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## Project Alignment

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## Lack of alignment?



She told me we couldn't afford beer anymore and that I would have to quit.

Then I caught her spending \$65 for makeup.

I asked her how come I had to give up stuff and she didn't.

She said she needed the makeup to look pretty for me.

I told her that was what the beer was for.

I don't think she's coming back.

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## Alignment

To arrange or be arranged to be in a **straight line** ;  
to adjust to produce a proper orientation  
*American Heritage Dictionary*

How does this relate to projects?

- Misaligned and conflicting objectives
- Unclear and unmet **expectations**
- Scope changes, schedule and cost growth

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## Why bother?



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## Why bother?



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## Project alignment is not ...



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Don't have all the answers!



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Helicopter Hangar and MAG HQs



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- SOW – move USMC helicopter hangar and MAG HQ from Willow Grove, PA to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ
- Project manager – NAVFAC

**A recipe for disaster!**

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Pre-session Survey

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What are the three most important objectives the Project Team needs to accomplish in the Partnering Session?

- Get to know and understand a little bit about the various team members and some of their background and experiences.
- Hopefully develop respect for each other and a willingness to move forward for the good of the project, even when there may be differences of opinion.
- Facilitate and promote consensus on the design parameters, objectives, and solutions for the project. It is essential that at the end of the Design Charrette a firm Floor Plan is established and will not change as the design progresses through Contract Documents.

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Initial session – Sept. 29-Oct. 3, 2008

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- Partnering Agenda
- Partnering Slides
- Survey Results
- Partnering Criteria Evaluation
- Project Success Criteria Breakout
- Change Management Process Breakout
- SWOT Analysis Breakout
- Partnering Rollout Plan Breakout
- Issue Resolution Breakout
- Organizational Chart and Project Directory Breakout
- Design Workshop Agenda

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Conceptual Design Team Agreement

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Follow up Sessions

- Dec. 14, 2009
- May 7, 2010
- August 26, 2010

**Met or exceeded  
all project  
objectives**




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But this doesn't apply to us!

- Principles are the same
- Remember the concept of scalability





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Four Cornerstones of Alignment

- Shared Vision
- Trust
- Communication
- Leadership





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Why do we need a shared vision?



What is the "vision" of a project?




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How important is trust?

"Every alliance interviewed in this research emphasized the role that **trust** has on the success of partnering"

CII, *The Partnering Process*,  
RR 102-11





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Impact of Attitudes

All parties must understand, appreciate, and fully utilize the **strengths** and **value-adds** that each person and organization brings to the project.




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## Owner's Attitudes

- Do you see your contractors and suppliers as **value-adding resources** or as **necessary evils**?
- Do you think that the term "**sorry contractor**" is redundant?



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## Design/Construction Group

Is this your view of the owner/customer?



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## How important is communication?

Communication at the right level and with the right people is the heart of successful project management. For several years, I have challenged project managers and others in the business to find a project with failures that can be attributed to any reason other than a breakdown in communication. Very few projects have been brought forward. In each case, when we worked backwards from the apparent problem, we ended with a vital gap in the communication plan.

Francis Hartman, *Don't Park Your Brain Outside*

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## Why is leadership important?

Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is society ... Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their **petty preoccupations**, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and **unite** them in the pursuit of objectives **worthy of their best efforts**.

John Gardner



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## Four Cornerstones of Alignment

- Shared Vision
- Trust
- Communication
- Leadership

**These principles apply to EVERY project!**



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## Personal Application

**Personal application** – Select a past or present project. Rate the project from 1 to 5 for each of the cornerstones:

- Shared vision (1=project objectives are not defined, 5=project objectives are well defined)
- Level of trust (1=none, 5=strong trust between all)
- Communication (1=none, 5=clear, consistent, effective)
- Leadership (1=none, 5=effective project leadership)

**Table discussion** – What are your top two project communication barriers?

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### Alignment Principles

- Make all parties successful



- Owner (or whomever controls the money) always has final control!!!

