
Kicking Off a Successful Organization Redesign

A GUIDE FOR THE C-SUITE EXECUTIVE



AlignOrg Solutions is a consulting firm that specializes in helping clients clarify strategy, design and align organization systems and choices, and lead transformational change to drive growth and marketplace success. Using our powerful methodology and a flexible approach that engages leaders and employees in decision making, we assist many of the most well-respected and successful organizations around the world with achieving real, transformational change. The expertise we bring is grounded in the practical realities of everyday business challenges and is designed to create insight and action.

To learn more about AlignOrg Solutions and our work and thinking, please visit www.alignorg.com.

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INTRODUCTION

Kicking Off a Successful Organization Redesign

Maya Angelou’s observation that every journey begins with a single step is especially apropos when it comes to organization redesign because the process can often feel like an endless slog. Redesigns can take months—and in some cases years. They are inherently disruptive to day-to-day business operations, presenting a palette of challenges for executives, including disengaged employees, disrupted daily operations, and disenfranchised stakeholders for what the organization is working to do.

As an executive you have probably initiated a significant organization redesign in the past, or perhaps are doing so now. It isn’t an easy endeavor and there are a lot of considerations for leaders, organization members, and supporting team members like those from human resources (HR). A positive launch to the effort can ensure success down the road. Success is measured not only by achieving the business outcomes desired but also in how employees embrace and pivot to adopt new performance expectations.



Regardless of the desired outcome—better productivity, improved customer service, implementing new technology, or product innovation for improved market share—the ultimate success of any organization redesign begins with a strong foundation. Laying that foundation before starting any change requires leaders to involve the right people, develop effective methods and processes to facilitate the realignment, and adopt an Agile approach to the work.



The right people. While it would be great to involve everyone, that's neither practical nor efficient. Before embarking on a transformation, leaders need to identify individuals who are knowledgeable about both how the business currently works, how it needs to work, and will champion the change. It can be someone in a management position that enables them to directly influence others, or it can be a member of the rank-and-file who holds enough sway within the organization to examine and reconsider design choices that will lead to improved work and organizational dynamics.



The right tools. There are no shortcuts; each redesign needs its own blueprint that reflects the distinctiveness and uniqueness of your organization's offerings. What worked for another organization or in a previous redesign may not work well now. Using the right tools to construct a design that's tailored to your organization's particular strategy and needs results in optimal organizational alignment.

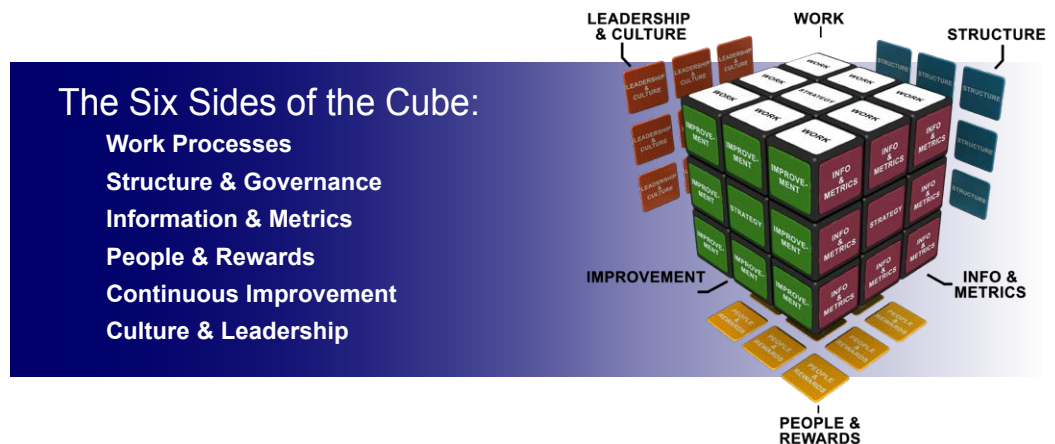


The right approach. Adopting an Agile approach can provide both stability and dynamism. For example, one Agile characteristic is working in concentrated bursts called sprints to focus on a particular problem. Usually within a short amount of time the team can come away with a minimal viable product, or MVP. The MVP is not meant to be a perfect solution by any standard. Instead it's a usable outcome intended to advance thinking and help the organization begin to change.



THE NEED FOR SYNERGY

Organizations are complex entities that need alignment among its processes, structures, systems, metrics, talent, and company culture to function efficiently. In our organization design work, we utilize a cube model—featured in our book *Mastering the Cube*—as an alignment tool that helps leaders preparing for an organization redesign, more easily visualize their organizations' elements and choices as interrelated parts of a whole, with each side representing a particular system.



Side 1: Work Processes. Routines and processes that differentiate you as an organization and help you win should be prioritized. Competitive work needs to be done as effectively as possible for a strong market position.

