

Front-end Alignment of Projects – Doing the Right Project

Terry Cooke-Davies

Abstract

Before starting significant work on a project or program, its goals and objectives need to be made explicit and assessed to ensure that if accomplished, they will further the sponsoring organization's chosen corporate strategy and contribute to its overall goals. Unfortunately, this is not always done, leading to significant underperformance compared to expectations. Challenges are created by the different nature of the tasks facing the permanent organization and the project, by the variety and differing worldviews of those involved, and by the multiplicity of roles necessary to achieve front-end alignment. These challenges can be overcome through judicious use of a well-founded business case, and by the skilful execution of a well-planned engagement programme.

Introduction

There is growing consensus among the practitioners of project management, of program management and of portfolio management that aligning projects to business strategy is a good thing to do. This is hardly surprising, since projects and programs are means to achieve some end, rather than ends in and of themselves. These "ends" are inevitably related to the strategic intentions of those involved in promoting and executing the projects.

Both program management (e.g. PMI 2006a, APM 2007) and portfolio management (e.g. PMI 2006b) are advanced as concepts to assist with the alignment of projects with business strategy. They are quick to describe and advocate generic processes to implement these concepts efficiently and effectively.

However, if alignment is important, then it is important irrespective of the particular management approach that is adopted, and so this chapter will pose a number of questions that need to be answered for any organization undertaking any project, using any standards, and will seek to provide helpful answers. Answers that are consistent with both the accepted practitioner standards and the results of current research, but that allow a reflective practitioner to reach their own conclusions independently of any given management approach.

The questions to be answered are:

- What exactly does "front-end alignment" mean? Why is it challenging?
- To whom is front-end alignment important?
- What are the roles of people who play a part in front-end alignment? And,
- How can front-end alignment be achieved?

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What exactly does “front-end alignment” mean? Why is it challenging?

Purpose and strategy

Every organization in every field of human endeavour exists for some purpose, irrespective of whether the purpose is explicit or implicit, conscious or completely outside the awareness of the people who constitute it.

That is not to say that people in an organization always share a common purpose or strategy; that is patently not the case. But by whatever process of accommodation, the organization will always *de facto* pursue some strategic intent to accomplish some purpose.

Among the more conscious and explicit purposes are those of commercial enterprises, competing in their chosen industry or market in order to make money for their shareholders, serve society and provide satisfying employment for their staff. For example:

- Pharmaceutical organizations seek to develop, manufacture and market innovative medicines and medical devices,
- Transport companies seek to develop, manufacture and market transportation products and services,
- Telecommunications companies seek to develop, manufacture and market communications services.

The list is an extensive one, and is not limited to commercial organizations in the private sector, even if public and third sector organizations do not share the common goal of making money for their shareholders. For example:

- Government agencies seek to develop and operate services to segments of the community, in order to further the legitimate business of government,
- Charitable organizations seek to finance and provide particular services for the good of all society or sections of it,
- Clubs and voluntary organizations seek to carry out their objectives for the benefit of their members or other beneficiaries.

And just as each organization exists for a particular purpose, so it inevitably seeks to accomplish its purpose through adopting some form of strategy: once again either explicitly or implicitly, and either inside or outside the awareness of its people. As Michael Porter explains, “Every firm competing in every industry has a competitive strategy, whether explicit or implicit.” (Porter 1980 p xiii)

Two classes of activity

Accomplishing this strategy requires two different classes of activity to be carried out in parallel with each other.

The first is the day-to-day operation of the particular activity by which the organization accomplishes its purposes. For example, for the six examples already provided:

- Pharmaceutical organizations manufacture and distribute licensed medicines and devices to hospitals, clinics and patients,
- Transport companies move people and freight from place to place by road, air, rail or sea,
- Telecommunications companies manufacture and sell telephones and communication equipment, and operate and maintain networks by which subscribers can communicate with each other,
- Government agencies collect taxes, pay benefits, issue licenses, provide healthcare, educate children and adults, police society and so on,
- Charitable organizations provide aid to disaster-hit communities, support the victims of particular diseases and other misfortune, raise funds and keep account of them and so on,
- Clubs and voluntary organizations support all aspects of membership, support the specific activities they exist to support and so on.

Generically, the totality of these activities that are the means by which each organization accomplishes its purposes on a day-by-day basis can be referred to as “business as usual”. The theory and practice of managing these activities has been the main focus of the discipline of “management” – not only the overall practice of “general management”, but the specific sub-disciplines such as operations management, marketing management, finance management, human resource management and so on.

The second class of activity comprises those efforts that are undertaken to improve an organization’s ability to accomplish its purpose – not simply by doing them better, but by doing them differently. If it is to survive and flourish in the continually-changing world in which we live, then each organization needs to undertake efforts that are designed to:

- Improve the performance of “business as usual” activities,
- Develop new businesses, new products, new services or new markets,
- Introduce new technology, new processes or new ways of working, and
- Build new physical infrastructure, acquire new assets and so on.

