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How a Manufacturing GCC Transformed Headcount Planning & Utilization Governance for 5,500 Employees with Anaplan

Client Overview

The client is the **Global Capability Center (GCC)** of a leading **global manufacturer of agriculture, turf, forestry, and heavy equipment**, supporting planning operations for a large technology and business workforce of approximately **5,500 employees.**

As the India technology center scaled, the GCC became a critical execution and governance layer for workforce planning, project-resource alignment, utilization tracking, timesheet governance, hiring workflow visibility, and project feedback management.

The planning process had not kept pace with the scale and complexity of the GCC. Headcount planning, project creation, activity-level timesheet capture, hiring requests, budget versions, feedback-based NPI calculations, and utilization tracking were spread across legacy systems, manual spreadsheets, and disconnected workflows.

The biggest operational challenge was not only data availability. It was the user experience leaders needed: a governed model that could drill from leadership views into projects, activities, hours, hiring status, and planning changes without losing context.

Polestar Analytics implemented an Anaplan-based workforce planning and governance model that connected project demand, employee utilization, open positions, hiring status, approval workflows, budget control, NPI calculations, and dashboards into one structured planning environment.

The objective was not to shift enterprise workforce strategy to the GCC. It was to help the GCC move from spreadsheet-led coordination to a governed planning operating model where leadership could see workforce demand, utilization, hiring progress, project feedback, and planning changes with greater confidence.

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Key Bottlenecks

As the GCC scaled, workforce planning became difficult to manage through legacy systems, spreadsheets, and manual approval flows.

Fragmented Workforce Hierarchy

- Legacy structure could not support planning across technology center and business leadership layers.
- Project planning and employee timesheet management lacked a unified hierarchy.
- Leadership visibility was limited across teams, roles, and planning levels.

Activity-Level Timesheet Complexity

- Timesheets were captured at an activity level under specific projects, increasing the need for deeper process drill-down.
- Projected hours, actual hours, approval status, and billable effort were not connected in one governed flow.
- Capacity gaps, over-allocation, and under-utilization were difficult to identify early.

Manual Resource Planning & Hiring Workflows

- Resource planning depended heavily on spreadsheets and offline coordination.
- Multiple human interventions slowed planning updates and approvals.
- Data consistency suffered across project, finance, and hiring stakeholders.

Limited Visibility into Open Positions

- Open roles were not tracked through a clear, governed workflow.
- Stakeholders could not easily see whether positions were raised, approved, pending, or filled.
- Long hiring cycles delayed resource fulfillment for project demand.

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Weak Budget, Forecast, and NPI Control

- Budget versions were difficult to control across planning cycles.
- Feedback-based NPI calculations were not consistently tied to project inputs and review workflows.
- Leadership lacked a clear audit trail for planning updates, calculations, approvals, and changes.

UX and Dashboard Visibility Gaps

- Leaders needed dashboards aligned to how project management, hours tracking, and hiring reviews actually happened.
- Existing reporting did not enable easy slicing and dicing across every relevant data point.
- The GCC needed a more intuitive planning experience with role-based views and drill-down paths

Solutions Implemented

Polestar Analytics implemented an **Anaplan-based workforce planning model** to connect project demand, utilization, hiring workflows, budget governance, and leadership visibility.

- **Connected Workforce planning Hierarchy**

Built a structured planning hierarchy across technology center and business leadership layers.

- Created parallel hierarchy views for tech center and business leaders.
- Linked projects, resources, reporting levels, and ownership structures.
- Enabled leadership visibility into workforce demand and accountability.

This created a scalable foundation for GCC workforce planning and project-resource governance.

- **Timesheet Punching and Approval Workflow**

Implemented a governed workflow for timesheet entry, review, and approval.

- Captured timesheets at an activity level under specific projects.
- Configured approval flows for managers and planning owners.
- Connected effort status, approval tracking, billable hours, and invoicing readiness.

This reduced manual follow-ups and improved control over timesheet governance and invoicing readiness.