Side 2: Structure & Governance. Just as the work of an organization follows its strategy, the structure of an organization should follow naturally from the work. Structure enables work and optimal use of limited resources.

Side 3: Information & Metrics. The information system of an organization includes the data itself as well as the technologies and tools for using, sharing, and storing it. This side of the cube also deals with the metrics used to make decisions and drive accountability.

Side 4: People & Rewards. The people and rewards system includes the recruitment, hiring, development, training, performance management, and succession processes of an organization. Aligning this area of the organization involves motivating people, maximizing their potential, and ensuring that all systems are set up to support the strategic goals of the organization.

Side 5: Continuous Improvement. All parts of an organization must be agile enough to constantly adjust to changes in its market, industry, infrastructure, and people.

Side 6: Culture & Leadership. While leaders can influence all other sides of the cube through direct decision making, culture is usually influenced rather than dictated. Through organizational choices, leaders can shape company culture in ways that contribute to differentiation and value.

Because certain elements in an organization drive other elements, progression through the sides of the cube follows a specific sequence, which helps leaders facilitate a complete redesign and alignment to keep your organization running effectively, efficiently, and productively. Throughout this guide we'll refer back to the cube model as it relates to the four objectives that form the pillars of a successful organization redesign:

1. The role leaders need to play in successfully launching a redesign
2. How HR practitioners and other change partners help set the stage and facilitate the conditions for success
3. Making sure you've got the right people involved
4. Ensuring acceptance and adoption of the changes you've architected

Any successful organization redesign starts with having solid leadership. Let's explore the vital roles of Alignment Leaders® and Change Partners.





A Dynamic Duo: Alignment Leaders and Change Partners

While organizations and their leaders tend to see themselves as forward-thinkers and innovators, the reality is more static. Too often change and flux is perceived as threatening or an aspersion that the current system is wrong. Our message is that realignment and organizational change is an opportunity for positive transformation and growth, both personally as an individual and collectively as a company.

What worked optimally five years ago likely isn't as efficient today because markets, economies, and clients' needs are always evolving. For innovation to flourish it needs an environment where leaders don't just advocate for transformation but champion it by actively facilitating the change and offering support to the team while it's in flux. Someone has to be responsible for the architecture and setup of the organization to make sure it can achieve strategic results. We call those who proactively design the organizational architecture and champion change Alignment Leaders®, which is not so much a position as it is a role that requires four integral competencies: making trade-offs, ensuring alignment, driving change effectively, and building Alignment Leader capabilities in others.

Trade-offs. Alignment Leaders need to:

- 1) clearly establish goals and define a strategy to meet them and
- 2) wisely and efficiently allocate available resources.

Making the necessary trade-offs often means tough choices. However, making the right trade-off can create profound advantages for the organization by preventing wasted time, energy, and money on tasks that don't move the needle enough and instead funnel those resources into productive and strategic pursuits.

Ensuring alignment. Practically speaking, organization redesign is a process of realigning choices, including processes, systems, policies, power, roles, rewards, leadership, and culture to get measurably different business results. In addition, you also need to change the thinking, behaviors, and performance of people, otherwise results won't change. Leading an organization to optimal results requires that every one of these elements aligns with the strategic goals of the organization. And misalignment in any one area can adversely affect results across the entire organization—much like a Rubik's cube.



Driving change effectively. All organization change starts with a vision for improvement. But too often there is a disconnect between the redesign plan and actual implementation. To effectively drive change you need more than a vision; you need follow-through, and you need to master five key skills.



Innovating: Finding creative ways to facilitate change will broaden perspectives of others in the organization, challenge the status quo, and encourage outside-the-box thinking.



Architecting: Aligning change with strategy connects goals with strategic priorities and business plan needs. Well-architected change is implemented in smaller increments rather than all at once and by clearly showing how it is relevant to people's daily work.




Communicating: When people understand why, what, and how change is happening and its intended end results there is less anxiety and more acceptance. The most effective communication is clear, detailed, and concise and presented across multiple platforms to accommodate different learning styles. Establishing a feedback loop to give employees a voice can boost morale and help identify any operational hiccups as they occur.



Leading by example: Being a role model and change advocate helps others adapt to the change more easily, encourages enthusiasm, and creates a sense of urgency to complete the new organization design.



Facilitating: Identifying key people to assist with the change. This can include creating cross-functional teams to assist with implementing new processes as well as involving those who can influence others to support change.



Alignment is a group effort, and the more systemic change leadership is, the easier it will be to drive change and maintain alignment throughout your organization.

Building Alignment Leader capabilities in others. Alignment is a group effort, and the more systemic change leadership is—from C-suite executives to rank-and-file influencers—the easier it will be to drive change and maintain alignment throughout your organization. Getting the full potential from that alignment requires a collective effort, not just one senior executive overseeing it. There are four steps that can be implemented to help create other Alignment Leaders.



