

Management Team Alignment: A Growth Strategy for Accelerating Performance

“The Success of Each is Dependent on the Success of the Other” (John D. Rockefeller, Jr.)

Today’s competitive, complex, and high-speed business environment demands superior knowledge, skills and expertise within the management team. Executives go to great lengths to attract, develop, and retain the best talent to build a highly effective management team.

Unfortunately, specific action to improve management team effectiveness is often overlooked as prerequisite for successful achievement of growth strategies.

Even the best management teams exhibit behaviors that work against their own effectiveness; behaviors that cause inefficiencies and dysfunction for the team *and therefore for organizations that they lead*. These behaviors are often exhibited as functional competition, short term thinking, win-lose thinking, internal focus, silo mentality, among others.

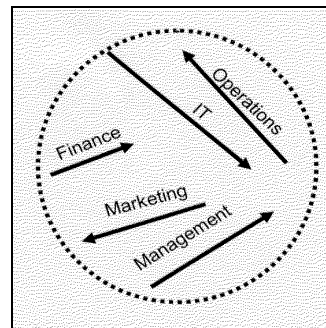
As managers, we often see team and organizational dysfunctional behaviors such as:

- Dysfunctional Behaviors**
- Lack of commitment and decisiveness
 - Criticism, sarcasm, and negativity
 - Unhealthy internal competition
 - Lack of follow through with initiatives
 - Unhealthy attitudes toward mistakes and risk-taking
 - Not working at peak performance
 - Fear of conflict, failure, exposure, change
 - High turnover rate
 - Breakdowns in communication
 - Dissatisfied customers
 - Lack of trust
 - Lack of initiative and creativity
 - Insufficient collaboration
 - Not working toward a common vision
 - Inability to manage/accept change

Such behaviors reflect an organization that is not aligned. Lack of alignment reduces the probability of achieving organizational effectiveness.

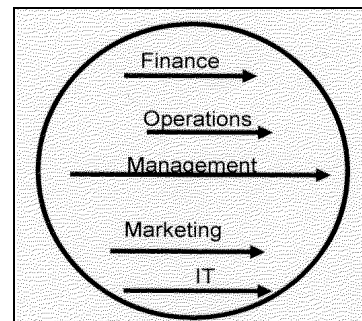
What we often have is:

Misaligned Organization



What we want is:

Aligned Organization



How do management teams acquire the underlying behaviors that will yield maximum alignment and therefore increase their effectiveness?

The effort must start at the top of the organization. If the management team is not aligned, the organization cannot achieve alignment and therefore will not perform effectively.

Avantt Consulting's management team alignment process addresses team interactions and dynamics to raise the management team's Collective Effectiveness by developing **behaviors** that allow the team to *perform more effectively*, not just know each other better.

The management team **Collective Effectiveness (CE)** is equal to the net of the team's aggregate knowledge and skills **Collective Intelligence (CI)**, reduced by the obstacles caused by its **Collective Dysfunction (CD)**.

The relationship

$$CE = CI - CD$$

tells us there are two ways to increase the team's Collective Effectiveness:

- Add to/change the team (increase **CI**)
- Reduce dysfunction (decrease **CD**)

In most cases it is far less costly, disruptive and time consuming to reduce dysfunctions than to add to or change the team's intelligence.

To achieve improved alignment, management teams must understand their current behaviors in critical areas affecting alignment **and then work to change behaviors** that increase the team's Collective Effectiveness. Critical areas teams typically address to improve alignment include:

- **Communications**
Understanding how each member communicates and then how to effectively communicate and resolve conflicts within the team
- **Personal behavior**
Understanding one's personal behaviors and how those behaviors impact the team's Collective Effectiveness
- **Team profile**
Understanding the specific composition of the team and how the team works to move an idea to an efficiently implemented result

Avantt Consulting's unique approach is:

- **Focused on basic behaviors** that are essential to a growth strategy
- Implemented by **seasoned senior executives** who bring practical industry experience to the effort
- **Implementation oriented** including specific actions to reinforce desired long-term behavioral change

For a business, the ultimate focus is the bottom line; leading to the question "will a team alignment effort have a desirable ROI?" This question is answered by addressing two issues:

- First, how does improving alignment compare to improving Collective Intelligence, and
- Second, what is the ROI of improving team alignment?

First, increasing Collective Effectiveness by increasing the Collective Intelligence involves adding people, replacing people, or significant investments in training and skill building. These actions have huge incremental and recurring costs—costs we work very hard to avoid.

Second, to calculate the ROI achievable from improved team alignment, one need only pick, for example, the top three symptoms of dysfunction and apply an annual cost. Comparing this cost to the cost of implementing increased management team alignment, produces the *minimum* ROI you can expect.

In today's business environment, improved management Collective Effectiveness is not an option. It is a must. Avantt Consulting can help improve alignment so that the Collective Effectiveness improves and the company's growth strategy accelerates.

The options are straightforward: changing the team (increasing Collective Intelligence) or improving alignment, (decreasing Collective Dysfunction), and thereby increasing Collective Effectiveness.

For additional information see
www.avanttconsulting.com.