

Organizational Alignment

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Creating and Implementing
Strategic Plans Workshop

*Sponsored by the AAMC
Group on Institutional Planning*

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Speakers

Laura Schweitzer, PhD
President
Union Graduate College



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Associate Dean, Planning
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Icahn School of Medicine at
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Session Overview



The Challenges

- To ensure strategic alignment between the macro-environment (the University) and the organization (School)
(external) ← Laura's Focus
- To ensure alignment between different areas (Departments, etc.) in the organization (School)
(internal) ← Rama's focus
- To make decisions that are aligned to the organization's needs
- To appreciate the pressures that the University experiences and the Schools experience and work to mitigate them



The Agenda

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Communication flow and gaining support from all constituents, putting the plan into action
- 20 min Laura: Alignment between schools within the University
- 20 min Rama: Alignment among constituents in the School
- 30 min Q&A



From the President's Perspective

Laura Schweitzer, PhD
President
Union Graduate College

UNION
GRADUATE
COLLEGE

Alignment

As a land grant university, we must think about our rural mission first and foremost!



The President

I think we should strive to provide care for the inner city underserved...lets create a series of urban clinics!



The Dean

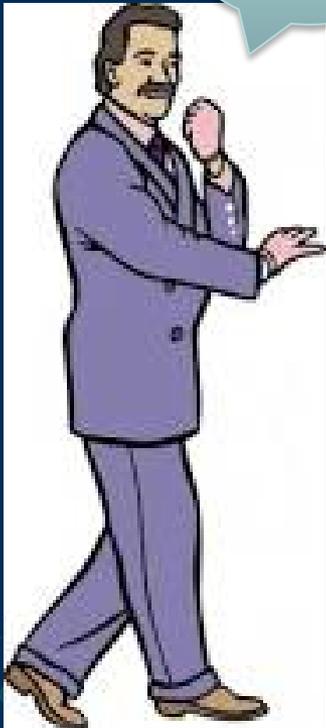
Alignment: The President's Perspective

Shared Organizational Mission and Vision
Organizational Strategic Plan
Objectives

This is
what I
want.

ALIGNMENT

School's Mission and Vision
School's Strategic Plan
Objectives



Alignment: The Dean of Medicine's Perspective

Shared Organizational Mission and Vision
Organizational Strategic Plan
Objectives

AN EXCEPTION

The School of Medicine
School's Strategic Plan
Objectives

We are
special/different.
This is what I
need.



My Credentials

- I was a dean of medicine during the strategic planning process and its implementation for the University of Louisville
 - I spent a lot of time energy and capital explaining why we were different, special and should be “allowed to vary”
- I am a college president that just completed a 5 year strategic plan. I have four schools.

The School of Medicine's Perspective

I spent a lot of time energy and capital explaining why we were different, special and should be “allowed to vary”

Q: What are some of the reasons that you would provide?



The School of Medicine's Perspective

I spent a lot of time energy and capital explaining why we were different, special and should be “allowed to vary”

What are some of the reasons that I would provide?

- Our faculty salaries are on “soft” money – our faculty actually have to produce to earn their salaries
 - Ancillary argument: Our faculty have to work harder than others
- We run businesses (clinics, etc.)
- We run businesses subject to industry regulations and pressures like no others in the university
- The university benefits financially when we are free to do what we do well
- We comprise over 50% of the university personnel and over 50% of the university budget

My Credentials

- I was a dean of medicine during the strategic planning process and its implementation for the University of Louisville
 - I spent a lot of time energy and capital explaining why we were different, special and should be “allowed to vary”
- I am a college president that just completed a 5 year strategic plan. I have four schools.
 - All four of my deans argued that they are different, special and should be “allowed to vary”

Alignment – Why Bother?

Why bother to align?

