



TransAlignment Framework

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Executive Summary

There are many times when Negotiators and Facilitators are engaging with people or organizations that would benefit from working together and engaging to proactively enhance business practices and maximize resources over the long-term to their mutual benefit. Typical situations are municipalities, inter-government relations, intra-governmental mergers, energy sector businesses, labour relations, aboriginal relations, contracts, family business arrangements, condominium issues, environment, regulatory resolution, and supplier-buyers, to name just a few.

In each of these cases, the parties must work with each other over the long term, often “transcending” the time and circumstances that brought them to engage, and, more than likely transcending even the people who are at the table. Future generations may be beneficiaries of collective decisions made today that have major implications on events into the future – many of which may not be foreseen in the present.

When facilitators are engaged in addressing these situations, they find they are often lacking the right framework to move the parties forward. Past histories, working relationships, differing interests and allocation of scarce resources may greatly complicate any opportunities to collaborate in the future. Certainly win/lose bargaining is not effective. All too-often, interest-based win/win approaches fall short of achieving lasting working relationships because the details are frequently negotiated in isolation of the systems within which they reside.

The TransAlignment Framework has evolved as a method, tried and tested in the crucible of action, that “aligns across boundaries,” (hence “TransAlignment”), while also transforming relationships into the future and transcending the time and people who are engaged in co-creating their new destiny.

TransAlignment Framework

This new approach first evolved from the field of strategic alliance formation, and can be used in any negotiation where long-term relationships must flourish. What makes the TransAlignment Framework so powerful are four Core Elements that are often missing in traditional win/win approaches:

1. **Strategic Alignment:** a long-term approach that is based on a strong shared vision for the future and an ability to generate maximum value for all the parties involved.
2. **Trust Foundation:** building a strong framework for creating trust now and sustaining trust in the future is essential for any collaborative arrangement to succeed.
3. **Operational & Organizational Integration:** attaining day-to-day results that demonstrate the value of working together across organizational boundaries
4. **Collaborative Innovation:** using the “differential energy” of people to solve problems and innovate as the dynamics of the world around them change is essential for future prosperity.

This White Paper explores and outlines the TransAlignment Framework, how it causes negotiations to shift to a higher operating order, and how it can add enormous value to the future of building successful long-term relationships.

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The Need for a New Approach – A *Systems* Approach

Leaders, Facilitators, Mediators, and Negotiators are often faced with situations where the parties are not strictly individual people, per se, but organizations that must co-exist in some form of harmonious relationship well into the future. Many times these parties don't call upon professionals as a result of a conflict needing resolution, but of a deeper need to create a future together that goes beyond "peaceful co-existence," where the future is symbiotic, or even synergistic.

The parties that typically come before us with these needs are:

- Municipalities (where neighboring cities and jurisdictions must collaborate),
- Inter-governmental relations (especially between different government entities),
- Intra-governmental divisions and mergers of Ministries,
- Energy sector businesses (particularly where companies share facilities or resources),
- Labour relations (not just conflict resolution but also adapting to changing conditions),
- Aboriginal relations (both internal communities and external treaties and government),
- Long term contracts (such as construction, service delivery, information systems, etc.),
- Family business arrangements (enabling harmonious relations and successful business),
- Condominium issues (keeping communities together in times of difficulties and change),
- Environment and Regulatory resolution (enabling resource users to create sustainability),
- Supplier-buyers (low-cost, high-value delivery while suppliers remain profitable).

The current model of "Win-Win" (interest-based negotiation) has, all-too-often, come up short; not providing the holistic "architectures" (frameworks, strategies, methods, practices, language, and metrics) that enable and empower long-term, sustainable inter-organizational collaborations to flourish.

What's Missing in the Win-Win Model

The Win-Win model that we have used, with some success over the last twenty years, while good for what it was designed to do – resolve conflicts or create solutions based on understanding deeper "interests" – is limited. First, the emphasis of win/win is on "interests" which produces an "agreement." However, win/win fails to produce a sustainable long-term "alignment." This is because win/win lacks the four core elements of the TransAlignment Framework.

