RIMAGIN
Orient – Implement · Cultivate

Sufficient alignment to enable communication and direction, but no more, so that teams have the highest possible autonomy while remaining aligned to the goals of the enterprise.
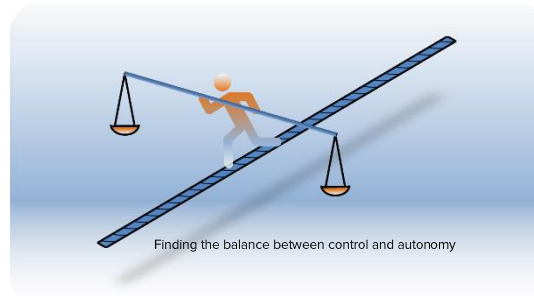
Compatible to SAFe®

We recommend building on the Solution Intent concepts of SAFe® (or using a similar mechanism) to manage organizational alignment.

Fully cascadable.

The concepts can be cascaded throughout the organization – each area adding its crucial, and only its crucial, additional alignment guidelines.

Removes uncertainty paralysis.

Clearly documented and communicated alignment guidelines create transparency across the organization and with this information teams can make fast decisions, confident that they are aligned with organizational goals.

Finding the balance between control and autonomy

The Challenge

In a larger enterprise working in an agile fashion, there is a constant need to balance between the justified need for governance and control and the equally necessary need for teams to have high autonomy.

Too many or unnecessary centralized regulations and management is accused of being agile in name only and teams relinquish accountability for their work.

Too little alignment leads to redundancy and internal competition risking chaos.

The Solution

Apply the Minimum Necessary Alignment (MNA) mindset and approach which requires rigorous processes for identifying, managing and communicating alignment needs on all organizational levels.

Extend the solution intent mechanism of SAFe® to include alignment requirements and manage them across the organization – always asking the question – do we need this alignment here?

Advantages

- On any level, minimum necessary alignment requirements are defined and cascaded. This maximizes the autonomy of any team – increasing motivation, flexibility and fast decision making.

- Teams can use the short learning cycles described in solution intent to constantly improve the alignment guidelines.
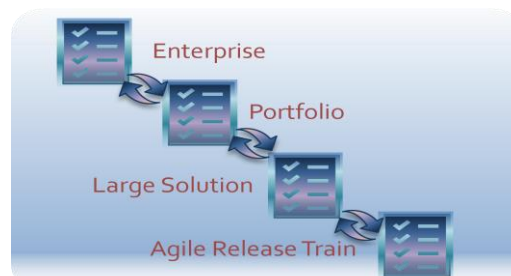
- Ensures that teams have the essential alignment that the organization needs to have a clear direction thus preventing redundancy, internal competition, and waste.

- Supports the concept of management by intent.

- Concept is an essential principle of dynamic future-proofed organizations.[1]

Considerations

In solution intent, alignment guidelines are documented and shared for a part of the organization.

- Extend this process on subsequent organizational levels, adding context-specific alignment requirements and adding this to the scope of the solution intent documentation.
- Be sure to remember – most of all – the mindset, always to ask initially what the alignment is and if it is necessary on the respective level.

- Ensure that there are good mechanisms for

  o Communicating contents and changes
  o Building input from teams into the process
  o Ensuring that alignment is cascaded up as well as down the organization.

- For organizations which cannot be cleanly decomposed into independent units (most organizations), ensure that mechanisms exist for handling this (e.g. MNA set-up mirrors the organizational structure). In such cases ensure that a mechanism exists for handling conflicting guidelines.

- Remember that for this approach to bear fruit, personal goals should not be in conflict to the MNA goals.

1. See our upcoming whitepaper: The future dynamic Organization.

RIMAGIN
Scaled Agility that works