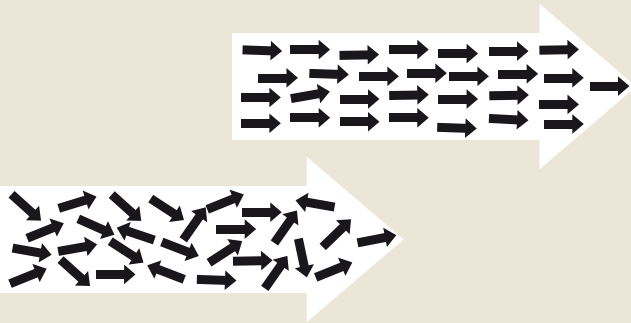


DE **ALIGNMENT**
PUZZEL REPORT

Research results

Organizational Alignment 2021 Survey



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1 Summary

One of the key factors for the success of organizations is the extent to which people and systems are aligned with each other towards a common goal. This 'Organizational Alignment' is the subject of this survey. We investigated the costs of non-perfect alignment, the kind of misalignment mostly experienced and the factors that are predominantly seen as the main causes of alignment issues in.

A survey was conducted involving 200 respondents from 81 different organizations.

On average, respondents indicated alignment issues as regular or often, and estimated a waste of time of over 30% as a result of that. Associations were found between the size of an organisation and the level of alignment and misalignment experienced by the respondents. Organisations with 500 employees or more have an estimated waste of time of 35%. In smaller organisations this is only 28%.

No associations were found with the sector of the organisation and the level in the hierarchy of the respondent.

2 Survey setup

2.1 Definitions

'Organizational Alignment' refers to the extent to which people, resources and systems within an organization are aligned with each other and with the goal of the organization.

'Misalignment' is the extent to which components of an organization oppose each other due to differences in goals, visions, knowledge and skills.

The part of the time and energy that people would save in the theoretical situation of when their organizations would be perfectly aligned is called 'Misalignment Waste' (MAW). It can be expressed as a percentage of the time in the working week of people.

2.2 Research questions

1. To what extent are the various forms of misalignment (vertical, horizontal and diagonal) perceived as disturbing?
2. How do people experience the amount of time they have lost as a result of misalignment (MAW)?
3. What do people think are the main causes of alignment problems?

4. Is there a statistically significant relation between both the MAW and the causes with:
- A. The size of the organization
 - B. The sector of organization (Trade & transport, Services, Industry & construction and IT& Software)
 - C. The position of the respondent holds in the organization,
 - a) the level in the hierarchy and
 - b) the role they have (CEO/VP, sales, production and support)?

2.3 Setup of the research

We created three videos of one minute each to introduce the topic, the types of alignment issues (horizontal, vertical and diagonal) and the concept of time wasted as a result of misalignment (MAW). The concepts are thoroughly explained with simple and clear animations. The main goal of the survey is to achieve statistical relevant results, which means an accessible, short, fast and superficial questionnaire. This comes with a price of the depth of the questions.

These videos were shown to the respondents before asking them questions about their estimation of alignment issues. The survey consisted of only 9 questions.



5. Please indicate how much of the different types of misalignment you experience in your organization. 0

	Not at all	Sometimes	Regularly	Often	Very often
Vertical misalignment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Horizontal misalignment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Diagonal misalignment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

It is practically impossible to have a researcher observing people in their daily work constantly over a longer period of time and clock the time they have to spend as a result of misalignments. So, the only way is to ask people their own subjective experience on this subject.

The animations used can be found via the following links:

- Video 1: <https://youtu.be/ArI7M-D4eRs>
- Video 2: <https://youtu.be/oDhgAWTCnlQ>
- Video 3: <https://youtu.be/xpvMNDMv60w>

6. Imagine your organization being perfectly aligned.
What percentage of your time would you save, compared to the current situation?
(Move the slider to the right position) 0

0%50%100%

7. Imagine your organization being perfectly aligned.
What percentage of your colleagues time would he/she save, compared to the current situation? 0