Set expectations. It should be clearly explained that part of a leadership role is to ensure that the organization choices and systems in the company are aligned to deliver performance.



Involve. Bring potential leaders forward and make them part of the process by letting them participate and contribute in deciding what the design is.



Walk the talk. Practice what you preach. Set up a specific training system to facilitate teaching the tools and methods that are used to accomplish organizational alignment and drive change.



Mentor. Help others on your team learn how to think systemically, and mobilize team members to evaluate organizational misalignments.

Alignment Leaders are needed throughout the organization. Yes, it should start at the top, but that doesn't mean Alignment Leaders aren't needed top to bottom. Every leader or executive in an organization should view their role as being the chief alignment officer whose primary competencies and capabilities need to center around ensuring that all the different organizational systems—the six sides of the cube—are pulling in the direction needed to accomplish an organization's strategy and desired end result.

NUTS & BOLTS, HEARTS & MINDS

In retrospect it's easy to see how alignment and transformation benefit the organization, its employees, and clients. But when faced with change, most people take a *better the devil you know than the devil you don't* stance. People resist change because it represents the unknown, so assuming the Alignment Leader mantle can be both a practical and an emotional challenge. Here are some keys to starting what will be a successful organization redesign.

Communication. Alignment Leaders need to help stakeholders understand what misalignments already exist within the organization and why change will be beneficial. Undertaking an organization redesign isn't an indictment of the status quo; it's about transforming the organization to deliver optimized strategy. Telling that story is key.



Assessment. It is critical the Alignment Leader understands the corporate change environment and responds accordingly. This means the Alignment Leader must assess both individuals and business segments to ascertain where they are in the transformation process and then act accordingly. This entails taking into account the following:



- ▶ organizational understanding of the need for the transformation and the desired results
- ▶ level of interest in and excitement for the transformation
- ▶ key individuals/leaders' level of influence to effectuate or hinder the transformation and their abilities to manage the change
- ▶ resources needed to facilitate the change, such as a project manager and supporting business systems

Intervention. Once the Alignment Leader has a sound assessment of their organizational change influencers, they can now begin to work on progressing them through the transformation process. Enhancing buy-in is extremely important and can be accomplished through a variety of methods including:



- ▶ awareness building and socialization
- ▶ road mapping the change process to show targets, critical events, etc.
- ▶ using information and metrics to express the need for the change and how the expected results will be measured
- ▶ implementing a training or skill-building plan to accommodate any current deficits that are needed under the new design
- ▶ developing conduits for feedback to ensure all employees can express their concerns

CHANGE PARTNERS

In *Mastering the Cube* we note: “Leaders should feel the strong support of a change partner. That could be from HR, that could be from a strategy office, it might be some other professional that an executive or leader is reaching out to and partnering with, but this change partner can chart the path or the roadmap for any scale of change, facilitate discussions, and provide tools for moving firmly and rapidly to build out capabilities across six sides of the organizational cube.”



The point being, even though you might possess all the skills necessary to be an effective Alignment Leader—a proficiency allocating resources, an expertise at integrating strategy and structure, the ability to seamlessly apply change, and a knack for identifying future leaders—without a change partner your efforts may not be realized as fully, as seamlessly, or as quickly as planned.

A change partner is not a sidekick or yes-person. They’re more like a wingman who helps implement organizational alignment through various functions, from helping develop a new training initiative to championing the redesign among the rank-and-file. Just like Alignment Leaders, change partners require specific competencies, which include:



Diagnostic skills. Good change partners ask insightful and thought-provoking questions. They are open-minded and aren’t afraid to challenge assumptions. The change partner’s job is to help the Alignment Leader diagnose if the organization is capable of achieving the desired the results.



Tools and processes. The most resourceful change partners possess an arsenal of tools and processes so they can lead others through even the most challenging organization redesign. The change partner provides an orderly framework like the Cube model so others aren’t randomly running around trying to whack a mole.



Navigating change. The one constant in business is change, so change partners must be adept at anticipating change and identifying ways to help the organization respond in ways that effectively advance their strategies. In simpler terms, the change partner lights the path ahead.



Thought partnership. Listening is an underrated skill. Being an approachable, nonjudgmental, sounding board not only provides perspective for the Alignment Leader, it also encourages other stakeholders to share their opinions, knowledge, and experiences, which can positively inform decision-making during a redesign.

SYNERGY

The best Alignment Leader-change partner duos work in sync to sustain momentum through the weeks and months of planning, architecting, and implementing change. This partnership starts by addressing appropriate set-up and resourcing for the transformation initiative, ensuring effective management engagement and following a proven approach to organizational change. It's the living embodiment of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.



An Alignment Leader might be a catalyst to start an organization redesign, but the change partner plays an integral part in walking the path with the Alignment Leader and setting the conditions for a successful organization redesign. As noted in *Mastering the Cube*, “Leaders ... should feel the strong support of a change partner who can chart a road map for any scale of change, facilitate discussions, and provide tools for moving firmly and rapidly to build out capabilities across all the six sides of the organizational cube.”

