

Case Study 2 – Breaking Down Cross-Functional Silos

A mid-sized tech company had grown rapidly after a new product launch. But success revealed a problem:

- Engineers rarely spoke to Customer Support teams.
- Product updates were often delayed by miscommunications and rework.
- Employees described the culture as “siloesd” in the annual engagement survey.

The CTO realized that critical product knowledge was trapped within a few senior engineers nearing retirement. Meanwhile, support staff—mostly millennials and Gen Z—felt undervalued because their feedback on customer pain points was rarely acted on.

Leadership decided to launch a 6-month Reciprocal Mentorship Program, pairing senior engineers (Legacy Partners) with support leads and junior engineers (Growth Partners) to:

1. Capture tacit product knowledge before retirement.
2. Encourage cross-functional trust and collaboration.

SMART Goals for Launch

1. **Knowledge Transfer & Innovation Goal:**
By the end of the 6-month program, each mentorship pair will document at least 3 recurring customer issues and co-develop 1 proposed improvement or workflow enhancement.
2. **Collaboration Goal:**
Within 3 months post-program, cross-functional project participation will increase by 10% compared to pre-program levels.

Key KPIs to Track

Category	Sample KPI	When to Measure
Knowledge Transfer	# of recurring issues documented per pair	Midpoint & program end
Innovation	# of proposed improvements submitted	Program end
Cross-Team Projects	% increase in joint engineer/support initiatives	3–6 months post-program
Engagement	Survey score: “I can share ideas across teams”	Program end & 3-mo follow-up

How to Collect the Data

- **Knowledge Transfer Templates:** Each pair submits documented issues and proposed solutions.
- **Innovation Log:** Track submitted ideas and whether they were piloted or implemented.

- **HR or Project Data:** Track participation in cross-functional initiatives before and after the program.
- **Surveys:** Conduct pre- and post-program surveys to measure perceived collaboration and voice.