



Aligning Leadership, Strategy, Vision and Culture in your Organization

using the **Platinum Leadership Business Alignment Model**®

By Andrew Bartley, PCC, MDiv, MBA and Corinne Walsh, MA, LLM
Principals, Platinum Leadership Inc. © 2015, 2018

Every organization makes conscious and unconscious choices in four key areas of its business:

LEADERSHIP	Influencing the behaviour of others toward a goal
CULTURE	The dominant values, attitudes and behaviour in an organization
STRATEGY	A plan to translate ideas into action to achieve objectives over time
VISION	A desired future reality, imagined and described today



Platinum Leadership
Business Alignment Model®

These are the four elements of the Platinum Leadership Business Alignment Model®. Any of these areas can be a source of pain or growth in an organization. In managing change, it is helpful to analyze and act on these elements as parts of an organic, interrelated system.

Pain: When these areas are misaligned, flow is stymied and the business works at cross-purposes in unproductive and ineffective ways. Performance spirals downward in a vicious cycle.

Growth: As these elements align, a powerful synergy and flow is created, increasing the vitality and resilience of the organization. A virtuous cycle forms with increasingly favourable results.

Two examples of a vicious cycle generated by misalignment:

- When an organization hires new leaders who are a poor fit for its culture, frustration and lost opportunity result.
- When a firm develops a strategy disconnected from those it expects to implement the strategy, execution is flawed and the enterprise loses ground.



Vicious cycle



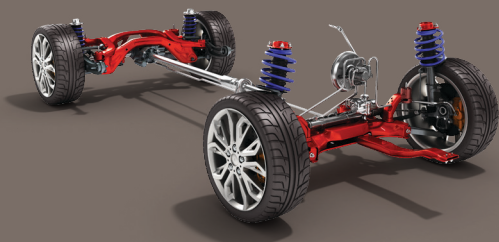
Virtuous cycle

Complex chains of events which reinforce themselves through a feedback loop with detrimental/favourable results.

In both scenarios, resources are squandered. The organization's ability to execute its external mission is blocked by escalating internal misalignment.

An organization can disrupt its downward spiral and **set a virtuous cycle in motion** by improving its leadership, strategy, vision or culture. They are most likely to make lasting change if they analyze and act on these four elements in concert. As they do:

- Leaders grow in competence and commitment
- Teams implement strategies, serve customers, and accomplish mission more effectively
- The organization's vision becomes closer to reality
- Culture supports leaders, strategy and vision in accord with organizational values.



A SYSTEMIC INTERVENTION

Imagine each element of the Platinum Leadership Business Alignment Model[®] as a wheel on your car. If your tire treads wear unevenly or your vehicle pulls to one side, you may need a wheel alignment.

During a wheel alignment, no adjustments are made to your rubber tires. Your mechanic examines your tires for clues and adjusts your suspension. This is the system that connects the rest of the car to its wheels. Once the suspension is aligned, the technician balances individual tires.

It's a good investment to align your wheels. You'll have safe and reliable contact with the road as you drive. In a similar way, align your organization's leadership, strategy, vision, and culture as an interconnected system to achieve your goals.

A MYSTERY IN LIFE AND BUSINESS

Paradoxically, both pain and growth can provide opportunities for a business to break negative patterns and access untapped potential. Both carry insight and momentum to make change possible.

Leaders can start at any point in the Platinum Leadership Business Alignment Model® to adjust their organization's alignment. Each small action can have a halo effect that positively impacts adjacent elements in the system. A single degree of course correction can make a massive difference over time. As they take in the big picture, leaders can ask:

- Where is our pain, and where is our growth?
- What opportunity do these provide to better align our leadership, strategy, vision, and culture?
- What dividends might an investment of time, energy or resources in one or more of these areas pay?

CONCLUSION

The word “corporation” comes from the Latin, meaning ‘united in one body.’ When leadership, strategy, vision or culture are misaligned in a corporation’s body, people in the organization experience pain. When these four elements are complementary, forming a unified whole, organizations experience growth. The collective synergy of leadership, strategy, vision and culture generates energy, strength and momentum towards goals.