The totality of these efforts comprises the practices and disciplines associated with managing projects, programs and project portfolios. The theory and practice that has developed for these efforts has been the main focus of, initially, project management, but more recently program management and project portfolio management.

What distinguishes this class of activity (projects and programs) from the first (business as usual) is that they all involve planning and then creating some product or service that at the point of inception exists only in the imagination of the person or people who are promoting it. The process of planning these activities, therefore, involves imagining a series of steps that may or may not work out as planned, and each of which may have unforeseen consequences. It could be described as a process

of “enfolding an envisaged future into a known present”, and can conveniently be labelled as “innovation”

In contrast, business as usual is already known and experienced, and thus forms a predictable basis from which to plan variations that can, generally, be relied upon to deliver the required improvement. This can conveniently be labelled “adaption”

A second distinction between the two classes of activity lies in the nature of the organization that undertakes these activities. For all but the most short-lived or routine of adaptations it is normal practice for an organization to create a “project team” or “program organization”, provided that the innovation is sufficiently important that it requires its own dedicated resources and structure for management, either as a project or a program. Such a team, existing as it does, solely for the purpose of accomplishing the particular activity, is by its nature temporary regardless of whether the people who make up the team are in fact employees of the permanent organization, employees of a supplier organization, or self-employed contractors hired specifically for the duration of the project or program. (Turner and Müller 2002) Business-as-usual activities, on the other hand, are by their very nature at the heart of the permanent organization that is seeking to accomplish its specific purpose through the strategy that it has adopted.

	Projects & Programs	Business as Usual
Organization	Temporary	Permanent
Challenge	Innovation: Realizing Envisioned Future State.	Adaption: Improving Known Current State.

Figure 1: Two Classes of Activity Necessary to Implement Strategy.

The Nature of Front-end Alignment

These two different but complementary classes of activity represent the means by which strategy is accomplished, and two consequences follow from this. The first is that, from the point of view of the permanent organization, its strategy should be translated into the optimum mix of activity spent on business as usual and on the right projects and programs. This topic is dealt with elsewhere in this book. (*Editor – please refer to the specific chapter relating to translating strategy into projects*)

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The second is that each of these projects and programs should be fully aligned to the organization's strategy. Before starting significant work beyond simply assessing the feasibility of a project or program, the goals and objectives of the temporary organization should be spelled out and made explicit, and assessed to ensure that if accomplished, they will further the chosen strategy and contribute to the organization's overall goals. That is what is meant by "front-end alignment".

Recent research by the author of this chapter and his colleagues indicates that this is indeed the case in general practice (Teague and Cooke-Davies 2007) and, as is shown in the box at the end of this chapter, it is important not only to the organization, but to each individual project as well.

The same research, however, shows that in nearly a half of the organizations surveyed projects are not selected based on their fit with the total portfolio and strategic objectives, and more less than half of all projects are approved on the basis of a completely well-founded business case linking the benefits of the project to explicit organisational goals (whether financial or not).

Why might this be? What are the challenges that prevent the front-end alignment of each project and program? There are two distinct areas that provide us with some clues as to the answer.

Differing Worldviews

The first of these areas is the different worldviews of those people who have made each of the two classes of activity their particular specialization – general managers (and their specialized colleagues) and project managers. It has been argued elsewhere that the respective worldviews are so different, that communication between the two groups becomes problematical (Dinsmore and Cooke-Davies 2005). It has also been shown that the systems and structures necessary and sufficient both to manage and to govern temporary organizations differ from those for permanent organizations (Turner and Keegan 1999).

The second of these areas relates more closely to the topic of this whole book – limitations of the way the human brain works, and how this relates to the difference between innovation and adaption. Extensive research by Michael Kirton over a period of more than 30 years has drawn attention to the different psychological profiles of people who are more attuned to solving problems using adaption than using innovation, and vice versa. (e.g. Kirton 2003) There is even a psychometric instrument (the Kirton Adaption/Innovation Indicator, or KAI) that can be used to demonstrate the extent of preference for one or the other in any individual, and that has been shown to correlate well to results obtained using other psychometric instruments such as the MBTI (Higgins and Cougar 1995).

The cognitive challenges faced by the human brain in contemplating and planning for innovations are dealt with elsewhere in this book (*Editor – please refer to the specific chapters relating to cognitive difficulties associated with estimating and with the anticipation of risk*)

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Working in quite separate fields of study Ralph Stacey (e.g. Stacey 2003) and René Girard (e.g. Girard 1986) have each drawn attention to the socially-determined nature of the individual, while Tom Wright (Wright 1997) has demonstrated the importance of worldview in forming, and being formed by, social customs.

It is no great stretch, therefore, when considering these two different avenues of exploration (worldviews, and the relation of the individual to the social) to assert that groups of people in temporary organizations charged with the task of innovation are likely both to make decisions and to share practices that differ considerably from those charged with the task of adaption in permanent organizations.

This contributes significant challenges to the task of front-end alignment between each project or program, and the strategy of the organization that is sponsoring it.

