

# Improving organizational alignment and performance with active planning

July 2021

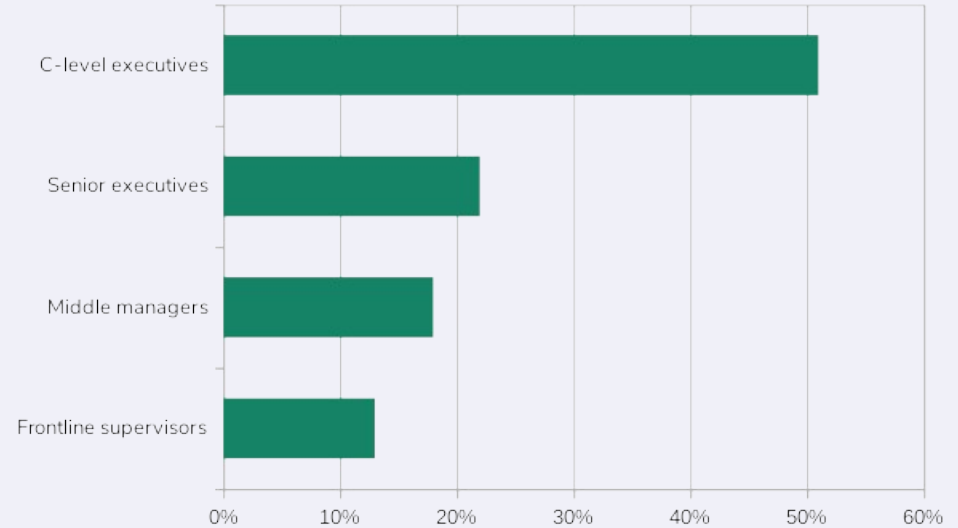
## Clear divisions exist within companies for important reasons, but these can lead to organizational misalignment.

Aligning all of a company's operations with its goals is a universally-recognized imperative, yet few organizations have processes in place to measure this in a meaningful way.<sup>1</sup> Ignorance is not bliss, however, as failure to focus and execute on strategic priorities is the most frequent cause of business failure.<sup>2</sup>

Active planning can help your business understand where goals are not being met effectively by identifying present tactics and allocations that may in fact diverge from long-term objectives.

<sup>1</sup> ["How Aligned Is Your Organization?"](#), HBR, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> ["A Simple Way to Test Your Company's Strategic Alignment"](#), HBR, 2016.



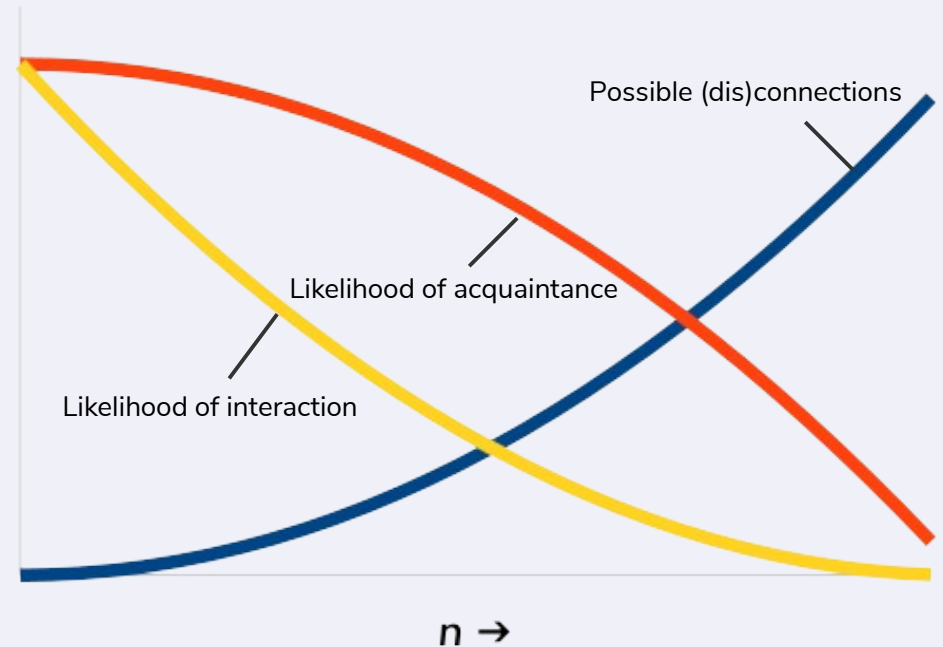
A 2017 study by MIT Sloan found that the vast majority of managers were unable to name their company's top three strategic objectives.

