

IN MOST ORGANIZATIONS, IT IS PEOPLE WHO ULTIMATELY MAKE OR BREAK THE SUCCESS OF YOUR EFFORTS.

Enabling coordinated action with minimal communication

What is an Alignment Cycle?

An Alignment Cycle is a facilitated process that ensures a group's ability to attain its on time, on-investment, on-benefit aspirations. They are conducted by groups with a common topic, to rapidly translate what could be done into what will be done, in a way that it can be done. Alignment Cycles leverage the participant's opinions and insights to clarify their common purpose, and innovative solutions to valid barriers to success.

Alignment Cycle Applications:

Within Your Organization:

- Strategy development
- Strategy revision
- Strategy rollout
- Transformation
- Reorganization

Between Organizations:

- Merger integration
- Outsourcing relationships
- Joint ventures
- Alliances and partnerships

Across Organizations:

- Industry coalitions
- Customer groups
- Policy groups
- Advocacy groups

An Alignment Cycle will:

- Provide a means to surface all explicit and tacit, positive and negative action drivers, to generate the most complete, endorsed shared intent.
- Surface all known and unforeseen misalignments and constraints to ensure sustained performance over time.
- Use streamlined methodology to collapse the elapsed time of idea-to-action from weeks and months down to days.
- Use powerful technology to pinpoint the necessary conversations and minimize participant input to high impact hours only.

Why are Alignment Cycles necessary?

While we would like to think that everyone is working with common purpose and like-mindedness, when they appear otherwise, it is rarely due to any mal intent, but rather to natural factors, which cannot be accommodated effectively in traditional collaboration processes.

The full scope of thinking that drives action and inaction within a group is far greater than that experienced in conversation and meeting-based group interactions.

- On average, groups have 150+ unique, action-level thoughts on their shared topic.
- Groups are never fully aligned at the 'action level' – the initial Alignment Index for every group measured to date has been between 44 and 83 on a 100-point scale.
- There is incomplete agreement over Underlying Assumptions – the basis of all change.
- There is incomplete agreement regarding Goals and Objectives.
- Individuals within groups foresee almost as many barriers to success as they do aspirations to be achieved.
- Individuals are divergent in opinion to the same degree that they are of like-mind.
- Most of the negative feelings are unspoken and manifest themselves as problems during execution.

Why conduct an Alignment Cycle?

- Most multi-person, collaborative activities requiring coordinated action suffer during design and execution.
- Alignment as to why, what, who, when, where, and how is not understood, implicit expectation, but is managed manually using inconsistent and incomplete human-driven techniques.
- Alignment is 'insufficient but necessary' – misalignment being the root to flawed design and imperfect execution.

When conduct an Alignment Cycle?

- Designed-In – at the start of new collaborations to maximize like-mindedness and ensure ability-to-execute.
- Drift – during execution when misalignment is manifesting itself and compromising on-time, on-investment and on-benefit targets.
- Recovery – when people and process changes only provide short-term impact and the 'system' factors need to be identified and discussed.



Methodology

An Alignment Cycle comprises three stages – **Measure, Maximize and Maintain**, which can be conducted in as few as three days, from four people upwards, conducted by a Gates and Company Alignment Coordinator using the Alignment Optimization Technology™.

Measure



Maximize



Maintain



- Customized templates and novel Internet technology are used to efficiently surface the group's thinking and organize it into actionable themes.
- Unique analytics pinpoint those alignment and misalignments requiring action, so meetings and interactions are focused and fulfilling.
- All outcomes are captured automatically in the form of a Foundation Document, Scorecard and Action Roadmap.
- All constraints are remedied using a simple but powerful Collaborative Design 3-step process.