To whom is front-end alignment important?

Up to this point, the distinction has been drawn between the permanent organization and the project or program as temporary organization. The explicit assumption has been that the project or program is undertaken as an innovative activity to improve the permanent organization's ability to accomplish its purpose, in alignment with its chosen strategy.

On this basis, it is the permanent organization that is responsible both for choosing the strategy for accomplishing its purpose, and also for ensuring that it invests resources only in projects and programs that are aligned with its strategy. However, that is easier to say, than to translate into practice. On closer examination, it turns out that there are challenges related specifically to the permanent organization as well as those that can be anticipated within the project or program itself.

Challenges related to the permanent organization

The difficulties of front-end alignment within the permanent organization relate to the fact that it consists of many different individuals and groups of individuals, each of whom may well have a different understanding of, or commitment to, different aspects of the chosen strategy.

In proposing a specific method of mapping so-called "stakeholders" in a project, Graham Winch (Winch 2004) identifies the following role within the organization that commissioned the failed TAURUS project for the London Stock Exchange:

- Client
- Sponsor
- Financiers
- Client's employees
- Client's customers
- Client's tenants
- Client's suppliers.

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Each of these groups, almost certainly with variations within them, will have had their own understanding of the strategy, and therefore of the scope and objectives of any project or program to be aligned to it.

This places great importance on the permanent organization's processes for both strategy formulation and project portfolio management, which can be effective only if all significant voices are taken into account, and the permanent organization itself aligned behind both the chosen strategy, and its translation into projects and programs.

It also places a considerable onus on the project or program team during the feasibility and conceptual stages, to ensure that the project or program plan reflects all work that will be necessary to work with all significant stakeholders in the permanent organization who have both a high level of interest in the outcome of the project, and significant power to influence the outcome.

Where the project or programme is undertaken by a number of organizations working together as an alliance, of course, the challenges multiply since the front-end alignment applies to groups of stakeholders in each of the organizations in the alliance.

Challenges related to the temporary organization

In the article about TAURUS referred to above, Graham Winch (2004) also identifies stakeholders involved with the "supply" side, or the temporary organization. He lists:

- Consulting engineers
- Principal contractors
- Trade contractors
- Materials suppliers
- Employees of the above.

In many circumstances, this list can be extended considerably as prime contractors and sub contractors add both complications to the plans, and complexity to the number and nature of human interfaces involved.

Since suppliers are usually concerned with their own strategies involving not only the financial success or failure of the specific contract, but their own corporate goals, any of these groups of stakeholders might contribute to a front-end misalignment either through the potential for misunderstanding that is inherent in all communications between people, or through pursuing goals of their own which only partially align with those of the project or program.

What are the roles of people who play a part in front-end alignment?

Given the importance of front-end alignment, however, these challenges need to be overcome, and the remainder of this chapter will turn from considering challenges to examining mechanisms for overcoming them. Three people (or groups of people) have roles which provide the key to effective front-end alignment, and we will consider each of them in turn: portfolio management, sponsor and project or program manager.

Portfolio Management

The role described here as “portfolio management” in fact refers to that group of people in the permanent organization that are responsible for approving or turning down requests that specific project or program should receive funds and/or other resources. This may be formalized into a hierarchy of governance committees, as it often is in the case of pharmaceutical R&D organizations, or major energy companies, or it may be decided by individual business units in the case of highly-devolved organizations.

Whatever the organizational structure and style, what is important is that the process by which resources are allocated is effective in supporting only those projects and programs that are fully aligned with the organizational strategy. Such processes are well described by many authors in this field (e.g. Cleland and King 1988, Cooper Edgett and Kleinsmith 2001, Artto Martinsuo and Aalto 2001, Archer and Ghasemzadeh 2004), but all agree that preconditions for a successful process include clarity about the organizational strategy, and a well-founded business case for the project or program. More will be said about that later.

Sponsor

As a senior executive with a foot in both the permanent and the temporary organization, the role of the sponsor has been coming under increasing scrutiny (e.g. Crawford and Cooke-Davies 2005). In a forthcoming research monograph (Crawford et al 2008) in-depth interviews with both sponsors and project managers on 32 projects in 9 organizations highlighted inter alia the critical role that sponsorship plays in front-end alignment. It is a role that is complex, and that is often shared between several individuals and committees. It is also a role that straddles the two organizations (permanent and temporary) and that is therefore uniquely placed to interpret each to the other.

No role is in a better position to sense when potential front-end misalignment exists, regardless of whether this is due to the project or program not being in line with the business strategy, or whether there is an internal misalignment within the permanent organization.

Unfortunately, it is a role the significance of which is not fully understood or grasped in large segments of all three sectors; private, public and voluntary. An emphasis on greater proficiency in the sponsorship role prior to projects receiving resources would undoubtedly help to improve front-end alignment.