1. Strategic Alignment of the parties around vision and mutual benefit
2. Cultural Alignment to ensure a working environment that promotes trust and teamwork
3. Operational Alignment that integrates core processes that produce better results together
4. Dynamic ReAlignment in time as conditions change, crises occur, new opportunities arise, etc.

TransAlignment Framework

What is needed

What is needed is a new approach – beyond Win-Win – that fills the void left by other approaches. The new approach has evolved over a number of years. As authors of this White Paper, we developed this approach from experience of what works, from years of trial and error/success, and integration of ideas from a very diverse set of practices ranging from strategic alliances, family relations, systems thinking, and adverse reaction to unsuccessful confrontational models. We have been solidifying and codifying those evolutionary experiences and the TransAlignment Framework emerged.

The Name: “*TransAlignment*”

Definition: *Trans*: prefix meaning *across, beyond, through*.

Transcendent

- Transcends Time – with a focus on both the present and the future
- Transcends People at the Table – the impacts of the decisions go beyond the time of influence of those making the decisions today
- Transcends Current Levels of Thinking – anticipates that new ideas and perspectives will supplant today’s point of view
- Transcends Self interest – focuses on *mutual* interests first

Transformational

- Transforms Relationships – from adversarial or transactional to collaborative
- Transforms Perspectives – Past, Present & Future are perceived in a new light
- Transforms Problems – into Solutions & Opportunities
- Transforms Potential Destiny – bold new futures are possible

Trans-boundary

- Cross Functional – integrates different functions for more effective delivery of results
- Cross Cultural—Diversity becomes the foundation of Co-Creativity

Definition: *Alignment*: to join or combine different elements or entities in a common direction or purpose, to unify, integrate or coordinate

The TransAlignment Framework is distinctive because it addresses the whole, it is a “systems architecture” which is composed of highly effective and symbiotic elements that, both independently and together, are able to produce predictable results.

TransAlignment Framework

TransAlignment Framework

This new approach first evolved from the field of strategic alliance formation, and can be used in any complex negotiation where long-term relationships must flourish. What makes TransAlignment so powerful are four Core Elements that are often missing in traditional win/win approaches:

- **Strategic Alignment:** in short term win/win negotiations, the parties are focused on self-interest, not mutual interest. This results in a failure to address vision, value creation, long term issues, and future competitiveness.
- **Foundation of Trust & Teamwork:** In any long term relationship, the culture of the relationship itself is determined by those in a leadership position.
 - If the Leaders are adversarial or transactional, so will be the future relationship between the parties.
 - Governance of the relationship depends upon how the parties trust each other and how they build teams that function effectively.

Building a strong framework for creating trust now and sustaining trust in the future is essential for any collaborative arrangement to succeed and reduces the chaos change can have on each system.

- **Operational & Organizational Integration:** for any joint/aligned entity to function effectively, an emphasis must be placed on the how coherent inter-Organizational Teams established, with attention to accountability, measures of success, best processes/practices & rewards that produce great results.
- **Collaborative Innovation & Continual ReAlignment in Time:** When trust exists between different parties or organizations, the opportunity is great to use the “differential energy” of people’s creative imagination to solve problems and innovate as the dynamics of the world around them change is essential for future prosperity. This enables the relationship to continually improve and produce greater value in the future.
 - The future will always be bringing crises, opportunities, changing priorities, technological shifts, governmental and environmental pressures, along with a myriad of unseen uncertainties.

Adapting and Re-aligning to change must be embraced from the outset of creating the relationship to keep the venture on track.

TransAlignment Framework

4-Dimensional Alignment

The TRANSALIGNMENT Framework incorporates the alignment of four dimensions of organizational interaction. These three dimensions are inter-related, inter-active, and inter-dependent. Each will influence the other; changes in one dimension will impact the other three dimensions.

1. Strategic Alignment

Because strategic alliances are, by their nature, “strategic”, the issues of mission, purpose, direction, destiny, and value creation are paramount. Thus the strategic alignment dimension receives great attention, especially in the early development of negotiations.