## Specialization can increase operational efficiency, but also reduce long-term efficacy and stifle innovation.

Whether as an individual or small group, focusing exclusively on one's own functional area contributes to silo mentality, limiting collaboration with a demonstrable impact on business performance.

In a multi-industry study, misalignment between sales and marketing teams alone was found to reduce top-line revenue by 36%.<sup>3</sup> With an active planning system in place, organizations are able to get and keep all teams on the same page, prioritizing initiatives and identifying barriers to progress quickly by operating at full strength.

<sup>3</sup> ["The economics of alignment"](#), Forrester Research, 2015.



With greater headcount and/or specialization, the value of consistent communication increases along with the difficulty of maintaining it.

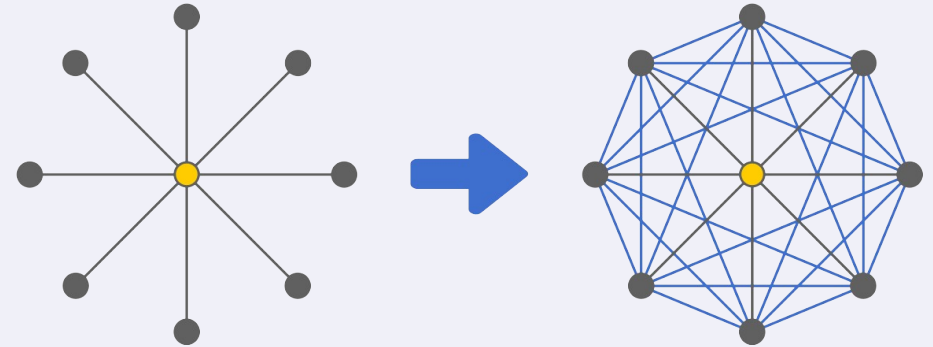
## Active planning helps teams identify new opportunities and combine individual efforts into concrete, goal-focused initiatives.

The best strategies are useless without the right tactics and resources to implement them.

80% of employees do not see a clear connection between their own tasks and company objectives, while 45% of middle managers are unable to name any of their company's top priorities.<sup>4</sup>

Active planning ensures that individual and team efforts are contributing effectively towards business goals through consistent communication and a common understanding of how one's own work maps to them.

<sup>4</sup> ["The use cases for big data"](#), BARC Research, 2015.



Active planning augments the traditional “hub-and-spoke” model of corporate interaction with a “rounded wheel”, allowing for improved collaboration, transparency and accountability while maintaining central oversight.

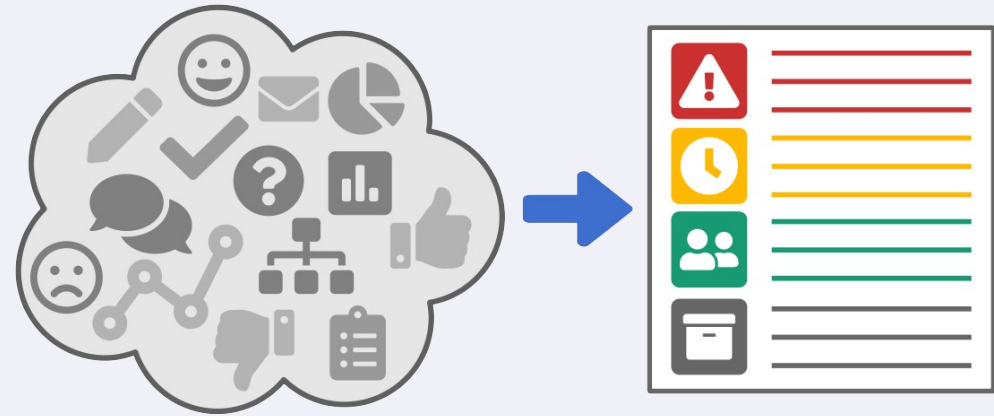
## Connecting long-term strategy with current tasks is particularly challenging for distributed/remote organizations.

