The People Side of PRFCTLY Aligned

Peter Germann, Executive Coach

In my previous article, *Solve the Problem at the Right Altitude*, I described the seven levels leaders need to align in an organization, from Purpose all the way down to daily Actions.

But organizational alignment is only half the equation. The other half is people.

People don't have to disagree with the strategy to drift away from it. Sometimes competing priorities take over, old habits return, or individual interests begin to outweigh shared commitments. People can be busy, work hard, and even succeed individually, while their collective efforts are no longer moving the organization in the same direction.

The problem isn't necessarily the strategy or the effort. Often, it's that the people have lost their alignment with one another and with what they're collectively trying to accomplish.

And that's where leadership comes in.

I've come to believe that one of a leader's most important responsibilities is creating the conditions in which people can succeed together. That doesn't mean having all the answers or controlling everything people do. In fact, quite the opposite.

Think about the people you lead. Are they truly **Enlightened**, understanding where the organization is going, why it matters, and what's expected of them? Are they **Encouraged** by the confidence and trust they have in their leaders and teammates? Are they **Energized** by what they're trying to accomplish, or are they simply going through the motions?

And understanding and enthusiasm aren't enough. People also need to be **Engaged**, taking ownership and making meaningful commitments. They need to be **Equipped** with the skills, resources, and support to succeed, and **Empowered** to use their judgment, take initiative, and turn those commitments into action.

Perhaps just as importantly, they need to keep **Evolving**, learning from experience, adapting to changing circumstances, and finding better ways to accomplish what matters.

I think of these as the Seven E's of people alignment. They're not a checklist or a sequence that every leader needs to follow. They're simply reminders of the different conditions that help people do their best work together.

People will drift. Circumstances will change. Priorities will compete. That's why alignment isn't something leaders accomplish once and move on from. It's something they need to keep paying attention to.

What I've learned is that leaders don't have to be perfect, and they certainly don't need to have all the answers. Their job is to help create the conditions in which their people can figure things out and succeed together.

Align the organization. Align the people. Results require both.