

# Spans & Layers Assessment for a Global Pharmaceutical Company

The global IT organization of a large specialty pharmaceuticals manufacturer sought to transform its organization to serve as a strategic partner to enable business growth. The client sought a comprehensive evaluation of their IT organizational structure, ways of working, and operating principles to ensure teams operated efficiently, effectively, and in alignment with the company's long-term vision.

As with many large and global IT organizations, this client faced challenges, including overlapping responsibilities across functions, inconsistent management layers, and varying spans of control. These structural complexities limited transparency, slowed decision-making, and constrained the organization's ability to focus on a shared set of priorities.

To address these challenges, the client engaged Clarkston Consulting to assess the structure of its global IT organization using spans and layers analyses and Organizational Network Analysis (ONA) to uncover where spans of control could be enhanced in line with best practice as well as uncover bottlenecks in cross-functional collaboration.

Ultimately, Clarkston delivered spans of control targets for each IT leader to use as a guide when right sizing their teams. Clarkston also facilitated an ONA survey with key IT leaders and provided recommendations to improve ways of working and efficiency in a modernized IT operating model.

# Life Sciences Case Study

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### INDUSTRY



Life Sciences

### PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



Generics & Specialty  
Pharmaceuticals

### PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- Provide new organizational structure/operating model that would be best fit to support the client's overall and IT- specific strategies, priorities, and goals
- Optimize span of control and organizational layers
- Reduce / outsource commodity skills where possible and increase higher value skills (*Data, AI, Cloud, DevOps, Agile, Cyber*)

### RESOLUTION

- Conducted interviews with 30+ stakeholders across the global IT organization to understand current challenges, overlapping capabilities, and opportunities for improvement
- Reviewed HR systems data to analyze reporting relationships, role and skillset distribution, and cross-functional relationships with functional teams
- Completed detailed spans and layers assessment for the global IT organization to visualize the current organizational structure, identify inefficiencies in reporting relationships, and optimize headcount in line with OPEX targets
- Benchmarked spans of control against industry best practice, highlighting opportunities for more optimal distribution of resources
- Tailored Clarkston's Organizational Network Analysis (ONA) survey framework for the client to assess how key IT leaders collaborated and solved problems across teams
- Provided recommendations to optimize the organization's structure, strengthen leadership alignment, and define the skills and capabilities needed to support future business growth

### KEY BENEFITS

- Provided IT leadership with a holistic view of the current organizational structure and informal collaboration networks within their teams
- Confirmed span of control metrics for each team within the global IT organization to streamline management layers and optimize spans of control
- Identified where collaboration flows naturally and where intervention is needed to enable smoother operations and boost organizational agility
- Defined the skillsets and capabilities needed within IT to support the company business strategy and future technology priorities
- Established a foundation for a future-state IT organization that is more agile, efficient, and strategically aligned with business goals



### KPIs

- Recommended increase in span of control to fall within benchmark average of 5-8 full time employees (FTE)/ Managers
- Identified \$2M in OPEX savings through span of control optimization and resource capability alignment
- Conducted an ONA survey and associated network diagrams with ~60 selected IT leaders

CONTACT US