0%50%100%

8. What do you think are the main causes of misalignment in your organization? 0

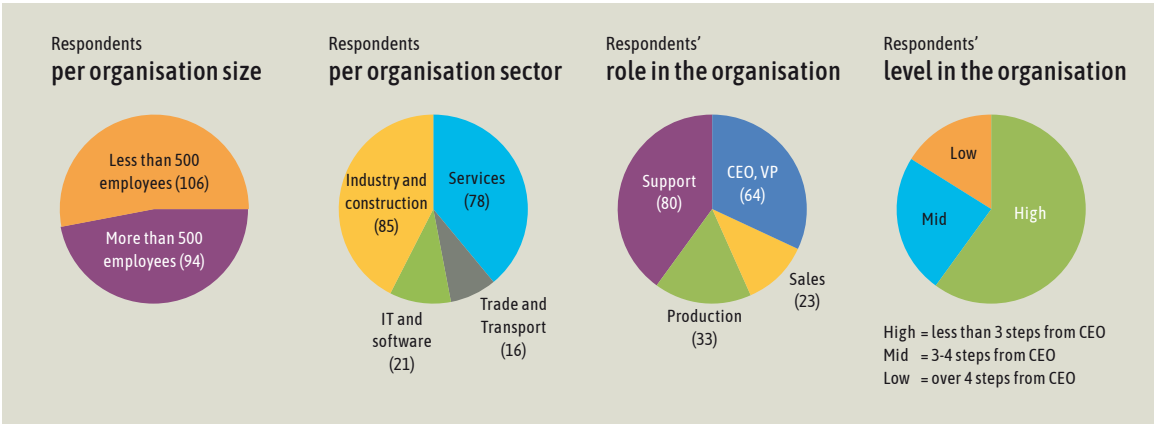
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	The most important reason
Lack of a clear strategy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
Too many conflicts of interest	☐	☐	☐	☐
It's nature: we are all human.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Too strongly separated silo's	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other

9. Optional: Would you like to add some closing remarks to this survey?
(Note: If you want us to respond, please add your name and email in this box as well.) 0

2.4 Characteristics of the population of respondents

The survey was conducted in 2019 and 2020 and involved 200 respondents from 81 different organizations, 39 of which had less than 500 or less employees (marked ‘small’ organizations), and 42 had over 500 employees (marked as ‘Larger’ organizations). Respondents were asked to indicate the sector they are working in, as well as their role and level in the hierarchy of the organisation.



3 Results

3.1 The importance of Organizational Alignment

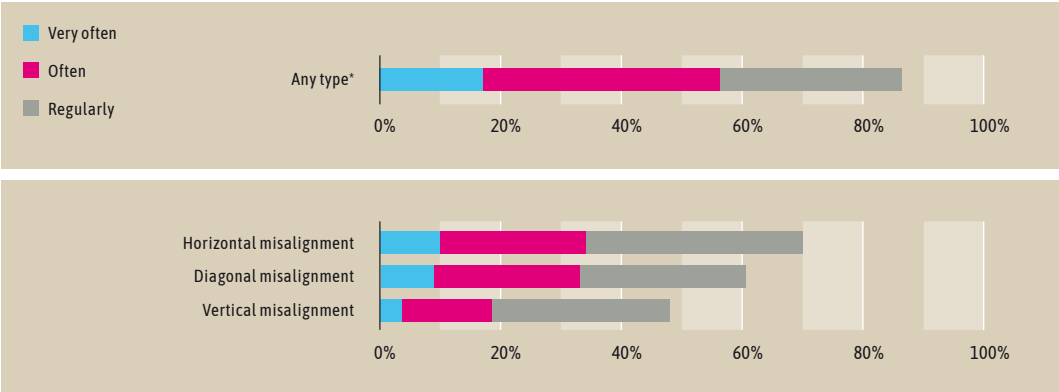
The results of the question ‘Please indicate how much of the different types of misalignment you experience in your organization’ are presented in the table below. The row ‘worst case’ is not answered by the respondent but added by us. It takes the highest value of the three answers given by the respondent to Vertical, Horizontal and Diagonal.

The results show that 70% of the respondents have Regularly, Often or very often an issue with horizontal alignment. Vertical is less, 60% and diagonal is below 50%. If we look at the worst case for each respondent, over 85% of respondents does have regularly, often or very often an issue with some form of alignment.

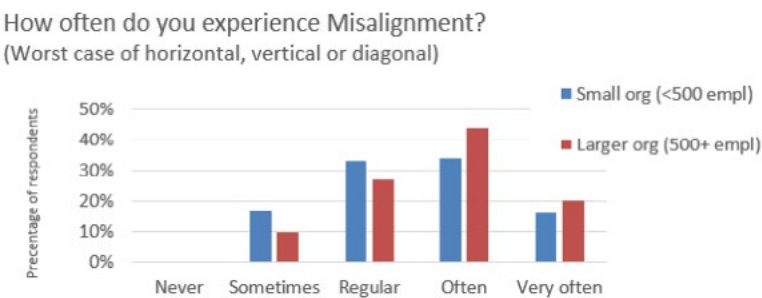
The results show a statistically significant difference in the number of diagonal misalignment issues people experience between larger and smaller organizations. In organizations with over 500 employees, people experience significant more diagonal alignment issues ($t(180.7) = 2.042$; $p < .05$).

