

Case Study:

How Qualtrics decreased developer burnout and increased deep work time

Uplevel helps teams meet their product release goals without burning out their people.

Burnout can be difficult to quantify—it's often thought of as a feeling, but if you dig deeper, there's usually a root cause that goes beyond hours worked.

An engineering team at Qualtrics made it their mission to understand why everyone was feeling overworked and what actions they could take to help. Using Uplevel metrics, they were able to measure the impact of changes they made to work better together without burning the candle at both ends.

Qualtrics is an experience management company that provides cloud-based software to help over 13,000 customers measure and improve the experiences for their own customers downstream. Following the transition to remote work in 2020, Qualtrics sought out tools to bolster team effectiveness and ensure software engineering teams were able to maximize their time and velocity—while still prioritizing the experience of developers. That's when Qualtrics found Uplevel.



Uplevel worked with Qualtrics leadership to summarize key trends across the organization and narrow in on specific metrics to quantify the impact of pandemic-driven remote work. When rolling out Uplevel, they encouraged teams to use the product for data-driven conversations and focus on metrics like Always On and Deep Work. Always On, which acts as a burnout indicator, looks at the number of hours worked outside of a normal workday. Deep Work captures the amount of time a developer has to focus without getting interrupted by meetings or messages.

Rohit Ramesh, an engineering manager at Qualtrics, was particularly concerned about his team's well-being. The recent employee engagement survey showed that his team had **40% lower work-life balance scores** and **24% lower well-being scores** when compared to the engineering org. Their overall **engagement scores were also 20% lower** than the 2020 numbers. They knew something had to be done, so they wrote up an action plan.



Rohit and his team decided to focus on four key areas to help the team decrease burnout levels:

1

work-life balance

2

work prioritization

3

**energy and engagement
at work**

4

**career growth and
development**





The first action they took was to improve their planning sessions. If they misestimated a sprint, they'd hold a retro to determine how to improve processes for future sprints.



Additionally, his team optimized their schedules to allow for more focus time to get work done, with the hope that there would be less of a need to put in extra hours. This included a “No Meeting Thursday” to give developers more time to get their work done without interruptions.

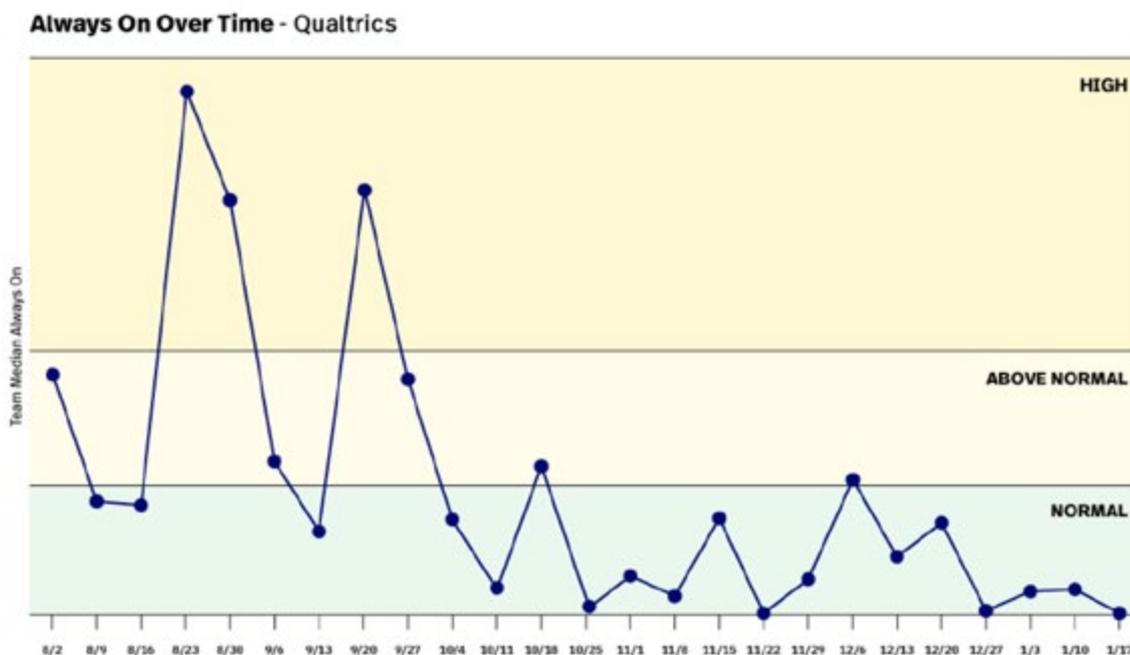


Rohit also has pursued more frequent conversations with team members to check in on how they were feeling and proactively encouraged them to take time off.



These changes weren't made on a whim—each action was intentional and directly related to their quarterly goals. They continued to iterate until things felt right.

The result? Rohit's team saw a dramatic change in their Uplevel metrics. They saw an **increase in Deep Work** and a **decrease in Always On** scores. Most importantly, the team felt the effect of these changes. Their employee engagement scores in the quarterly Qualtrics engagement survey also **increased from 73% to 83%** quarter to quarter.



Going forward, Rohit plans to continue using Uplevel to keep a pulse on burnout risk. He'll continue to provide support for his team by ensuring their schedules allow for ample focus time and advocating for change when necessary.



“Better planning has helped the team feel like they aren’t always in crunch mode and introducing Deep Work and reserved time for focus [No Meeting Thursdays] has really helped.”

– Rohit

Curious about how your team can use Uplevel to get ahead of burnout?
Get in touch with our team today.

uplevelteam.com