2. Cultural Alignment

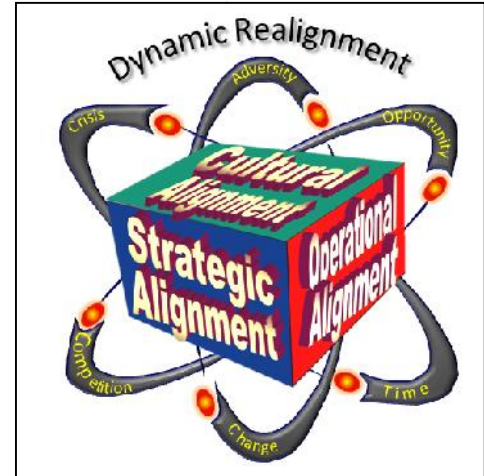
Regardless of how good the strategic alignment, if the cultural alignment is inadequate, people will be mistrusted and dysfunctional. Thus leadership, core values, trust building, and how people are measured and rewarded are essential issues that must be addressed if success is to be attained.

3. Operational Alignment

This is the dimension in which real work is accomplished. It’s where key issues of task, responsibility, methodology, and performance are essential.

4. Dynamic Realignment

Adapting to changing conditions, such as different people, new laws, emerging conflicts and opportunities. Innovating and reconfiguring/restructuring is necessary as results are achieved and conditions/situations change. This requires the ability to resolve future difficulties, as well as collaborative innovation and reframing the future for positive regeneration from disasters or failures, etc.



Trust Foundation

Ask any alliance manager about the value of trust in a relationship, and they will wax eloquently about its impact on success. Without trust, strategic relationships fail, period. Trust is the foundation of all cooperative enterprises. Trust is the glue that binds personal relationships and the grease that prevents frictional differences from becoming fractious.

Trust and integrity are the threads of the complex relational fabric. Integrity is more than just being honest or trustworthy; Integrity means being true to oneself, to one’s deepest values; and the benefits are ultimately both a divine blessing and a liberating freedom.

TransAlignment Framework

In a fast moving world, trust and integrity thus spawn a massive competitive advantage, because together they enable the teams to make rapid decisions without the need for a legal contract every time someone tries to make a decision. What's more, trust and integrity enhance creativity, build teamwork, reduce unnecessary transactional costs, and make the relationship more fun, thereby building human energy.

The alliance professional that can build a strong relationship of trust creates enormous economic value. Our economic studies have shown consistently that trust can double the rate of innovation, accelerate speed of implementation by two or three times, and cut non-value-added work in half, or more. The economics of trust are compelling, especially considering that it costs little or nothing to create trust, while it is excruciatingly expensive to coexist without it.

Embedding a condition of trust into your negotiations yields enormous rewards for all stakeholders. Trust unleashes latent human energy and enables it to be aligned on a common purpose. Many leadership situations require influencing without authority, which can only happen when those we wish to influence trust and value us. Trust produces highly effective people, high performance teams, useful ideas and innovations, and people who want to come to work because it is an energizing, co-creative experience.

How the TRANSALIGNMENT Framework builds a Trust Foundation

The TransAlignment Framework incorporates 5 Core Trust Elements:

Trust Element # 1 - 4 Drivers of Behavior – Grasp the fundamental roots of human nature

- Drive to Acquire
- Drive to Bond
- Drive to Create
- Drive to Defend



The Four-Drive model of human behavior is simple to understand and is grounded in the neuro-science of the brain.

Trust Element #2 – Create a Code of Conduct that Honors the 4 Drivers of Behaviour

- Honor another's Drive to Acquire – by enhancing their capacity to acquire necessary resources; distribute material rewards based on contribution and merit.
- Honor another's Drive to Bond – by keeping promises and seeking fair exchanges
- Honor another's Drive to Create – by telling the truth; sharing useful information and insights, and by respecting their beliefs, even in disagreement
- Honor another's Drive to Defend – by helping to protect the other, their loved ones and their property