Project or Program Manager

The third of these pivotal roles is, of course, that of the project or program manager, supported by his or her team. There is a great deal of work to be done at the front-end of the project, in order to be satisfied that

- the permanent organization’s strategy has been expressed in the benefits that are to be delivered,
- the benefits to be delivered have been correctly expressed in the product or service specifications,

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- the scope of work contained in the project plan is both necessary and sufficient to deliver the desired product or service in the most appropriate manner after considering all sensible alternative approaches, and
- the required resources to carry out the scope of work have been correctly identified.

How can front-end alignment be brought about?

In the face of these challenges, and in the light of the multiplicity of groups of stakeholders, how then can front-end alignment be accomplished?

Two mechanisms have been developed for this purpose: the creation of a well-founded business case, and the execution of an engagement program. These will each be considered in turn.

Creating a well-founded business case.

The artefact that provides the focus for all decisions concerning front-end alignment is the business case. The term can be used to denote either as document that is produced at the beginning of a project in order to secure the necessary funds, or in a more all-embracing sense, to stand for the complete rationale for allocating scarce resources to this particular project in the light of the permanent organization's strategic goals.

Used in either sense, the business case is critical for front-end alignment. Figure 7 below shows that for the particular 311 projects considered in Human Systems' research, the average gain in efficiency (measured by traditional measures of time, cost, scope, quality and safety) is 14% if the business case is completely well founded, versus those projects where it is largely, partially or not at all well-founded.

The business case is the sponsor's primary means of communicating the needs of the permanent organization to the project and vice versa. A "well founded" business case, in this instance, is one that is capable of being understood by all, is explicitly acceptable to all stakeholders in the permanent organization, can be assented to by all members of the temporary team, and is internally consistent.

To be internally consistent it needs to be considered in conjunction with the project strategy and the scope of work included in the project plan so as to answer three fundamental questions about the project:

- Why are we doing the project? (Business case)
- How are we planning to implement the project? (Project strategy)
- What do we have to do to deliver the project and its benefits? (Project scope)

Only when all three questions have been answered satisfactorily, is the project fit to be taken to the Portfolio Management process for final approval, and for completion of the front-end alignment.

Skilfully executing a thoroughly-prepared engagement program.

An "engagement program" is the name often given to a formal process of consultation with groups of stakeholders during the initial stages of a project, for the purpose of engaging them in active support of the project. Such activity is best conducted after the shape of the business case is understood (so as to ensure that what people are being asked to engage with is the actual project that is to be undertaken) but before all the final details have been worked out and approved by the portfolio committee (so as to

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ensure that the legitimate concerns and viewpoints of the stakeholders can be reflected in the final scope of the project).

The design of such a program calls for an awareness of group dynamics and the structure of facilitative meetings, as well as political awareness of the factors at play among the different groups of stakeholders with a legitimate voice in the permanent organization's strategy. The stages in the design and execution of such a program are typically as follows:

Program design.

Agreeing how many distinct meetings need to be held with which groups of stakeholders, and designing each meeting so as to maximise the chances of providing the necessary outcomes in terms of either winning "hearts and minds" in support of the project, or of providing information that is in the possession of the attendees and is essential to the construction of a well-formed business case. The planning needs to take account of the number and diversity of attendees, their likely frame of mind at the start of the meeting, the information that they will need to be given before and during the meeting, the desired outcomes from the meeting, and the "meeting process" in terms of what subjects will constitute the agenda, and how each subject is best facilitated during the meeting itself. Both the identification of a suitable venue, and the appropriate mechanism for the issue of invitations should also be taken into account.

Meeting preparation

Once the program has been designed, each meeting should be meticulously prepared, with the venue set up in the right physical format and with appropriate refreshments to create an atmosphere conducive to the meeting purpose, with all input materials prepared, and with meeting roles clarified in advance. Since facilitation plays such an important role in meetings of this sort, it is as well to make formal arrangements for facilitation of both plenary discussions and any small group discussions that are planned. It is useful to have a facilitator who is neither the project manager nor the sponsor, to allow these two important roles to enter into a dialogue with the stakeholders who will be present,

Meeting conduct

Each meeting represents a significant opportunity to influence and communicate with the particular group of stakeholders that has been invited to attend. Thus, if events don't work out as planned, it is important to be able to modify the meeting "on the fly" so as not to lose the opportunity. This calls for the facilitator and the project manager (who should be present at all such meetings) to be sufficiently flexible to modify either the process of the meeting or the agenda in order to improve the likelihood of obtaining the outcomes desired from the meeting.

Resources should also be provided to capture the outcome from each meeting for the benefit of both the project team and the stakeholders.

Program review.

On the assumption that genuine dialogue is taking place between the project manager and stakeholders, fresh information will emerge from each meeting that could

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influence the design of the engagement program, the nature of the business case, or both. In the light of this, the engagement program itself should be reviewed after the first few meetings, and suitable changes made to it if appropriate.

The goal is likely to remain the active and supportive engagement of stakeholders with the project, and the production of a well-formed business case, but the means by which this goal is to be achieved may not always be those that were planned for at the outset. After all, engagement programs, like the projects that they exist to align, are planned with “scant information”, and thus need to be skilfully steered towards their envisioned goal.

