

Breakthrough Alignment for Business and IT Teams

How to make alignment work and mitigate project delivery risk

Program Synopsis:

Despite an unprecedented investment of time and money in project methodology, tools and process over recent years, organizations continue to face an unacceptable rate of strategic project failure. Why is this?

Studies show that the reason most projects fail is because of misalignment between three main organizational elements which are essential to successful project execution:

Organizational Strategy, Business Sponsors and IT Project Management

More work on methodology and tools won't help – improvement begins by understanding the root cause of failure and eliminating it. This program, facilitated by two of the leading practitioners and authors in the field of organizational alignment, Dr. James Norrie and Lucy Proteau, will provide its participants with the knowledge and resources necessary to dramatically improve project execution through breakthrough business and IT alignment.

Participants:

- Business project sponsors and leaders at all levels
 - IT project leaders, directors and managers
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Learning Objectives:

1. To assess the current state of project management in the organization and provide a baseline against which improvements can be measured.
2. Identify key issues that can be addressed through participation in the workshop which will address the active engagement between executive level business project sponsors and project leaders to drive the following learning outcomes:
 - Understanding the connections between organization strategy making, project proposal and selection, and project execution to drive results.
 - Enhance mutual understanding of the roles of project sponsors and project managers and common gaps that impede project success.
 - Creating improved mutual accountability through higher levels of joint ownership of key project outcomes (RACI), deliverables, processes and methods.

- Driving a mutual understanding of the connection between project decision-making, lapsed time to decision and impact on project timelines.
 - Learning how to gain project benefits realization and not just project installation.
 - Increasing mutual awareness of structured methods of communication and interaction which facilitate improved execution and reduced conflict.
3. Provide coaching as a follow-up to training for those who need it.

Program Format:

The program consists of five phases:

1. Establishing the baseline through a survey to:
 - a. assess the current state of project management in the organization
 - b. provide a baseline against which improvements can be measured
 - c. identify key issues that will be addressed through participation in a 2-day workshop
2. Stakeholder communication to position and align the workshop with attendees' objectives
3. A 2-day customized training workshop for designated business and IT project leaders
4. Support for the workshop attendees through post-training coaching as needed
5. A final summary of findings which will include the baseline and any additional issues as input for future planning

Phase 1 Establishing the Baseline:

Having a baseline and common understanding of the current state is the prerequisite for planning for an improved future state. The survey will provide the organizational input needed to establish the success road map for the rest of the program.

Phase 2 Stakeholder Communication:

There are three main communication objectives:

1. To ensure those involved understand the rationale for the training of project sponsors and IT project managers.
2. Focus on how the learnings from this training will help achieve defined project objectives and what roles those participating in the training will play in that success.
3. To motivate employees to participate in the training by encouraging their input and ideas, stressing the important role they play in project success.

4. To support sponsors and IT project managers as roles are clarified, expected behaviours are defined, and necessary skills are applied to project work to ensure desired outcomes.

Phase 3 The Workshop:

This 2-day facilitated workshop is designed to assist IT project managers and their business project leads identify and address key issues by focusing on the needs of each group. Attendees should be in the role of sponsor or IT project manager and have at least basic knowledge of the project management lifecycle. (See Sample Workshop Goals below.)

Participants begin together, diverge for separate discussions and content, and re-converge to establish and enhance understanding across the various learning modules in the program.

Methods taught, when consistently applied, will have a measurable impact on project ROI organization-wide by providing clarity around responsibility and accountability across the entire project landscape. This leads to:

1. Elimination of controllable project delays
2. Increasing the speed of project-based decision-making
3. Enhancing understanding of risk and reward trade-offs for decision-making, especially under uncertain conditions
4. Producing a measurable, positive financial impact in terms of improved resource utilization and more certain project execution
5. Substantially reducing the risk of project failure

This unique approach is designed to reduce the underlying culture of tension and mistrust that often exists, replacing it with an improved sense of mutual respect, understanding and co-operation which positively impacts corporate culture by reducing politics and improving productivity.

Phase 4 Post Training Coaching for the Workshop Attendees:

This phase is custom-designed for each client and will be developed as part of the workshop process.

Phase 5 Final Summary Report:

This customizable report provides a scorecard of the Breakthrough Alignment results, detailing identified requirements and results achieved through the workshop and post-workshop process. It also serves as a planning document for future resolution of any additional identified issues.

