



Alignment First



Stop Launching
Confusion

01.

02.

03.

INTRO

Explore the cost
of misalignement
in your
organization

CHECKPOINTS

Explore Executive
Leadership and
People Manager
sprints and
checkpoints to get
on track

TOOLS

Get access to tools
to aid in
implementing your
Alignment Sprints

If You Treat Alignment as a Broadcast...

Your Project Pays the Price

Are you a leader who treats alignment as a broadcast?

You share the strategy. You circulate the project plan. You schedule the kickoff. You assume people will line up because the information looks clear.

This approach fails for a simple reason. I just wanted to let you know that information is not agreement. A deck does not create shared priorities. A plan does not settle trade-offs. A kickoff does not create commitment.

Simply announcing a change or a new project does not create alignment, even with a loyal, dedicated team. Loyal teams move fast. They start doing. They fill in gaps with assumptions to keep work moving. That speed looks like commitment, yet often hides confusion.

Confusion lives where clarity is missing and conversations stall



Interpretation without alignment is dangerous

People interpret the same announcement through different lenses: what matters most, what success looks like, what takes priority when trade offs appear, who has authority to decide, what stays the same, and what changes.



Alignment starts with Leadership motion

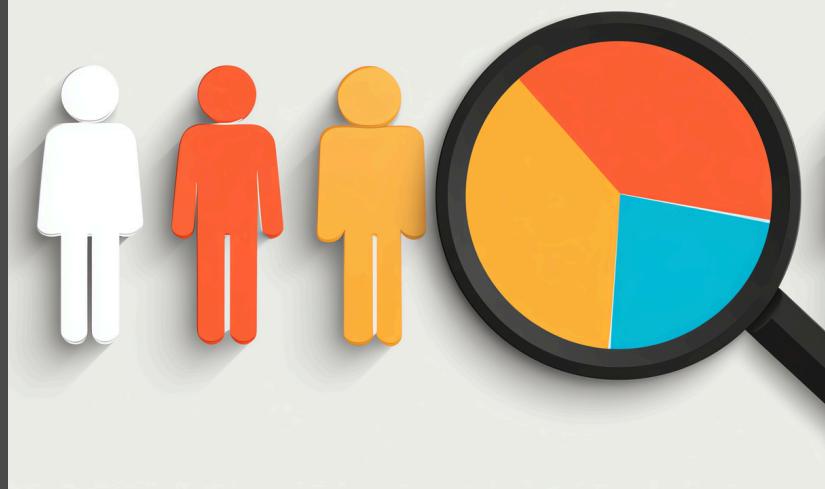
When leaders have not aligned on those answers first, a loyal team does what loyal teams do. They try to make it work. Then rework rises. Decisions slow. Friction grows between functions. People managers spend time translating mixed signals. Front line teams feel the churn.

An announcement starts motion. Alignment starts traction.

What Alignment means

Let's Clarify

Alignment is not a communication step. Alignment is a set of conditions leaders build before execution starts. Alignment means shared, demonstrated commitment to the same outcome, expressed through consistent decisions and actions across leaders.



3 Components of Alignment

1. Outcome alignment

A plain language definition of success. Shared priorities and trade offs. Clear exclusions, what will not be done.

2. Accountability alignment

Named owners for benefits and key decisions. Decision rights, who decides, who advises, who executes. Escalation path with time limits.

3. Behaviour alignment

Consistent messages from leaders to teams. Visible actions, resourcing, removing obstacles, and reinforcing priorities. Follow through when pressure rises.



Alignment Checkpoints

Alignment Checkpoint 1: Executive Alignment Sprint

If executives are not aligned with clarity and accountability, every layer below spends energy translating tension into day-to-day choices.

Executive alignment sprint outcomes

- One sentence success definition.
- Top priorities, agreed trade-offs, and clear exclusions.
- Named benefit owners for measurable outcomes.
- Decision rights and an escalation path with time limits.
- Shared leadership message and visible leader actions.
- A leadership cadence for decisions and issue resolution.

Executive alignment sprint format

Session 1: Outcome clarity and trade-offs (90 minutes).

Outputs: one success statement, priorities, and exclusions.

Session 2: Decision rights and benefit ownership (90 minutes). Outputs: benefit owners, decision rights, escalation path, time limits.

Session 3: Behaviour and messaging (60 minutes).

Outputs: shared message, leader actions, cadence.

Alignment Checkpoint 2: People Manager Alignment Loop



Many leaders assume people managers will align because a plan exists. People managers align through engagement, iteration, and clarity.

People manager alignment means four things.

- People managers understand the outcome and why the work matters.
- People managers know their role, what they own, and what they reinforce.
- People managers have space to ask questions, surface constraints, and challenge assumptions before decisions harden.
- People managers leave with confidence, not compliance.

People manager engagement loop before broad rollout

Loop session 1: Sense making and intent (60 minutes).

Loop session 2: Impact and constraints (90 minutes).

Loop session 3: Leading teams through change (90 minutes).

People manager input loop

Ask three questions in every session.

1. What will break in day-to-day operations if execution starts next week?
2. What feels unclear, unrealistic, or risky?
3. What needs a decision from executives within one week?

Track responses in a visible log. Show decisions, changes, and non-changes with reasons.

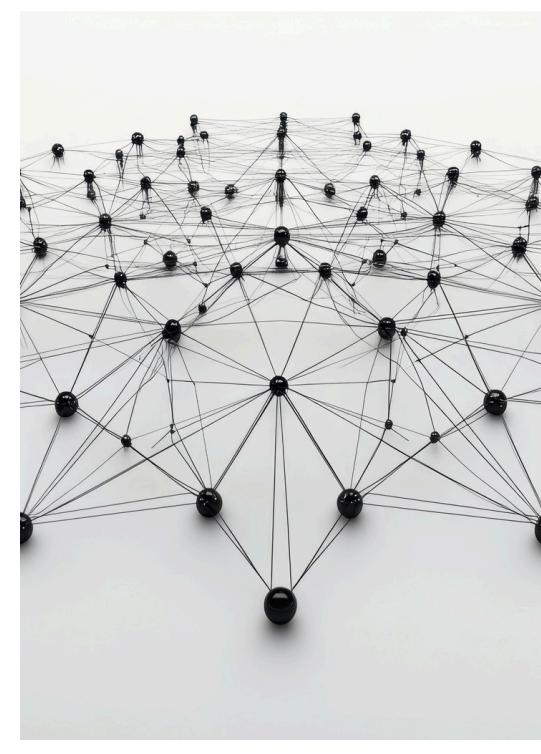
Alignment Checkpoint 2: People Manager Alignment Loop Cont'd

People Manager role clarity

- What people managers reinforce in team meetings.
- What People Managers decide locally.
- What People Managers escalate.
- What People Managers stop doing during transition.
- What support People Managers receive?

Protect People Manager capacity

Time is the hidden dependency. If leaders do not protect time, engagement turns into theatre and team clarity drops.



After both Alignment Checkpoints

Once executives align and people managers align through engagement, strategic readiness and leadership readiness land faster and hold longer.

Delivery discipline then works as intended.

Alignment Toolkit

Use this toolkit to run the two alignment checkpoints with speed and clarity.

- Executive alignment sprint agenda and outputs.
- Executive alignment scorecard.
- People manager alignment conversation guide.
- People manager input log template.
- One-page people manager role brief.

Link to:

[Alignment First Summary Table and Leader Quick Reference Checklist](#)



Thank you and keep in touch

We are a full-service Change Management Consultancy offering Workshops, Leadership Coaching, and Facilitation

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