The Importance of Front-end Alignment

Evidence from a piece of empirical research conducted by Human Systems International (Teague and Cooke-Davies 2007) suggests that the front-end alignment of projects with organizational strategy is of critical importance to both an organization’s “agility”, and to the success of the project as measured by traditional measures. The basis to that piece of research has not yet been fully published and it is not all relevant to the topic of this book, but here would seem to be an appropriate forum to give a somewhat fuller account than has hitherto been provided.

The author’s own empirical research (e.g. Cooke-Davies 2001) combined with a desk review of the literature on project success factors for inclusion in the Wiley Guide to Managing Projects (Morris and Pinto 2004) led to a conclusion that project success could usefully be assessed at three different levels; project management success (was the project done right?), project success (was the right project done?) and consistent project success (were the right projects done right, time after time?) A number of different factors were identified from published research that could reasonably be seen to contribute to each of these levels of success, and also the criteria by which success at each of these levels could be assessed.

Taking this work as a basis, the author and his colleagues developed a web-based questionnaire that investigated both the extent to which each of the factors was present in any given organization (consistent project success), program or project (project success) or project (project management success). The questions about each level of success were asked only of people who could reasonably be expected to have reliable knowledge about both the factors that were present, and the degree of success achieved. This meant that senior business managers and those responsible for project management practices and processes throughout an organization could answer all three sets of questions, project sponsors and program managers could answer questions about project success and project management success, and project managers or team members could answer questions only about project management success. The data is continually being added to, but at the time of writing contains 350 sets of data in total, 46 about all three levels, 134 about project success and project management success, and 170 simply about project management success. Not all those questioned answered all questions.

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The two questions concerning project success factors that have given rise to the conclusion that front-end alignment of projects matter are:

- #3 Projects are selected based on their fit with the total portfolio and its strategic objectives [Alignment to Strategy], and
- #56 Each project is approved on the basis of a well-founded business case linking the benefits of the project to explicit organisational goals (whether financial or not) [Business Case].

The first of these two factors was asked at the organizational level (of senior managers concerning consistent project success) while the second was asked at both the governance/sponsorship level (of project success) and also at the project level (of project management success). Respondents were asked to signify the extent to which the above statements were true of their organization, program or project using a 4 point Likert scale that ranged from completely true to completely false. Scores were then assigned of 1, 2, 3 or 4 (4 = completely true), and the numerical score was taken as a measure of the presence or absence of the specific factor (or, as it was referred to in the questionnaire, “capability”)

Distributions of the answers to the two selected questions are shown in Figures 2 and 3 below.

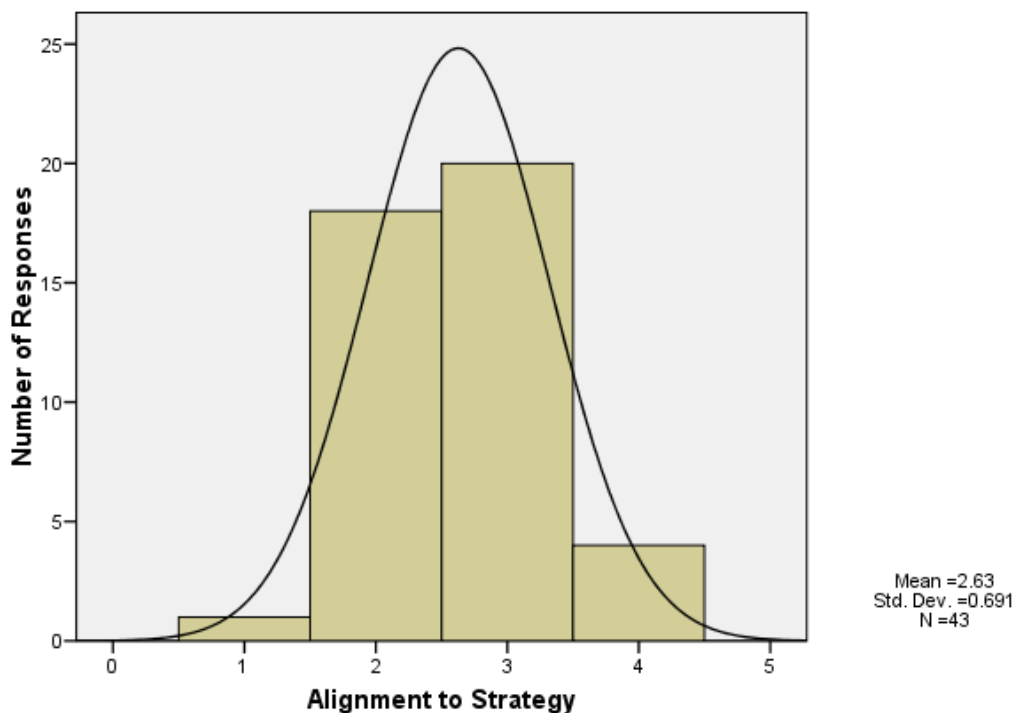


Figure 2: Range of Responses to Question #3.