### Alignment Process

1. Consensus success criteria
2. Strategy to achieve success criteria
3. Measures
4. Rewards and recognition



- Must be a direct line of sight from bottom to top
- Subsequent level based on higher level
- All produce specific team deliverables

### Alignment Process

Objectives and success criteria

↓

Strategy to achieve success criteria

↓

Measures

↓

Rewards and recognition

### Objectives and Success Criteria

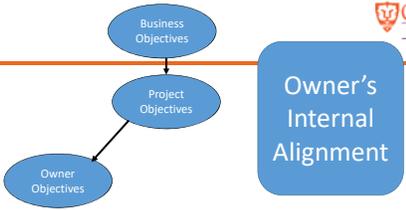
- Communicate higher level objectives (business, relationship, etc.)
- Allow each entity to provide inputs on what they see as the appropriate success criteria
- Facilitate melding inputs into **specific** success criteria that all can embrace because they can be successful

### Success Criteria

- Safe project construction
- Execute projects below budgeted cost
- Meet/beat project schedule
- Reduce rework costs
- Reduce future project costs
- Customer satisfaction
- Meet quality requirements
- Equipment reliability

Each would have specific, measurable results

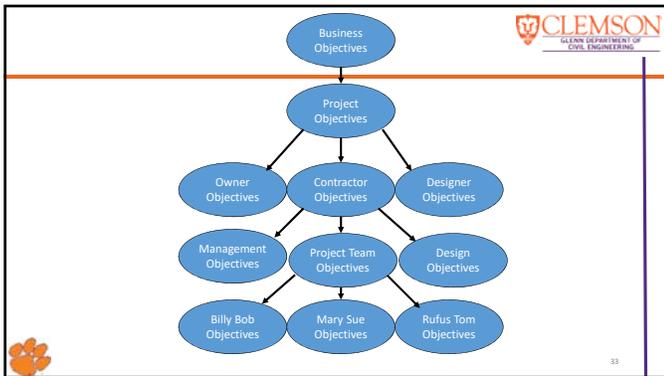
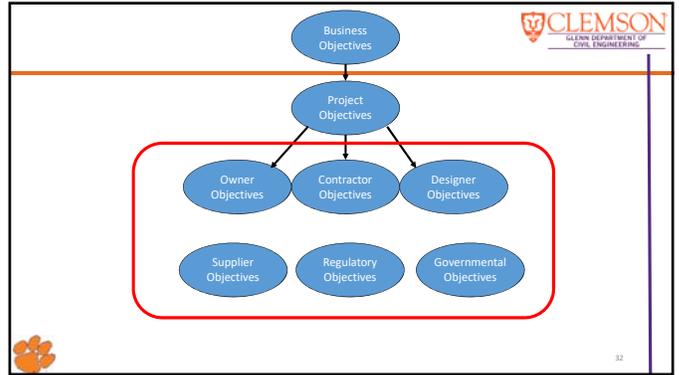
### Owner's Internal Alignment




  
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= FAILURE


  
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### Alignment to All Levels

*No man can do anything without knowing what he is doing. Generals and staff officers don't win wars.*  
**Soldiers win wars**  
*The soldier must know what he is doing at all times. He must know the **objective**.*



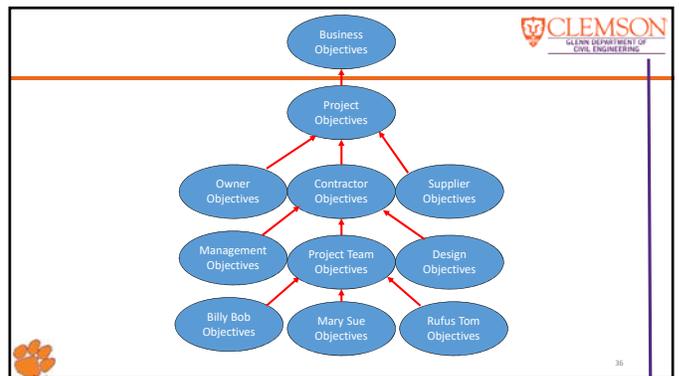
George Patton


  
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### No Mushroom Approach!




  
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Is conflict good or bad?



The creativity of groups is better than that of any individual member if the group is composed of people with different backgrounds, views, and styles, and if they feel free to express their differences. Creativity and motivation are **stillborn in bureaucratic organizations.**

Richard Mayer

Personal Application

**Personal application** – Use the same project selected earlier:

- Is the customer internally aligned? If not, what issues need to be resolved?
- Can every person in the project state the primary project objective(s)?
- If not, what needs to be done to better communicate the project objective(s) to all participants?
- Who should be responsible for this communication?

• **Table discussion** – What are the top barriers to internal alignment for your projects?