In almost any situation, leaders can increase their systemic awareness and level of engagement. As you analyze your organization’s pain and growth, consider how the four elements interact with each other in your organization. Do they support and strengthen one other, leading to growth? Or do weaknesses in one or more elements compound your problems?

Prior to implementing any specific change, consider how it will impact health and resilience in the system. Small changes can begin to stabilize, align and strengthen an organization. Harnessing momentum, leaders can leverage culture to implement strategy in pursuit of vision. What once seemed out of reach becomes increasingly possible.



Visit the Platinum Leadership's YouTube Channel to see the model in action.



Visit platinumleadership.com to download complementary resources to put the model to work with your team.

A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE POWER OF ALIGNMENT

BY ANDREW BARTLEY

Have you experienced back pain? I have. I grew up in a family business, working in my parents' warehouse. My Dad taught me to lift heavy loads with my legs and, for the most part, I listened. I was young and strong, shook off soreness, and got away with a lot.

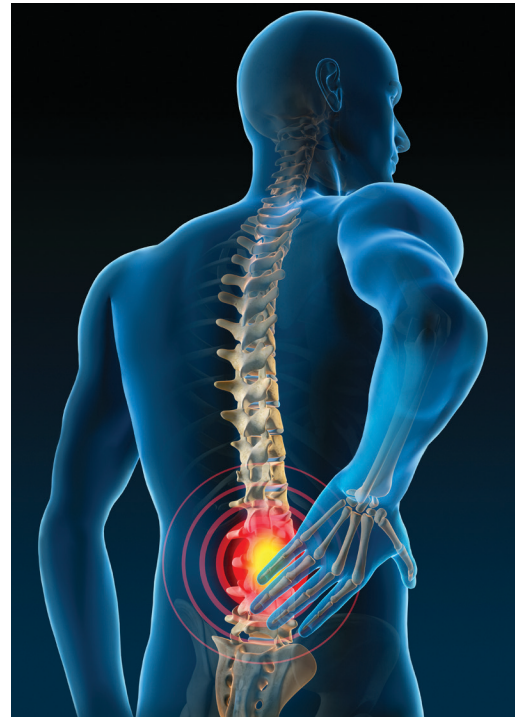
In my twenties, I wasn't so lucky. A tree I planted as a child had grown sick in our yard. It was time to take it down. With my family gathered around, I picked up a long axe, brushed off good advice, and swung with all my might. I missed the tree and hyperextended my back. I pushed through strain and embarrassment, and chopped the tree down.

The next day I took a long walk on the beach and returned to my car. Opening my driver's door, I reached over to the glove box and suddenly recoiled in pain. I fell to the ground, unable to move. Someone called 911. I was strapped to a spine board, loaded on an ambulance, and taken to the hospital.

A decade of re-injury and recovery followed. I'd be fine for a while; running and skiing until back spasm laid me low. Early advisors recommended bed rest and heat, which in my case made things worse. So too did aggressive therapy. At one low point, I was told I'd never run again.

I found a new physiotherapist who worked with me as I was, while helping me see how I could be. When I was inflamed and in distress, his interventions were subtle. As I regained flexibility, he prescribed strategic movement and exercise to build core strength. While setbacks still occur, my vision for the future is clear: I will be nimble and joyful as I roll on the ground playing with children when I'm 100.

Healthy back alignment isn't my life's goal; it's a means to an end. It facilitates abundant living. The same is true for organizations. Aligning leadership, strategy, vision, and culture is a means to an end. When an organization builds core strength, trains consistently, and chooses what is sometimes very hard, it will discover new resilience – and its people will experience the joy of working together.



PLATINUM LEADERSHIP INC.
Choose Excellence

999 Waterloo Street
London, ON N6A 3X4
519 433 8982
info@platinumleadership.com
platinumleadership.com