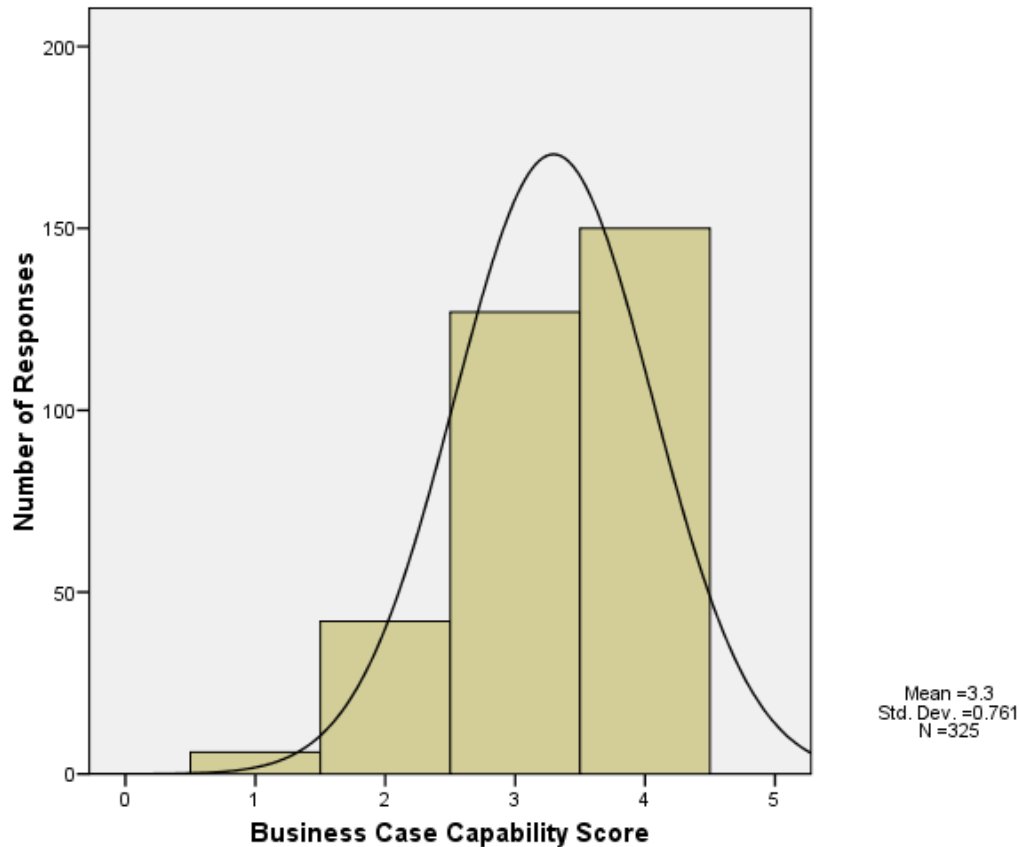


Figure 3: Range of Responses to Question # 56

At each level, performance was asked for against a series of specific success criteria relevant to the level, and the mean of all these results was combined into a single measure known respectively as “agility” (consistent project success), “effectiveness” (project success) and “efficiency” (project management success). The measure for each of the individual criteria was chosen for its appropriateness to the specific criterion, for example % of benefits delivered, % variation from budget, or customer satisfaction. In order to provide some comparability across these, the question always asked for a response within a specific range whereby a score of 3 was equivalent to a result as anticipated, a score of 4 was more than 10% better than anticipated, a score of 2 was more than 10% worse than anticipated and a score of 1 was more than 25% worse than anticipated. This is rough and ready, but allows the results to be viewed for either single criteria, or for overall success at a coherent level.

The ranges of results for agility and efficiency respectively are shown in Figures 4 and 5.