Alignment Process



Objectives and success criteria

↓

Strategy to achieve success criteria

↓

Measures

↓

Rewards and recognition

Implementation Strategy

- Plan to achieve project success criteria (your PEP)
  - Specific activities
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Scheduled completion dates
  - Barriers and plans to address
  - Accountability process



Alignment Process



Objectives and success criteria

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Strategy to achieve success criteria

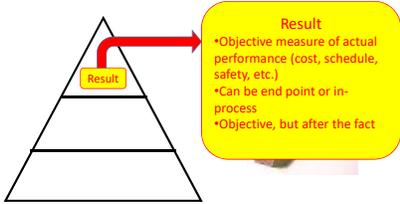
↓

Measures

↓

Rewards and recognition

Alignment Measures



**Result**

- Objective measure of actual performance (cost, schedule, safety, etc.)
- Can be end point or in-process
- Objective, but after the fact

### Alignment Measures

**Result**

**Process**

- Assessment of work processes (change management, RFIs, etc.)
- Quantitative (time for RFI turnaround) or qualitative (opinions on effectiveness of change management system)

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### Alignment Measures

**Result**

**Process**

**Relationship**

- Qualitative measures assessing the health of the project (e.g., Team Character Inventory)
- Provide early warning of potential problems

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### Sample Relationship Measures

- Internal communication
- External communication
- Meeting effectiveness
- Worker morale
- Internal trust/candor
- External trust/candor
- Internal leadership
- External leadership
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Accomplishment of objectives
- Utilization of resources
- Creativity and synergy
- Timely evaluation, and appropriate response
- Definition and adherence to roles and responsibilities
- Continuous improvement

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### Alignment Process

Objectives and success criteria

Strategy to achieve success criteria

Measures

Rewards and recognition

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### Reward and Recognition

- Focus on awards that directly support objectives; should have a clear line of sight from rewards to objectives. Determine key objectives and/or results to be supported by rewards and recognitions.
- Be careful what you reward, because **that's what you'll get.**
- Do not over-reward;** should not establish an entitlement mentality.
- Must be seen as fair and impartial.
- Be **creative** and identify unusual ways to recognize performance.
- Establish an Awards Subteam to implement and manage the plan. Include inputs from all levels to make awards meaningful and supported.
- Don't overlook the value of **recognition** personal, at meetings, company newsletters, etc.). Cheap and very effective. Top management should play a very visible role in recognitions.

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### Project Alignment Session Agenda

Time	Item	Responsibility	Deliverable(s)
8:30 - 8:45	Welcome	Sponsor	
8:45 - 9:30	• Project and contract overview • Agenda review • Interview results	Facilitator	• Understanding of alignment principles • Path forward • Consolidated survey results
9:30 - 9:45	Introductions	Team members	
9:45 - 10:15	Company success criteria and value-adds	Company representatives	• Company-specific objectives and success criteria • Company-specific value-adds
10:15 - 10:30	Break		
10:30 - 10:45	Introduction to Breakout 1	Facilitator	
10:45 - 12:00	Breakout 1	Subteams	Proposed project success criteria, strategy, and responsibilities
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch		
12:45 - 1:45	Breakout 1 reports	Subteams' designated representatives	Project success criteria, strategy, and responsibilities
2:30 - 2:45	Introduction to Breakout 2	Facilitator	
2:45 - 3:00	Break		
3:00 - 3:45	Breakout 2	Subteams	• Project organizational chart and directory; • Change control process; • Issues resolution/escalation process; • Partnering rollout plans • Project S/MOT analysis
3:45 - 4:45	Breakout 2 reports	Subteams	Team tools
4:45 - 5:00	Path forward	Facilitator	Follow-up Plan

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## Alignment Barriers



- **Unclear** or **uncommunicated** objectives (remember expectations?)
- Inadequate alignment effort
- **Unspoken** disagreement; **unexpressed** conflict
- Not considering **"no deal"** an option
- Rewarding **wrong** behavior
  - Project level
  - Organizational level
  - Individual level



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## Personal Application



Select a project just starting or planned for the future.

- Who should attend an alignment session for the project?
- What key issues should be addressed in the alignment session?
- What problems might be encountered in getting the right people there or resolving the issues?
- Who should facilitate the alignment session?
- Will any of the alignment barriers from the previous slide negatively impact the project?



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## Project Alignment References



- *Pre-Project Planning Tools: PDRI and Alignment*, RS113-1
- *Alignment During Pre-Project Planning – A Key to Project Success*, IR 113-3
- *Development and Alignment of Project Objectives*, EM 113-21



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## Wrapping it all up



- Establish an alignment-focused culture
- Standardize scalable alignment processes
- Integrate alignment deliverables in the stage gate process
- Train alignment facilitators
- Just do it!



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