How often do you experience misalignment in your organisation?

	Never	Sometimes	Regularly	Often	Very often	Total
Vertical	17	87	59	30	7	200
Diagonal	5	74	55	48	18	200
Horizontal	5	55	72	48	20	200
Worst case of Horizontal, Vertical or Diagonal	0	27	60	77	36	200



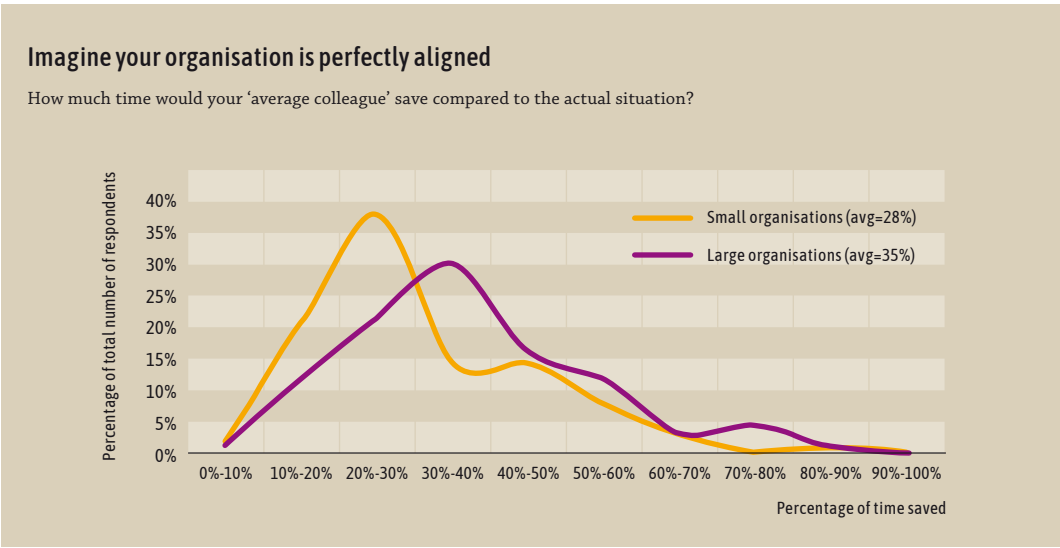
* Any type means that at least one of the three types is mentioned – so either vertical, horizontal or diagonal.



3.2 Experienced waste of time and energy by the respondents

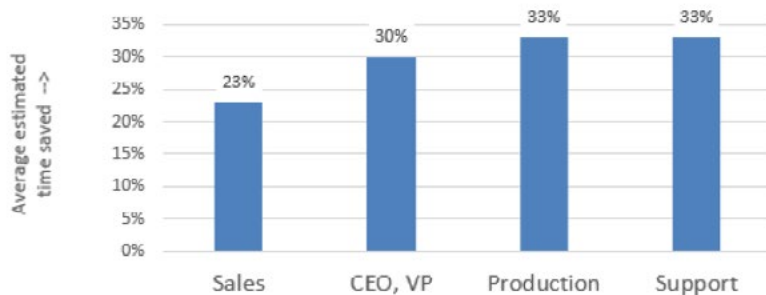
After the respondents viewed a short movie explaining the concept of Misalignment Waste (time lost as a result of lack of alignment) they were asked to answer the question ‘Imagine your organization being perfectly aligned. What percentage of your colleague’s time would he/she save, compared to the current situation?’

Respondents answer on average they estimate the loss of time at 31%. The results show a clear difference between small and larger organizations.



The survey showed a statistically significant difference in MAW-c between larger and smaller organizations. In organizations with less than 500 employees, MAW-c is on average 28%, in larger organizations (<500 employees) it is 35%. ($t(198)= 3.050, p < .01$).

Respondents estimated value, average by role in the organization
Imagine your organization is perfectly aligned, how much time would your "average colleague" save compared to the actual situation?