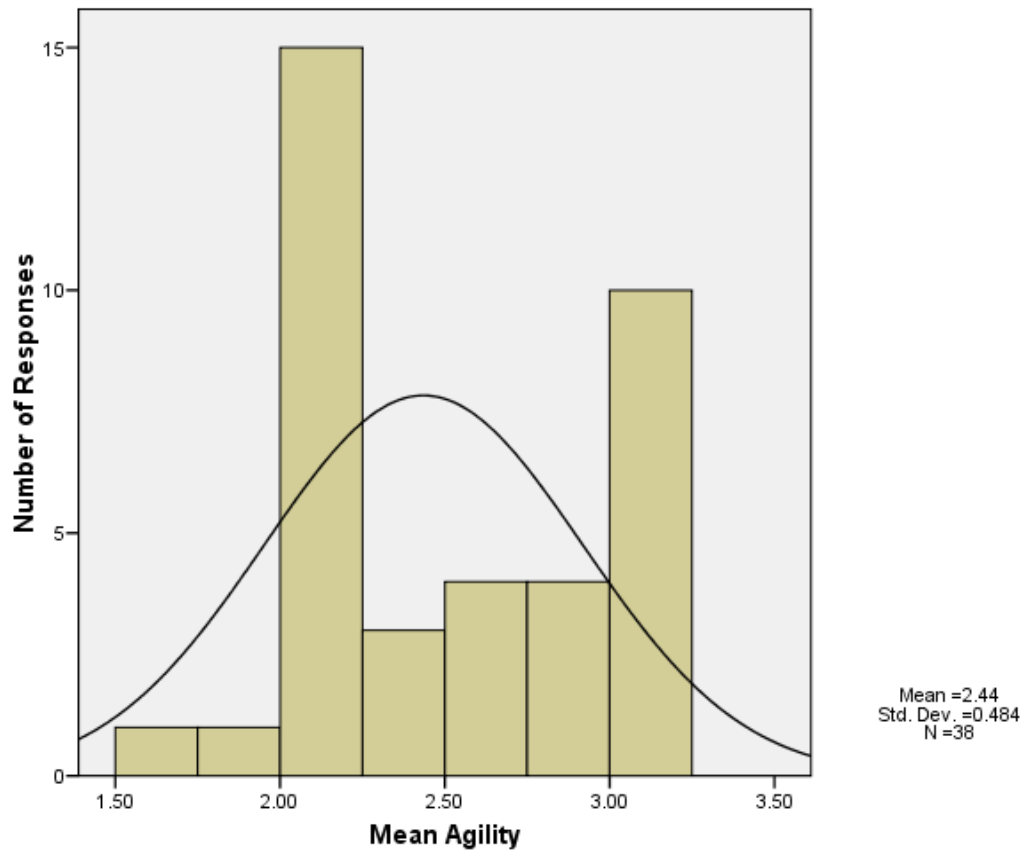


Figure 4: Range of Results for Agility (Consistent Project Success)

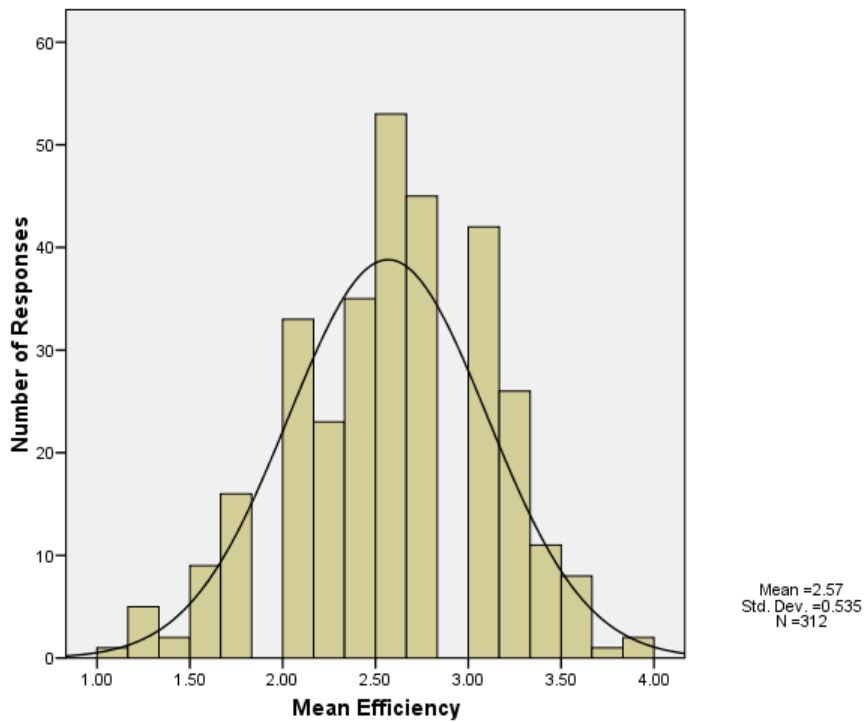


Figure 5: Range of Results for Efficiency (Project Management Success)

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The ranges of results for effectiveness (project success) are not shown, because no correlation to questions #3 or #56 were found to be present. Analyses of the results were conducted using a variety of correlation techniques, including one called “categorization and regression trees” (C&RT), by which the population of results to questions about independent variables is divided into two, according to the variable that has the highest significance with regard to the dependent variable. The resulting populations are then further divided, according to the next most significant variable and so on.