- Alignment helps an organization work cohesively
- Coordinates everyone's activities so the organization as a whole works toward the same goals
- Gives employees direction and a vision of what matters most in the organization

There may be potential synergies between units:

- Energy and resources can be focused
- Redundancy might be eliminated
- Conflicting priorities are reduced
- Decision making may be more efficient

Alignment: Communication and Getting Support from the University

The concerns of a president with multiple schools:

Giving each school the support and latitude it needs to grow, while sustaining forward momentum toward university-wide goals



Alignment: Communication and Getting Support from the University

The concerns of a president with multiple schools:

Aligning resources with your priorities ... this may require reallocation of resources between schools



Alignment - Communication and Getting Support from the University

Questions the president must answer:

Do I support the strongest school because that is where my resources perhaps will leverage the most?

Or do I place extra support into the weaker schools because they need the most help?

What framework will I use to make resource allocation decisions?



Alignment - Communication and Getting Support from the University

Beyond resource reallocation, I believe that my role as president is to drive the alignment of the university on a day-to-day basis:

- Be a role-model for others in terms of focus on the strategic priorities.
- Reinforce the strategy and its link to school's then department's, then employee's goals.



Building the Team

As president I needed to build a strategic planning team of functional leaders including representation from all schools to be involved throughout the planning process. They will be the hands on deck who best understand the strategy and can serve as ambassadors to drive alignment during the execution stage.

As the president, here is what I look for in institutional leaders who will comprise the team and help design, spearhead and execute strategic plans:

Team Member Competencies Needed

- Big picture perspective (including beyond their school)/Emotional intelligence: the ability to view information from different perspectives and points of view
- They have the ability to identify key stakeholders in own their school
- They have political and climate sensitivity
- They can integrate and assimilate information and understand the interrelationships between the schools
- They have critical thinking skills and the talent to troubleshoot and predict
- Insight: identify common elements or trends in situations and actions across the university

Alignment - Communication and Getting Support from the University

Questions the dean must answer:

Does central administration conceptualize that the unit-based strategic plans will be rolled up into a university-wide plan? (bottom up) (if so, how do I make our plans attractive so that they are supported?)

Or conversely: Does central administration conceptualize that the university strategic plan will be executed through the units? (top down) (if so how is the Unit represented in the planning process, are we getting what we need?)

EITHER APPROACH REQUIRES TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Steps to Alignment: Top Down

1. Goals are set for the University, desired measurable outcomes are set for the University
2. The applicable goals are set for each School, with the appropriate proportion of achievement (rolled up would then be the desired University outcome)
3. Strategic actions are concisely articulated for each school with input by the Dean
4. Within each School tactics are described, projects are designed, leaders are tasked.