When senior management fails to build consensus between teams, processes can not scale effectively and morale suffers. Unsurprisingly, feeling “left out of the loop” is the #1 reason that top performers give for leaving their employer.<sup>5</sup>

The emergence of COVID-19 has only accelerated transitions to remote work and the potential for disconnect between company goals and individual tasks (or even meaningful interaction between other employees at all). While the work environment has changed for many, making sense of the big picture and one’s place in it remains critical.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ["Why Do Employees Quit On Their Bosses?"](#), M. Schwantes, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> ["2016 Millennial Employee Engagement Study"](#), Cone Communications (Porter/Novelli), 2016.



Teams that are left out of the planning process are forced to catch up later (but often don't). Active planning helps organizations continually optimize resource allocation while keeping everyone on the same (goal-oriented and priority-ordered) page.

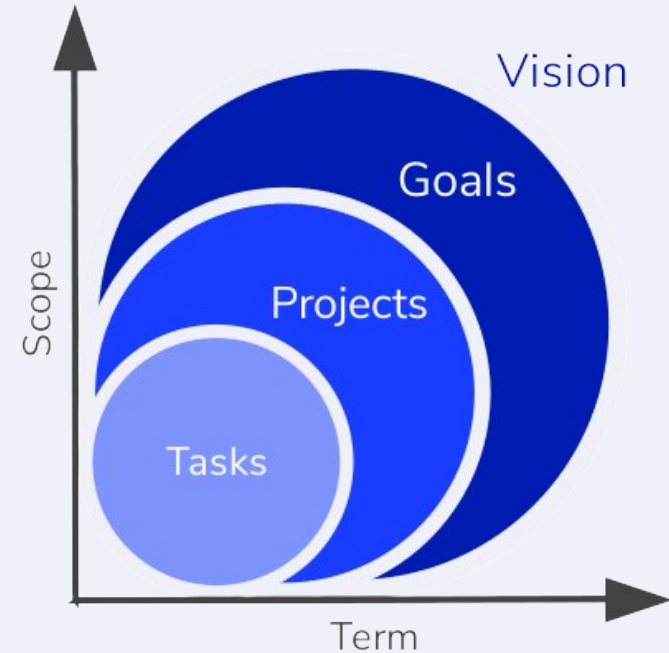
## Active planning up front avoids reactive (and costly) corrections later.

While many companies conduct periodic surveys to capture response, unidirectional sets of fixed questions offer no ability to identify much less collaborate on effective solutions.<sup>7</sup>

Active planning allows senior management to augment lag indicators with a clear assessment of present strengths and opportunities, aligning top-level strategy with ground-level operations and organizational learning for faster progress.<sup>8</sup>

7 ["The potential benefits of advanced planning"](#), Chalmers University of Technology, 2010.

8 ["The ROI of Alignment"](#), CIO, 2007.



By definition, strategic planning involves all of a company's resources over the long term. Active planning allows for more informed decision-making while providing a mechanism for future course correction when necessary.

## More information

To learn more about ViaVote and how active planning can help align your business goals and operations, please visit [www.viavote.com](http://www.viavote.com) or contact us at [info@viavote.com](mailto:info@viavote.com).

Thank you.



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