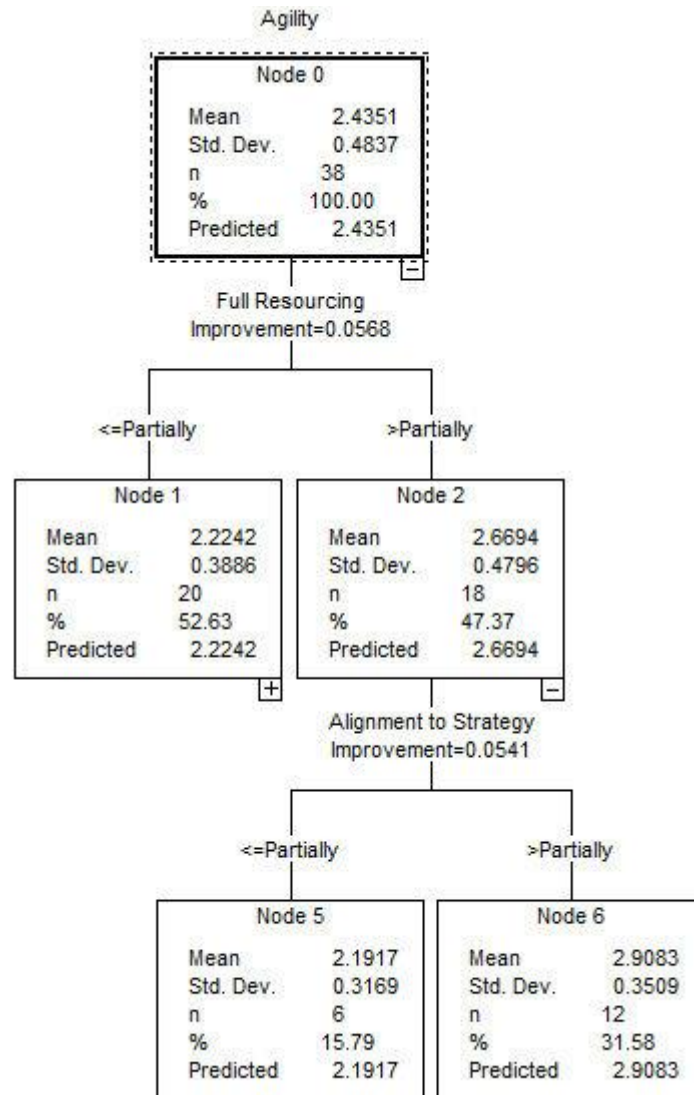


Figure 6: C&RT Analysis of Capabilities Correlating to Agility.

As can be seen from Figure 6, Question #3 is the second most significant factor correlating to an organization’s “agility” – its ability to deliver consistently successful results from the right combination of projects.

The practical mechanism by which projects are aligned to strategy is, by and large, the production of a well-formed “business case”. A similar analysis of the factors that most correlate to “efficiency”, shown in Figure 7 below, highlights the business case

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as explored in Question # 3, as being the most significantly-correlated of all the factors under investigation.

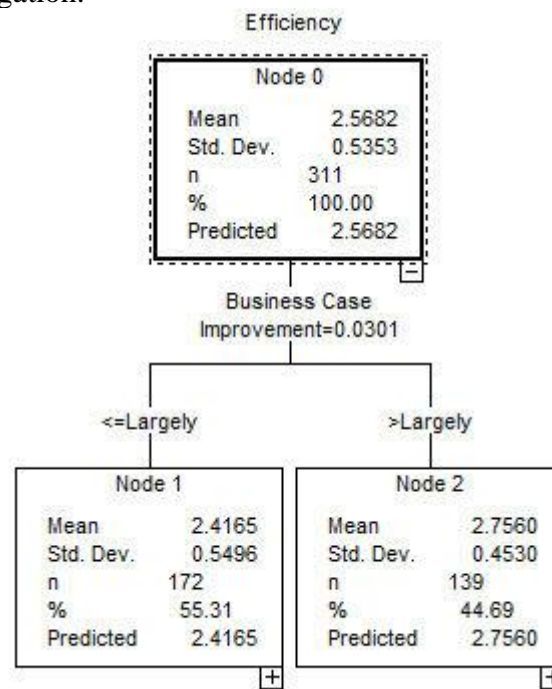


Figure 7: Partial C&RT Analysis of Factors Correlating to Efficiency.

There is no sense that the sample from which these results have been obtained is true for all projects, all of the time. The majority of the respondents are from USA (67%) and UK (27%) and from industries newly adopting project management such as financial services and manufacturing (60%), information, computers and telecommunications (24%) and biopharmaceuticals (14%).

On the other hand the results, particularly for the correlation between an effective business case and project results as measured by the classic measures of time, cost, scope and quality, are very strong statistically and make logical sense.

Aligning projects with organizational strategy at the front-end makes sense for both the project and the organization.

Conclusion.

Achieving front-end alignment is challenging but important. It is important to the permanent organization if it is to achieve its chosen strategy, and it is important to each project if it is to make efficient use of the resources allocated to it.

It is, however, fraught with challenges. In this chapter, several of these have been examined: the innovative worldview embodied in the project contrasted with the adaptive worldview of the permanent organization surrounding it; the varied interests and perspectives of different groups of stakeholders; the complementary roles that must work together in order to bring about front-end alignment.

Two mechanisms have been described for achieving successful front-end alignment in the face of these challenges: a well-formed business case, and well-planned and executed engagement program. There is always a temptation to “get on with the project” rather than investing all this front-end effort. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that this is a temptation best resisted.

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