Sample Workshop Goals (customizable based on client need)

	BUSINESS SPONSOR	IT PROJECT MANAGER
1	Understand the current state of project delivery and why it is important select the right projects.	Support the business project lead through the project selection process for ranking and possible selection.
2	Set the right vision for the approved project to support organizational alignment around common project outcomes.	Leverage the vision for an effective project launch.
3	Establish and maintaining the right tone-from-the-top and continuously manage communication between the executive team, key stakeholders, the project team and those that will be touched by the pending project implementation.	Leverage the right “tone-from-the-top” as input to the communication plan that aligns with the vision. Communicate key messages continuously and consistently at all levels of the organization to avoid confusion and to rally desired action.
4	Understand the key components of a project and why each one is important to mitigating risks for overall project success.	Ensure alignment and interdependencies of key components of the project and why these are mandatory for successful planning, execution and risk mitigation.
5	Understand the need for measurable strategic outcomes. Learn how to identify risks up front based on project risks so they can be managed in accordance with risk tolerance levels that are understood up front.	Discuss and agree on strategic project outcomes as well as how these will be measured, managed and communicated to the organization. Assess additional costs associated with risk mitigation and ensure they are understood and factored into the cost benefit analysis.
6	Learn the importance of follow-up to ensure timely corrective action for identified project risks.	Understand the importance of maintaining a risk inventory to ensure corrective action had desired outcome.
7	Discuss prioritizing project and production work to ensure resources are not overloaded. Determine how compensation for those involved in project delivery could better align with degree of actual project success.	Ensure % of time resources have to work on the project are clear and reflected in the timeline. Agree on when the baseline and metrics for the project will be established as input to measurement & performance management.

	BUSINESS SPONSOR	IT PROJECT MANAGER
8	<p>Understand “critical mass” (i.e. other influencers and stakeholders) the Business Project Lead/team need to be aware of.</p> <p>Define engagement strategies to ensure the alignment and collaboration needed for success are in place.</p>	<p>Create a stakeholder map of the project to ensure critical mass is accounted for as well as clear delineation or roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Ensure communication strategies for each group are agreed upon and included in the communication plan.</p>
9	<p>There should only be 1 Business Project Lead. In cases where more than one executive sponsor can't be avoided, gain an understanding of how they will jointly align forces to govern the project and make decisions promptly.</p>	<p>Define a code of conduct for the project with the sponsor(s).</p> <p>Determine how decisions will be made promptly and ensure any needed escalation paths or delegations of authority across project roles & responsibilities are understood.</p> <p>Assess impact of delays in decision making. Communicate this to the sponsor/key stakeholders (may be a steering committee) regularly and take corrective action as needed.</p>
10	<p>Determine project deliverables that will require strategic or cultural change and map out a change plan and tactics to ensure these happen in parallel with project delivery.</p>	<p>Understand culture change process and how it will be applied to the project and its deliverables as part of what the IT Project Manager is managing.</p>

Facilitators:



Dr. James L. Norrie, DPM, LL.M

Associate Dean & Chief Academic Officer, Eichelberger Chair in Business Education, Graham School of Business, York College Pennsylvania; Managing Partner, e-Venture Consulting, Inc.

James conducts industry research, speaks globally at conferences and consults to companies with a focus on aligning business and IT strategy. He was previously Associate Dean of the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University in Toronto where he taught business and technology strategy, leadership and project management. James is the author or co-author of 5 books and hundreds of presentations and articles. Prior to his teaching career, he was an entrepreneur who founded and managed several high-tech and e-business ventures.



Lucy Proteau

President. Leap Software Services

Lucy is a dynamic leader, effective communicator, mentor, and problem solver with almost four decades of IT executive leadership and program management experience in the areas of Financial Services, Publishing, Retail, Consulting, Government, Telecommunications, Pulp and Paper, Aviation and Manufacturing. She has performed the roles of CIO and Vice President, Information Technology, and has successfully partnered with business owners, leaders, and project sponsors to lead numerous technology-enabled and culture change projects that helped move business strategy forward. She is recognized as an outstanding builder of high performing cross functional teams that get the job done and inspire team members toward ever increasing levels of achievement.

Leaders Beyond

Leaders Beyond education programs provide mid-level and senior IT professionals with the critical skills and knowledge they require to position themselves as true business leaders. We take you beyond the traditional scope of IT, enabling you to provide measurable and immediate value that contributes directly to the overall success of your organization.

Students gain the real-world advantages of learning from accomplished business leaders using a highly interactive case study-based approach:

- They learn critical skills to address real-life business challenges.
- They gain the ability to understand, collaborate and engage with anyone at any level of the organization.
- They gain the knowledge and insight to make a measurable and immediate impact on business outcomes.