Solutions Implemented

- **Projected vs Actual Utilization Tracking**

Created a single view to track planned effort against actual utilization.

- Captured projected hours, actual hours, and utilization variance.
- Highlighted over-allocation, under-utilization, and capacity gaps.
- Connected project demand with real workforce availability.

This improved utilization visibility and helped leaders act faster on resource mismatches.

- **Project Feedback and NPI Calculation Layer**

Built a structured layer for project feedback and NPI calculations.

- Captured project feedback as part of the planning workflow.
- Linked feedback inputs with project, resource, and effort data.
- Enabled consistent NPI calculation and review traceability.

This improved calculation control and gave leaders stronger project-level visibility.

Solutions Implemented

- **End-to-End Hiring Workflow Visibility**

Digitized the hiring workflow for in-house and contract employees.

- Captured open positions across approval levels.
- Tracked role status from request to fulfillment.
- Connected hiring demand with project and capacity plans.

This improved hiring transparency and reduced delays in resource fulfillment.

- **UX-Led Dashboard Suite**

Designed the planning experience around how users wanted to review and act on data.

- Built close to 100 dashboards across project management, hours tracking, utilization, hiring cycle, budget, and executive views.
- Enabled slicing and dicing across every relevant planning data point.
- Created role-based views for leadership, managers, finance, and planning users.

This improved adoption and reduced dependency on offline reporting.

Solutions Implemented

- **Budget Governance and Maker-Checker Controls**

Introduced governance controls to manage planning changes and budget versions.

- Enabled maker-checker controls for planning updates.
- Controlled budget versions, forecast changes, and approvals.
- Created a clearer trail of planning actions and ownership.

This reduced ad-hoc changes and improved confidence in workforce forecasts.

- **Role-Based Access and Planning Control**

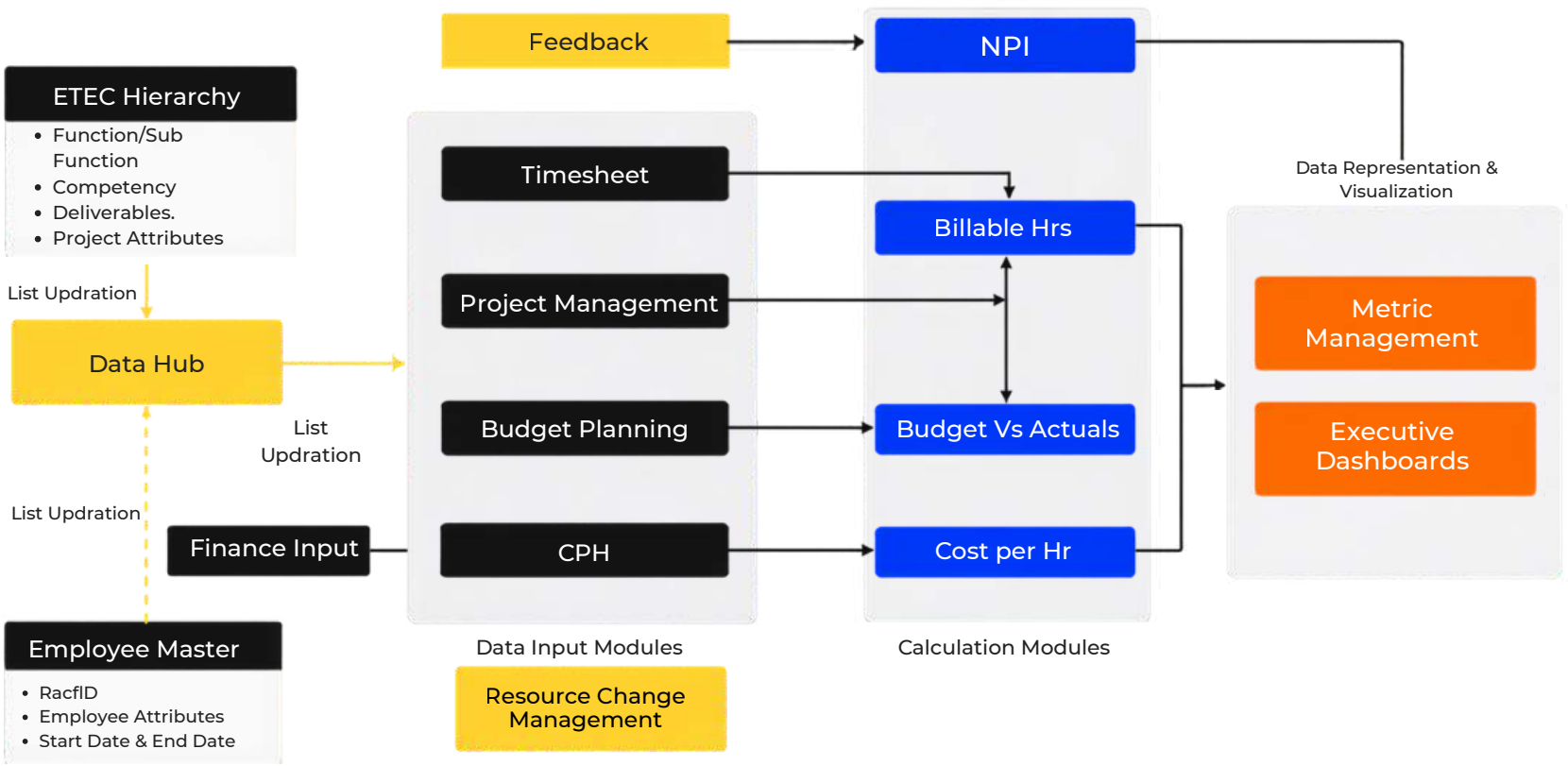
Defined access controls across business, technology, finance, and planning users.