Working in tandem, the Alignment Leader and change partner will ensure the following five keys are in place when kicking off a successful organization redesign effort.

1. Be clear on objectives and outcomes.
2. Get the right team involved.
3. Dedicate the right amount of time.
4. Leverage a proven approach and tools.
5. Determine the decision model.

So now let's dive into each of these steps and introduce the frameworks, tools, and processes that will help to ensure the successful launch of a redesign.



Step 1: Be Clear on Objectives and Outcomes

One aspect of strategy is defining your objectives and the outcomes you hope to achieve through accomplishing your redesign, such as securing a new market, cementing a position in the current market, capturing more customers, reducing costs, or improving productivity. Once you know the sought-after outcomes, you can determine what capabilities and capacity the organization currently has and needs to have to fulfill those strategic objectives. You can also identify the variables that will lead to measurable business results. Think of it as a formula:



An Alignment Leader with their change partner might know directionally where they need to go and what changes they need to undertake, but often the details of exactly how that change will actually work and what ripple effects it may cause to the organization are unknown. Since you cannot predict the specifics, in the early stages of setting up an organization redesign effort you often need to rely on vision and give people direction based on where you are trying to take the organization.

Further along in the process the pivotal question will be: *To what extent have we actually implemented the change that we've come up with?* But at the beginning of the redesign, the more pertinent question for leaders is: *How committed am I to implementing this change?* If there's any sort of chink in that armor, others will sniff it out. If you're not fully committed, that might prevent your team or the organization as a whole from buying into what needs to happen, which can undermine your ultimate objectives.



And the final piece is defining what good behavior looks like in the context of the change you are driving. For example, if you are driving for improved quality, then those in the organization should learn what behaviors lead to quality outputs and commit to demonstrating those behaviors.

That might seem like micromanaging, but using another example, if we can tell people the kind

of behavior a salesperson would ideally demonstrate, then people in the organization can keep that objective in their mind's eye as we strive to implement the organization redesign changes and undertake the transformation journey.

In the end it's not enough for a leader or a change partner to simply say: ***Hey, we want to do something to increase sales.*** You need to architect an organization design that creates the conditions for people to perform in a way that leads to strategic success. Without a connection between desired results, organization choices and behavior, change rarely happens and business results rarely improve.

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How do we architect a solution and define the connections between results and behaviors? In the next chapter, we will explore how answers come from collective wisdom not from the mind of an all-knowing leader.



Step 2: Get the Right People Involved

Having the right team can be the difference between a successful organization design and one that fails to realize your end strategic goals. Taking the time to assemble the right people at the beginning will pay dividends throughout the entire process. Nothing is worse than being ready to start implementation of an organization design only to discover that a perspective was missed, a stakeholder group was overlooked, or some practical business issues were not considered because you didn't have the right design or executive team involved. Those kinds of oversights mean having to redo work and rethink recommendations, which wastes time and money and squanders employee engagement.

When putting design teams together, we look to the person who is going to champion the redesign effort—usually the Alignment Leader. They paint the vision and articulate their change strategy, desired results, and design criteria. Then they will put a team together in the Agile way and encourage the participants to work like a rugby team with the hard work of the match happening in the scrum. In a similar way, organization design often happens in a scrum-like work session where teams share insights, debate options, weigh alternatives and recommend solutions. Design teams optimally have eight to twelve team members and rely on a facilitator to guide the work of the team.

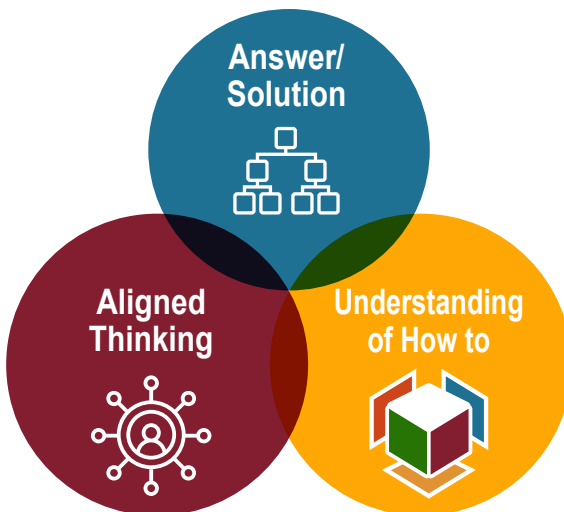
When putting a team together, an Alignment Leader and change partner will look for people who:

