

High Action/High Alignment

© Jolie Bain Pillsbury and Raj Chawla

Aligned contributions occur when leaders work together to take effective action that is complementary, mutually supportive and leveraged to produce measurable improvement in a result.

Contents	
1.	Four Quadrants
2.	To what end?
3.	High Action
4.	High Alignment
5.	Where are you?
6.	What are you willing to do?

1. The Four Quadrants of Aligned Contribution

Takes actions that contribute to results	High	<p style="text-align: center;">High action, low alignment</p> <p>A leader working actively and independently to contribute to the result, but not reaching out to build relationships with others to achieve complementary efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader acting on their own agenda • A leader uninterested in adapting to maximize impact 	<p style="text-align: center;">High action, high alignment</p> <p>A leader with resilient relationships acting on collaborative decisions and being accountable for measurably improving results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader implementing shared strategies • A leader working to strengthen relationships
	Low	<p style="text-align: center;">Low action, low alignment</p> <p>A leader observing what is going on and not engaging in either relationship building or taking action that can contribute to results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader sitting on the fence • A leader not connecting with others 	<p style="text-align: center;">Low action, high alignment</p> <p>A leader joining with others and fostering relationships, but not using the relationships to leverage contributions to the result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader not in action to implement strategies • A leader getting to know and connect with others
		Low	High
		Works to be in alignment with others	

2. To What End?

High Action/High Alignment is only possible if you and those you want to work with seek to achieve a common result that cannot be achieved alone. Authentic agreement on the result defines the purpose and meaning of the work and allows people to answer the question, “to what end?” The pull of the common result is strengthened when people can vividly describe what the result looks like and how you will know when you have it.

Is there a result you are committed to achieving that you cannot achieve alone?

3. High Action

Even with authentic agreement to a clearly understood common result, what people do doesn't add up. The Four Quadrants of Aligned Contributions is used to get groups moving together in the same direction and actively matching up their actions to achieve results.

High action captures actions that both contribute effectively to the result and are frequent enough and large enough to make a measurable difference. High action requires leaders to examine what they do, how much they do, and whether what they do contributes to the result.

Are your actions timely and sufficient to make a difference?

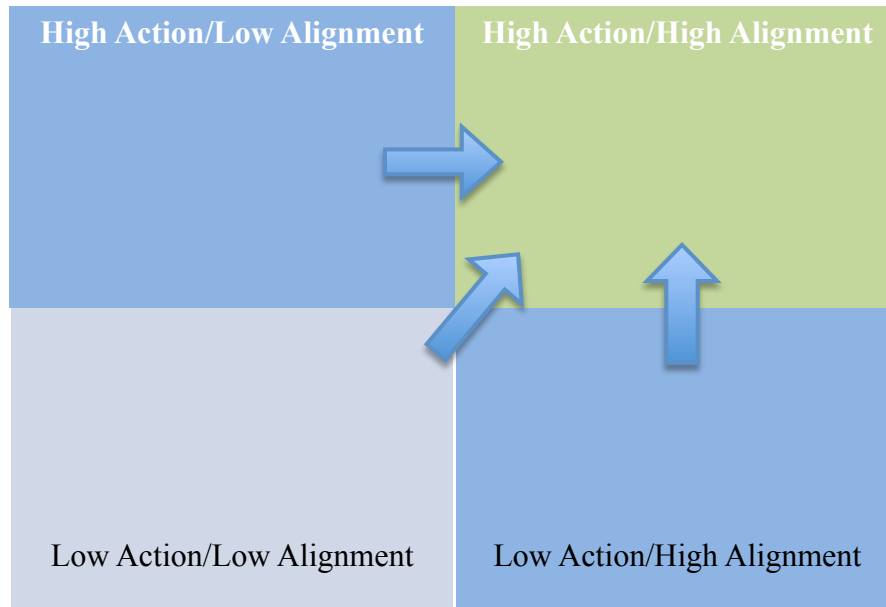
4. High Alignment

Achieving alignment with peers is hard when you are in the habit of being the “boss” or the expert and can tell people what to do. The work of alignment requires listening to other points of view and modifying your own; understanding the limits of your authority and accepting other people’s authority; living with shared decision making; and accepting other ways of learning and doing. Taking the time, the energy and the risk necessary to change how you work in relationship with others is the work of high alignment.

What are you willing to do differently in how you work with others to align your action?

5. Where are you now?

Look at the four quadrants of aligned action. Consider the result you share with others that is worth changing for. What quadrant are you in now? Where do you perceive others to be? Share your assessment with others and understand their assessment. What do these assessments tell what you need to do and what others might need to do to get to or stay in aligned action?



What quadrant are you in? Where are others? What do you and others need to do?

6. What will you each do to move into or stay in aligned action?

Through your conversation, discover what will you need to do to either get to aligned action or stay in aligned action? Make a commitment to aligned action that specifies what you will do, how you will do it, when you will do it and how what you do will match up with or contribute to what others do.

What is your aligned actionable commitment?