Steps to Alignment: Bottom Up

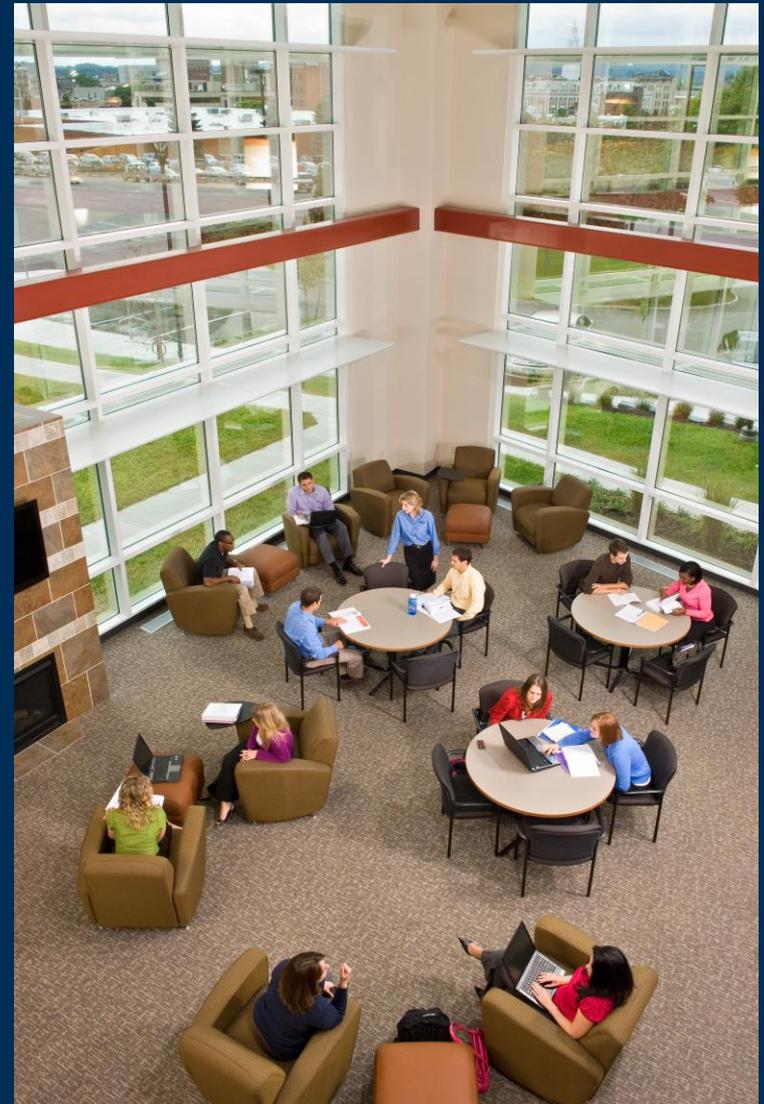
1. Strategic planning takes place in the School with some guidance from the University about university-wide goals
2. Strategic actions are concisely articulated for the school with input from central administration
3. Within each School tactics are described, projects are designed, leaders are tasked



Steps to Alignment

Bottom up / top down

1. What is the experience of the audience with alignment?
2. What worked, what did not?



From the Planner's Perspective

Rama Iyengar, MBA, AIA
Associate Dean, Planning and Resource
Management
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai



Organizational Alignment?

Strategic Plans → Where are we going?

Implementation → How do we get there?

DEPLOYMENT of right people in the right roles

ALLOCATION of sufficient resources

→ All parts of the organization aligned

→ Communications Plan critical

Organizational Alignment in 3 words

Communication

Communication

Communication



Robust Communication Plan

1st step in implementation

- A person dedicated to communicating with each group
- Institutional leaders **MUST** be seen to be engaged in the process
- **MUST** include leadership within each group to reinforce message
- Messages **MUST** be tailored to each group of stakeholders

Who?	How?	When	What?	Responsibility?
Dept Heads/ Faculty/ Staff/Students/ External	Town Hall/ Print/ Website/ Social Media/ Press Release	Dates & Frequency	Message tailored to each group	Lead person assigned for each group - MUST include their leaders

Adapted from the University of Wisconsin
www.quality.wisc.edu

Deployment?

Successful implementation requires coordinated:

Initiatives

- each new initiative reviewed against strategic plan

Budgets

- both capital and operating budgets reviewed

Performance

- performance measures tied to strategic goals

Structure

- current organizational structure reviewed

Monitoring

- regular reviews and course correction



Deployment-mobilizing the troops

How engaged is the senior leadership in this phase?

Have there been meetings with each department leader and line manager?

Is there a communications plan for every level of the organization?

Are there dedicated resources to concentrate on execution?

Have there been “deployment workshops” to identify roles?

Is there a plan to ensure that each department’s efforts are aligned?

Have the metrics been defined and a monitoring plan developed?



Implementation Teams for each area

Define purpose of each team & leadership



Set goals for each team

Define deliverables for each goal



List all steps needed to achieve each goal

Assign tasks to each person with a deadline



Consolidate/coordinate all the action items

Adapted from :
www.serqaygroup.com/Smart-Talk

Alignment requires discipline

New projects scrutinized by senior team:

Presentation for each new project includes:

Sponsor – person accountable for the project's success

Strategic initiatives addressed by new project

Specific Aims of the project

Timeline for implementation

Indicators of success

Budget/Business Plan

Leadership assigns:

Capital investment score

Priority

Alignment of institutional resources

Impact of new initiative on:

Human Resources

- Recruitment
- Credentialing

Information Technology

Finance

Space – Research/Clinical/Educational....