- ▶ are willing to learn and experiment
- ▶ exhibit strong strategic-thinking skills
- ▶ can change directions quickly
- ▶ can iteratively push performance and reach for higher goals
- ▶ communicate effectively
- ▶ offer fresh perspectives
- ▶ step back from their personal perspectives and see an organization from a strategic level
- ▶ are willing to concede to group consensus after healthy deliberation
- ▶ put the best interest of the company before their own
- ▶ bring technical skills and analytical capabilities



There are also some important intangibles, such as the diversity of your team. Having people from different cultural backgrounds and under-represented groups as well as from different areas of your organization provides diversity of experience, perspective, and thought. So when thinking about pulling teams together, make sure that all the right leadership chairs are represented because an organization redesign is an intense decision-making process. We often tell executives that when you're doing organization design work, it's about more than just getting an answer. It's also about getting leaders aligned around what that answer is and then helping to clarify how the new organization is going to work. Just coming up with great answers doesn't smooth out all the other aspects, so having the right team is key to jump-starting your change efforts and ensuring a robust solution.

Organization Design is More Than an Answer





Step 3: Dedicate the Right Amount of Time

Time is money is more than an old adage. According to a *Business Journal* [article](#), research shows that people today really do actually equate time with its monetary value. For leaders about to embark on an organization redesign, the prospect of an extended period of disruption can be stressful and raise concerns over lost productivity. These are legitimate concerns particularly if the business rationale for undertaking an organization redesign isn't clear and powerful (see Chapter 1). Assuming the need for change is evident, then you will need to come to accept that the work will take some time and may distract members of the organization from their daily work and focus. That said, with the right reason the organization transformation journey can be motivating and engaging for team members.

I am regularly asked how long the redesign process or aspects of it will take. In one case an organization was concerned over how much time some of their key leaders would be tied up in design sessions. The leader of another group we were working with saw how much time we had allotted to plan the design and said: *I know our group, and I know how long winded we can be, so I'm worried that we might not have sufficient time to accomplish all that we need to cover at the depth we need to cover it.* These are both legitimate concerns.

When trying to figure out what the right amount of time is, I start with what we call the AlignOrg method—a simple series of steps that guides the phases of going from the initial idea for an organization redesign to its full implementation.



Phase One: Diagnosis. The first step in the Transformation Journey is to use the Cube Model to assess current capabilities, structures, and processes within the company and determine which may need realignment to the strategic goals of the organization. In this stage, it is advisable to enlist the help of a broad range of stakeholders, customers, and employees across the organization to ensure that the diagnosis and assessment is as objective and inclusive as possible.

Phase Two & Three: Strategy and Macro Design Development. Once areas needing realignment have been pinpointed, the next step is to bring together a cross-functional team of leaders to address these strategic deficiencies. Using the diagnosis/assessment as a guide, the macro design team will create a strategy, business model, and delivery process to support the new strategic goals.

Phase Four: Micro Design Alignment. With the macro design phase complete, it's time to start making alignment decisions at a more granular level in the organization. In this phase, teams of subject matter experts are assembled in each area of the organization that has been targeted for change. These teams clarify roles and responsibilities, come up with effective work processes, plan for talent needs, and align metrics to support execution of the organization's strategy.

Phase Five: Implementation & Sustainability. The last phase of the Transformation Journey is where the rubber meets the road. Here, a coordinated implementation plan is created for strategic delivery. As change is implemented throughout the organization, results are monitored and adaptations are made as necessary to ensure behavioral change and sustainable results.



After breaking down the process into these phases, the next question is how do we determine the amount of time needed to complete each phase of this process? Let's take the strategy development part of the process, which encompasses

- 1) understanding how we're going to win in the market,
- 2) what is going to set us apart,
- 3) and then how do we set our organization up to best enhance the organizational capabilities we need to be effective in driving that? Given the importance of that work, your knee jerk thought would be that a lot of time was needed.



But with organization transformation, agility is key. And if you think about Agile ways of working, you can construct this phase of work into sprints, which are concentrated bursts of work focused on a particular problem. In this case the sprint would be a design session where the right people with the right backgrounds and skill sets are brought together, put into a room, provided a savvy and trained facilitator, and given a clear mission to figure out what the

strategy is and how to best set the organization up at the macro level to deliver that strategy. A concentrated sprint like that can be accomplished in four to five days.



Such sprints become meaningful interactions where you get a wind in your thinking sails and start figuring out how the redesigned organization is going to work at the strategic level of the business. And when thought about in that fashion, you can better identify how much time you'll need. Whether it's two days or two weeks also depends on a number of factors and considerations, such as the complexity of the organization and the scope of the redesign.