TransAlignment Framework

Trust Element #3 – Honorable purpose

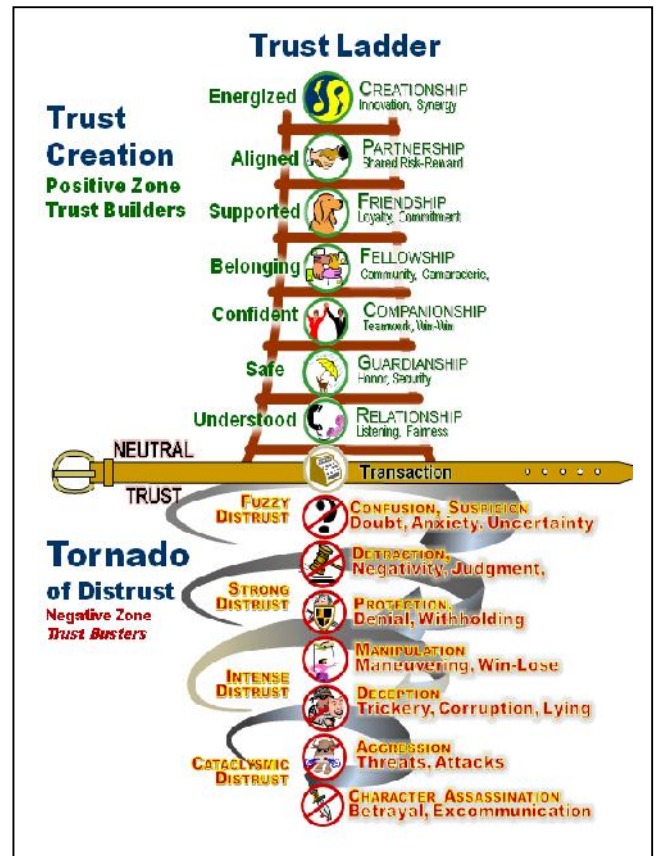
A shared honorable purpose helps align other stakeholders around one central target. This enables trust by ensuring that everyone is going in the same direction for the same reasons. People’s energy, commitment, and enthusiasm can rise to amazing heights when they are aligned with an honorable purpose that will truly make a positive difference that gives meaning to their work.

Trust Element #4 – Balancing self interest versus greater good

No organizational or economic system can thrive over the long run if it places overwhelming emphasis on self-interest (Acquire) or sacrifice of reasonable personal gain in favor of the greater good (Bond). We trust people we can count on to balance self-interest with the mutual interests.

Trust Element #5 – The Ladder of Trust

The Ladder of Trust has become the centerpiece of the TransAlignment Framework by making it visible and accessible; it’s a tool we use to illustrate the journey from the darkness of deep distrust to the light and wealth of strong bonds of trust. A condition of TransAlignment is the use of behaviors associated with the upper rungs of the Ladder of Trust which enhance the Drivers of Create and Bond.



TransAlignment Framework

Collaborative Innovation

Joint problem solving in times of change is essential for successful sustainability (this is the “4th Dimension of our 4 dimensional alignment). Problems today tend to be highly complex and often filled with uncertainty and unpredictability. All the great problems today will be solved on the foundation of Collaborative Innovation.

Key Factors for Success

We have discerned the key factors for success (KFS) of collaborative innovation that can be replicated and used to produce powerful results for continuous improvement and adaptation, are:

1. Create a collaborative Innovation Culture
2. Make a Commitment to Innovation
3. Generate ideas for the fuel for the Innovation Engine
4. Turn breakdowns into breakthroughs (learn from mistakes)
5. Ensure Innovation produces results
6. Ensure Innovation is rewarded
7. Engage in Collaborative Inquiry
8. Embrace differential Energy
9. Drive breakthroughs by the numbers
10. Dismantle the blocks, traps, and resistance to change

The TRANSALIGNMENT Framework incorporates these key factors into the negotiation.

Summary

We recognized that Leaders, Negotiators and Mediators need a framework to bring their work to a higher level. We have developed a negotiations framework that builds on the critical alignment, trust, and innovation architectures. In addition, the TRANSALIGNMENT Framework addresses the methods necessary to reframe the past, transform historic trauma, and to use the Power of Language to build new, positive futures.

In sum the TransAlignment Framework encourages negotiators to recognize current organizational system patterns so new patterns can be co-created. The TRANSALIGNMENT Framework enables negotiators to view the items they are negotiating as a small part that is intricately woven within a whole dynamic system. Instead of running from complexity you will be examining and working within it holistically.