- Renovation
- Infrastructure
- Housing

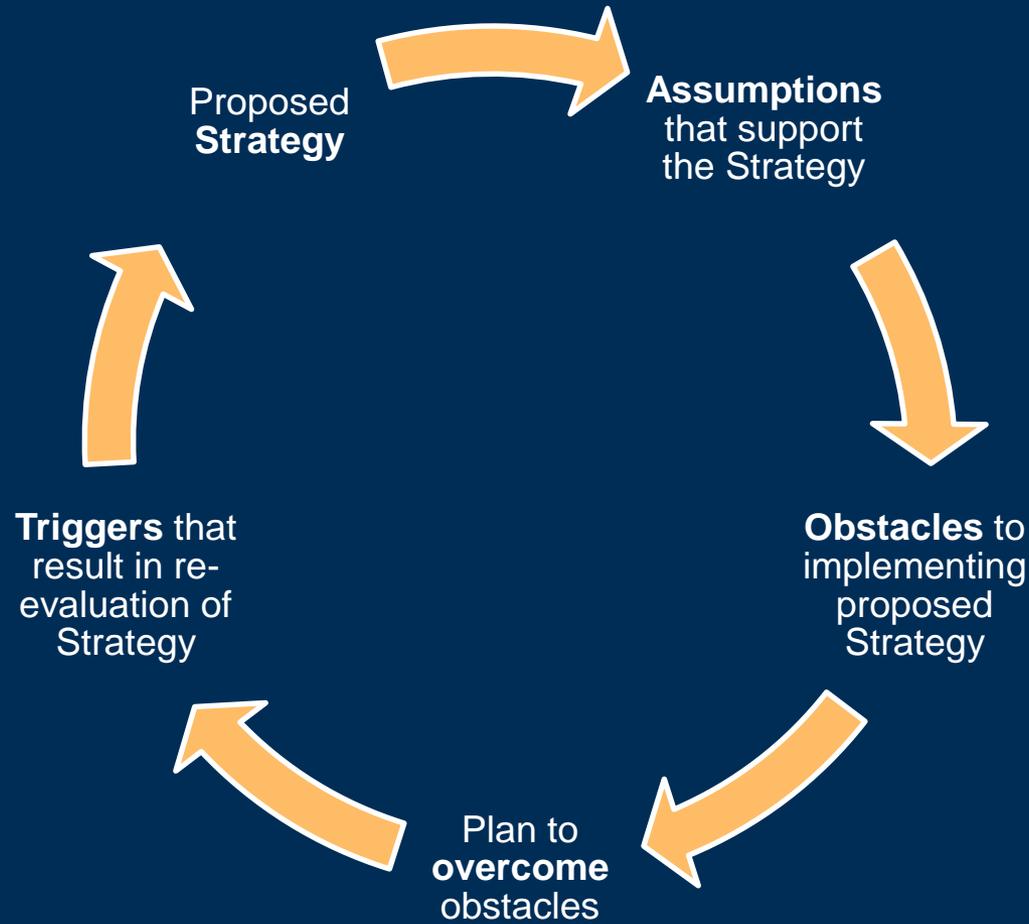
Research Resources

- Grants Office/IRB/IACUC/Vivarium/Cores etc

Do these departments need additional staff/resources/space/\$s

Monitoring – evaluate & update plan

Success requires that the Strategic Plan considered this cycle:



Monitoring-course correction

How do changes in the external or internal environment impact plan?

How is successful execution being measured?

Is there a dashboard to support decision-making?

Are there regular meetings with line managers to assess performance?

Is there a periodic review of the plan to review against expectations?

Is success recognized and celebrated?





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