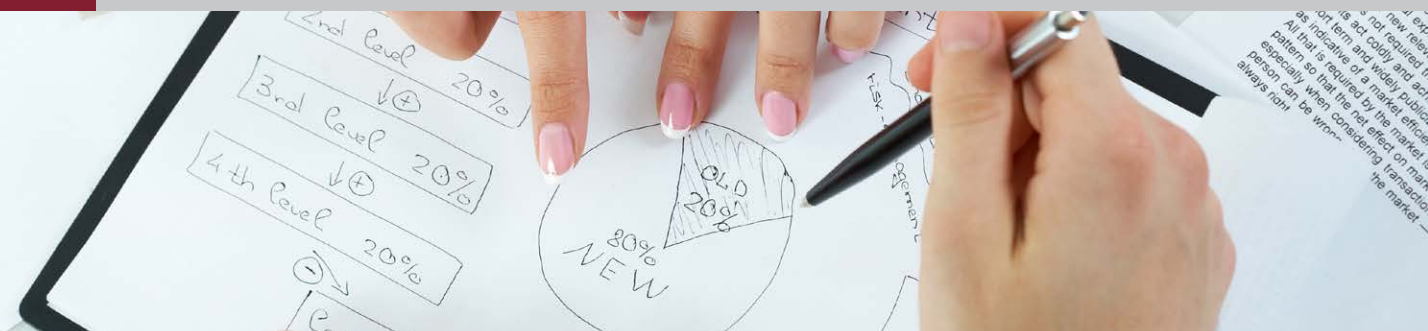
Extending this process further, after a couple of short sprints you will have produced a minimal viable product (MVP) at the macro design level. Even if you might not have everything perfectly figured out, you will certainly have a lot of clarity about how to deliver on your intended strategy along with a growing sense of aligned thinking and engagement among your team. That will set the stage for the micro design work. Usually, there will be several micro design work streams to address more tactical and operational details deeper in the organization. We have found the pattern of sprinting, getting a macro design MVP, advancing forward to develop micro design MVPs and then repeating to make continual improvements, is a pattern that works very well.

LEADERS NEED TO LEAD

Organization alignment is an inherently mental exercise that takes the time and energy of your best and brightest people. Expect some push back, but one of the key responsibilities of Alignment Leaders is to make sure the organization is committed to achieving optimal organization alignment. If you hand it over to human resources to figure out or hire an outside consultant to do it for you, then you run the risk of getting an answer but not the aligned thinking and operational know-how that will be required to implement the changes and realize results.

Remember to tap on a change partner, whether that's someone from inside your organization (like an internal practitioner) or an external partner. That partner will help you navigate through this journey, identify the strategic and organizational options, and help you through the process to determine what design choices will bring you closer to your strategic objectives and operational end state.





Step 4: Leverage a Proven Approach and Tools

Everything that we've been talking about up to this point has been about setting the stage and engaging the right people. Once the stage is set, the next step is to ensure you have a solid and proven approach to addressing the strategic design challenges for which you are trying to solve. As outlined in the last chapter, there are phases to follow starting with diagnosis, clarifying strategy, developing the macro level design of the organization, aligning the micro level, and implementing the changes. That's our approach.

Now we need the tools and frameworks at each phase in the approach that will smoothly and logically address the design questions that need to be answered. A good approach will ensure you don't just end up in a long series of undirected, politically-charged conversations among high-ranking leaders. Design sessions need to be constructive and need to proceed in a thoughtful and objective manner. As detailed in Chapter One, the model that we introduced in *Mastering the Cube* forms the foundation of our practice. Initially the organizational cube can be a bit frustrating and overwhelming to solve just as a Rubik's Cube is for the untrained player, but the point is that with experienced facilitation and a sound tool kit, you can solve the toughest organizational puzzle.

We begin by looking at the results the organization is getting. Then we look at the marketplace expectations and what we need to be paying attention to. In other words, what's changing and happening in the market. Then we make organization choices starting with the strategy—how we're going to differentiate and win in the marketplace. From a practical perspective, the work that we will do as a change partner is not coming up with strategy; it's clarifying strategy. Alignment leaders determine the strategic choices made.

Once we know the direction we're headed, the next thing is to figure out what organization capabilities are needed, such as enhanced analytics, world-class manufacturing, or merger and acquisition deal making. But we will only know those after we know exactly what the strategy demands. When we refer to capabilities at this level, we're not talking about individual skill sets; we're talking about the organization muscles that a company must have in order to compete. And we figure that out at the macro-level of alignment. We ask and answer key questions about how we want to operate, like: *How is work going to be grouped together? Where are resources going to sit? How are we going to be structured?* As that becomes clear, you can move into the more detailed micro-level of organization choices by using the cube model to think about the different organization dimensions that when optimally aligned propel performance.

If organization design is only equated to a structuring discussion, then we're limiting ourselves because there are many other levers that can affect performance and behavior. In the first step of our process we looked at what the business results need to be and what behavior changes we're trying to drive. A well-crafted metric on what is expected can sometimes have as much impact on results as redesigning a division's structure or changing a key work process or manipulating a long-established culture. This is how the specific organization alignment tools fit into the approach (the AlignOrg method). Many of the tools listed are part of AlignOrg Solutions' proprietary methodology and tool kit.

