

The Blind Spot Paradox, Part II

Underused Strengths Hiding in Plain Sight

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In Part I, we explored blind spots as risks — the unseen factors that quietly undermine performance.

This time let's flip the lens. Some blind spots don't hide weakness; they hide untapped strength.

Executives spend much of their energy searching for what's broken — lagging metrics, failing projects, emerging threats. But often the most neglected sources of growth aren't problems at all.

They're capabilities that have gone quiet: people, routines, and systems that still deliver value but rarely make the agenda.

Every organization has them — the long-standing client who renews year after year, the operations lead who "just makes things work," the regional team whose culture hums below the radar. These are strengths hiding in plain sight. We stop seeing them not because they vanish, but because they perform too smoothly to attract attention.

Here are six ways to bring underused strengths back into play—practical moves that turn hidden assets into concrete advantages.

Blind spots aren't only where risk hides — they're where unused advantage sleeps.



1. Invert the diagnostic

Most executive reviews start with a forensic mindset: find the gaps, fix them, move on. But the highest ROI often lies not in remediation, but in rediscovery.

Try this inversion:

- Instead of "Where are we failing?", ask "What's working so well that it's become invisible?"
- Instead of "What should we repair?", ask "What could we scale if we paid attention?"

This shift from problem-solving to potential-finding reframes strategy as amplification rather than correction. Many teams are already running on unused horsepower — they just need recognition and room to expand.

2. Identify why strengths go unnoticed

1. **Familiarity bias.** What's reliable becomes background noise.
2. **Silos.** Strengths live locally and rarely cross departments.
3. **Budget inertia.** New initiatives get funded; consistent excellence does not.
4. **Cultural modesty.** People minimize what comes naturally, calling it "just doing my job."

Ironically, these are usually the lowest-cost growth levers. The skill, the process, or the trust network already exists — it just isn't positioned as strategic.

3. Seeing what's too close to see

To uncover underused strengths, ask three deceptively simple questions:

1. *What's working so well that we've stopped talking about it?*
2. *Who quietly saves the day again and again?*
3. *Which small routines generate disproportionate impact?*

These questions work best outside the boardroom. Try skip-level check-ins, internal network maps, or informal listening sessions. You'll often find invisible systems of excellence holding everything together — the ones that never appear in a slide deck.

4. From recognition to leverage

Finding a quiet strength is only the beginning. To transform it into an asset:

- **Codify** what makes it work. Write down the invisible steps.
- **Replicate** it thoughtfully — start small, then scale.
- **Elevate** the people behind it; visibility fuels momentum.

- **Measure** and celebrate its contribution, however modest at first.

Imagine if we invested in our competence with the same urgency we invest in our problems.

Redirecting even 10 % of problem-solving time toward amplifying what already works can unlock significant growth — and re-energize teams that are tired of "fix-it" cycles.

5. The leadership mindset

Spotting hidden strengths requires curiosity more than urgency. It asks leaders to look not for what's missing, but for what's thriving quietly. That means walking the floor (or joining the call) to catch people doing something right — and acknowledging it as a strategic act.

High-performing cultures balance innovation with stewardship. They reward the heroes of *maintenance*, not just invention. They recognize that stability, consistency, and trust are competitive assets — and treat them as such.

Examples abound:

- A field-service group whose informal mentoring halves turnover.
- A client-success team whose empathy drives renewal rates.
- A finance analyst who tracks early warning signals the dashboard misses.

Each is a micro-engine of resilience, hiding in plain sight.

6. When awareness becomes advantage

Once named and nurtured, these hidden strengths compound.

They build:

- **Talent magnetism.** People stay where their contribution is seen.
- **Resilience.** Known capabilities adapt faster when conditions shift.
- **Strategic coherence.** Growth aligns around what already earns trust.

Leaders who surface these assets often realize they didn't need new capacity — they just needed new eyes.

Closing thought

In Part I, blind spots were about what could hurt us. In Part II, they're about what **could lift us** — if we choose to notice.

Growth isn't always about invention; sometimes it's about rediscovery. Look closely: the next breakthrough may not be a new idea at all, but an old strength finally seen for what it is.

Leadership insight: The most undervalued assets in any organization are often the ones performing exactly as intended. See them, name them, and let them lead the way forward.

Françoise was recently hired by Laulima Consulting as a Senior Strategic Advisor, where she helps forward-thinking organizations navigate disruption, uncover blind spots, and accelerate growth.

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