The survey showed a statistically significant difference in MAW-c between people working in sales departments and other departments. ($F(3, 196) = 3.042, p < .05$)

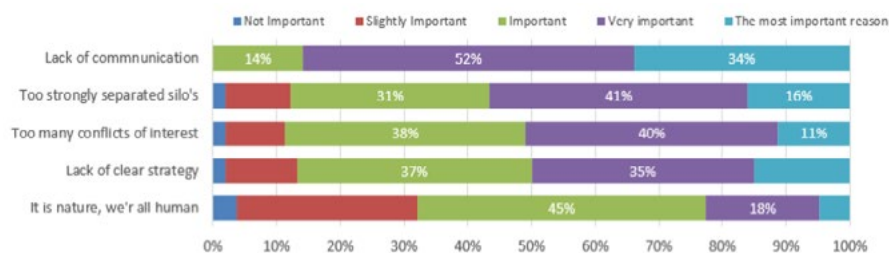
3.3 The causes of organizational alignment issues

The survey showed a statistically significant difference in the cause of misalignment issues people mention between larger and smaller organizations on communication and interest.

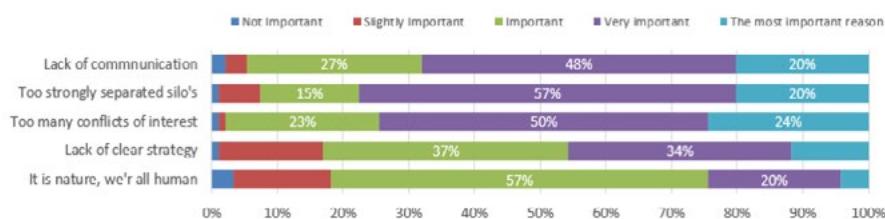
In smaller organisations, people tend to name communication as the main cause of alignment issues. ($t(198) = 3.571, p < .001$).

In organizations with over 500 employees, people indicate the conflicts of interest and the strongly separated silos as the cause of alignment issues. ($t(198) = 3.942, p < .001$).

What do you think are the main causes of misalignment in your organization?
Small organisations only (<500 empl).



Large organisations only (>500 empl).



4 Conclusions, answers found and not found

4.1 Answers found

The survey showed the following answers to the questions raised:

1. To what extent are the various forms of misalignment (vertical, horizontal and diagonal) perceived as disturbing?

Answer: Over 85% of respondents does have an issue with some form of alignment regularly, often or very often.

2. How do people experience the amount of time they have lost as a result of misalignment (MAW)?

Answer: Respondents answer they estimate the loss of time at 31% on average.

3. What do people think are the main causes of alignment problems?

Answer: In smaller organisations, people name communication as the main cause of alignment issues. In organizations with over 500 employees, people indicate the conflicts of interest and the strongly separated silos as the cause of alignment issues.

4. Is there a statistically significant relation between the MAW and the size of the organization?

Answer: Yes, Small organisations 28%, larger organisations 35%.

4.2 Expected results, not supported by the survey

There were no statistically significant relations found between position or level in the hierarchy or the sector of the organisation and the experience of alignment issues of the MAW.

5 Attachments

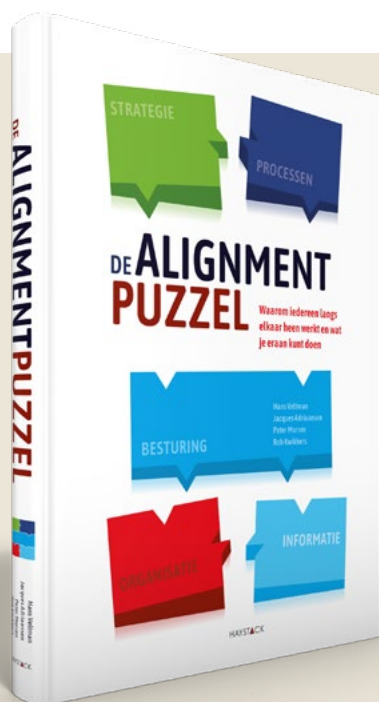
5.1 List of larger companies' respondents

ABB, AKZO, Alliander, ASML, Attero, BCC, Biomet, BMW, Boskalis, Cargill, Coats, Cofely GDF, Dow, DSM, Dura Vermeer, EbbenPartners, Electrabel, Eriks, Fabory, Gasunie, Heineken, Honeywell, Hunter Douglas, IBM, Italtile, KLM, Kraft Heinz, Kverneland, Marel, MCB, OSRAM, Perfetti v Melle, Philips, PPG, Rabobank, Stedin, Sulzer, Tommy Hilfiger, T-Systems, Volker Wessels, Vopak, Vrumona.

5.2 More information

This survey on Organizational Alignment is organized by AMVKResearch, Rotterdam, Holland.
www.AVMKResearch.com

Organizations are welcome to join the research program, for more information, please contact:
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More refreshing insights and methods:
Read *De Alignmentpuzzel*, the book that sets the
new standard for alignment in organisations.

www.alignmentpuzzel.nl

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