TABLE 1: DESIGN TOOLS

Organization Transformation Process

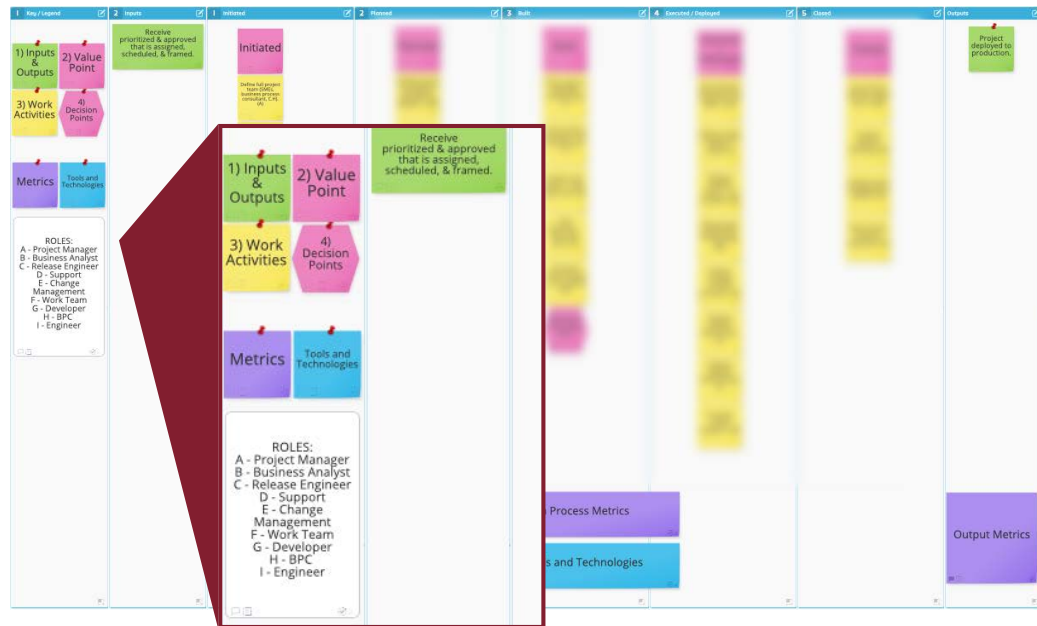
Diagnosis	Strategy	Macro Design Alignment	Micro Design Alignment	Realization & Sustainability
Diagnostic Framework	Stakeholder Requirements	Work Categorization	Aligning Organizing Choices	Change Readiness Assessment
Gap Analysis	Core Motivation	Business Model	Choice Prioritization	Core Message
	ANCHOR	Organizing Rationale	Value Point Mapping	Implementation Success Criteria
	Differentiating / Enabling Activities	Linkages	Spans & Layers	Stakeholder Categorization & Personality Spectrum
	Design Criteria	Matrix Organizations	Measurement Planner	People Enablement
		Responsibility Chart	Role Profiles	Work Launch & Alignment

This table is simplified and not meant to be exhaustive, but it does list the major tools that we use in organization redesigns. Some may look familiar, some may not, but each tool has a specific purpose and is designed to answer a key design question such as: What organizational

capabilities will drive a differentiated strategy? Where should work be placed in the organization? How will organizational boundaries be spanned? Collectively they were developed to help the processes of analyzing, evaluating, and then ultimately deciding what would be the best organization choices.

Initially there are tools intended to analyze current results and gaps to help us understand what the organization is capable of delivering today. Some tools are focused on bringing clarity to the implication of an organization’s strategy, others on making sure the organization’s operating model and capabilities at the macro level are aligned. Some tools are more tactical in nature: *How do we make sure at an operational level the organization is going to perform the way it needs to and drive the kind of behavior change that we want?*

These are the kind of tools we teach a change partner during training so that when the Alignment Leader wants to change something, the change partner has a point of view, a model, an approach, and tools to bring to the table. We want change partners ready to go when the organization needs to mobilize and take action. We also want Alignment Leaders to have the confidence that when they say go, the organization’s leaders and members can step on the transformation path and make measurable progress.





Step Five: Determine the Decision Model

As the design discussions start, it is important to make sure we're clear on how decisions are going to be made, which we refer to as the decision model. There are obviously many ways and times to make decisions, but we have found that the macro, the micro, and the implementation planning phases of the approach are where significant decisions are made.

So let's look at micro planning in the graphic as an illustration. What's happening there is not just getting ready for step four in the approach; it's also asking if we have consensus agreement and authorization to move forward to phase four in the method. Or do we need to await some further sign-off or endorsement to move forward? The same thing can happen at the implementation planning phase. Are we prepared to go and actually implement this? Can we move people from one role to the next? Can we implement the things that we've talked about?