- Configured role-based visibility and edit rights.
- Restricted approvals based on user responsibility.
- Strengthened security across workforce planning workflows.

This ensured the right users could view, update, and approve the right planning data.

Our Solution Framework behind this transformation

POLESTAR ANALYTICS x Anaplan



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Business Impact

40%

faster project creation and timesheet invoicing through standardized setup, effort capture, and approval workflows.

Close to

100 **dashboards**

build across project management tracking, hours tracking, hiring cycle visibility, utilization analysis, budget control, and executive reporting.

100%

visibility into open positions, hiring status, project demand, and workforce availability across the GCC planning model.

35%

improvement in utilization control by connecting projected hours, actual effort, and variance tracking in one view.

50%

reduction in manual planning effort by replacing spreadsheets and follow-ups with a centralized Anaplan workflow.

30%

faster budget and forecast cycles through controlled versions, structured approvals, and maker-checker governance.

25%

reduction in ad-hoc planning changes through stronger ownership, access controls, and audit-ready workflows.

The Outcome

Polestar Analytics helped the GCC build a more controlled, transparent, and leadership-ready workforce planning model.

Built on **Anaplan**, the solution moved the GCC beyond manual headcount tracking and created a **connected planning layer for resource demand, composite hierarchies, activity-level timesheets, utilization governance, hiring visibility, project feedback, NPI calculations, dashboards, and budget control.**

For a large manufacturing enterprise with a **5,500-employee workforce base, this created a stronger foundation for workforce planning discipline, faster planning cycles, and better alignment between project execution and resource availability.**

The GCC did not take over enterprise workforce strategy. It became the **governed planning layer** that gave leaders better visibility into demand, utilization, hiring progress, approvals, and forecast changes.

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About Polestar Analytics

Polestar Analytics is a leader in Data, Analytics, AI, and Enterprise Planning helping organizations to unlock intelligent outcomes through our proprietary products like 1Platform, accelerators, and services. Our expertise spans data engineering, data science, agentic and generative AI, and advanced planning for CPG/Retail, Pharmaceuticals, Manufacturing, IT/ITeS, and Financial Services.

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