Those types of decisions happen all along the transformation approach. The diagnosis phase of work is a perfect time to decide how the myriad of design and implementation decisions will be made throughout the rest of the transformation journey. Does a leader just get to unilaterally make the decisions, or is there some type of decision-making process that needs to be understood and articulated?

There are some important questions to consider when setting up the decision model for your transformation effort. For example:

1. What decisions need to be made?
2. Who has the authority to make those decisions?
3. Is there anyone outside of the key decision-making group that could step in to veto the decisions?

The other key question to keep in mind is what buy-in or commitment is essential to move forward? This informs the decision-making authority someone has. It can be *yes/no*; *I support/I don't support*, or *I'm aware/I'm not aware*. Whichever one it is will shape your decision model, which can be summed up this way:

Defining the Decision Model

Single Leader	 <p><i>"Thanks for your input, I will make the decision."</i></p>
Executive Team	 <p><i>"I will take our recommendation to the executives for a decision."</i></p>
Design Team	 <p><i>"We will make the decision as a group."</i></p>
Group Decision Making	 <p><i>"I can support the direction we are recommending (conditional)."</i> <i>"We all agree and are in complete consensus this is the best decision and direction to go."</i></p>

The decision model used will directly impact the speed of the decision-making, so determining the time needed, along with how many decision-making hurdles you're dealing with, will impact your decision-making approach. A common decision model used where a single leader makes the call on their own, is the fastest. Everyone knows that whatever decision that leader makes is going to stand.

Unfortunately, not every organization can—or wants to—take that streamlined approach. Sometimes you will have a situation where once the leader has gathered the input of their team, they have to report back to other senior leaders to win their endorsement. The third model is where the decision-making resides with the design team. This is not typical because organization executives are rarely comfortable delegating decision-making authority for something so important to the members of design teams.

Then there is decision-making through consensus as a group. Total consensus or unanimity is when everyone who is involved in the decision agrees with direction and vision; there are no holdouts, reservations, or footnotes associated with the decision. More common is a collective agreement or general consensus where people support the decision even if it isn't their preferred course of action or there are aspects they disagree with.

There is no right or wrong decision-making model, just what works best for your organization's individual business circumstances, culture, and needs. Whatever the method used, it is crucial that it be determined early, clearly communicated to all stakeholders, and followed. Failing to abide by the agreed upon model can cause resentment, frustration, and disengagement, leading to low morale and even lower enthusiasm for the transformation effort. To maintain the engagement and positive energy of organization members that can come from kicking off a redesign on the right foot, make sure everyone knows how decisions will be made and by whom. People may not like the model used, but at least it's clear right up front what role they're playing and how they're going to contribute.





Final Tips: Kicking Off a Successful Organization Alignment Journey

In this guide we have outlined five keys to success that will help ensure your organization alignment efforts are set-up for success.

Step 1: Be clear on objectives and outcomes. Once you have identified the sought-after outcomes, you can determine what capabilities and choices the organization needs to accomplish your strategic objectives and identify the variables that will lead to measurable business results.

Step 2: Get the right people involved. Having the right team of stakeholders is key to jump-starting your change efforts and ensuring the development of a robust solution, and having a team from diverse backgrounds provides a diversity of experience, perspective, and thought.


Step 3: Dedicate the right amount of time. Organization alignment can take some time, but the AlignOrg method provides a series of steps that will help you go from the initial idea for an organization redesign to its full implementation as efficiently as possible using Agile ways of working.

Step 4: Leverage a proven approach and tools. By answering key questions about how you want to operate, you can use the cube framework to facilitate your organization alignment. For each aspect of the cube, there are tools that help guide key decisions and trade-off choices.

Step 5: Determine the decision model. Finding a means of making decisions that works best for your organization's individual circumstances, culture, and needs will help prevent unnecessary delays and provide clarity to all stakeholders so decisions are made quickly and organization members stay engaged in the transformation journey.

Finally, here are some additional tips for you and your team to keep mind as you prepare to lead your organization through a redesign. These additional tips should help ensure a successful organizational transformation.

- ▶ Take an Agile approach to transformation.
- ▶ Follow a proven approach.
- ▶ Be clear on the *what* and the *why*.
- ▶ Prepare your leaders to lead.
- ▶ Get everyone on board for the transformation journey.
- ▶ Track your progress along the journey.
- ▶ Prioritize investments using the lens of strategy.
- ▶ Don't sprint the marathon.
- ▶ Plan for set-backs; they are going to happen.
- ▶ Keep the tone positive.



Download our [66 Organizational Alignment Tips](#) app on your mobile device today to have quick access to these tips any time.

As this guide has shown in detail, no redesign occurs in a vacuum; it affects all levels of the organization as well as all stakeholders. It is vital to design from the outside in, aligning your strategy around a clear and targeted customer experience, and to continually assess customer needs and experiences to ensure long-term viability and success.