



Top 10 Ways to Gain Alignment for Your Idea, Project or Initiative

Getting everyone on the same page to move your ideas, projects or initiatives forward can be challenging at times. To save time and minimize the chaos, use these **10 simple ways** to get your organization aligned and moving in **One Direction**.

1 Listen before you take action

Ask questions to find out what's important to people. Find out why they value those things. Share your own point of view where you see common ground. Start with the foundation of their values and interests and build from there.

2 Get clear about your goals

In order to communicate clearly with others, you have to be crystal clear about your own goals, priorities and objectives first. What are the results you want and why? How does it benefit them and the organization?



3 Define your stakeholders

Before you can make sure everyone is on board, you have to make sure you know who needs to be aligned. Make a list of your stakeholders from approvers to key influencers to implementers. Who do you need to influence? Who can help you influence them?

4 Create a stakeholder strategy

Based on what you heard when you were listening, assess how committed you think your stakeholders might be to your idea, project or initiative. Who is already on board? How can they help you? Who do you still need to influence? What's the best method to communicate with them?



5 Build awareness

Build awareness for your idea, project or initiative through formal and informal communications as often as you can. Remember: it takes at least 12 times for people to retain your information. Make sure it's clear, concise and connects to them. Share data with examples, stories, metaphors and analogies to get their attention and increase your ability to persuade.

6 Flex your communication style

As you're communicating with your stakeholders, keep in mind that people want to receive information differently. Some want specific data and details while others just want high-level information. Customize your communication with your audience in mind.



7 Check for understanding

Take the time to check for understanding to avoid miscommunications. Invite them to ask clarifying questions. Ask them questions about how it will work rather than asking them for their opinion or to simply repeat what they heard.

8 Ask for feedback

People are far more invested when they are participating. Ask your stakeholders for feedback, encourage honesty and allow for challenges, doubts and questions. Ask them for their own ideas about what could be improved. Then, generate solutions together.

9 Seek to serve

To get alignment, you need to continue to answer the question "What's in it for me?" every step of the way. Frame the idea, project or initiative so they can see the value and the benefits. If there are issues, go to them directly. Negotiate when necessary. If they give you ideas, solutions and support, give them credit.



10 Evaluate commitment

Ultimately, you want to gain your stakeholders' commitment not just their compliance. Open communication keeps information, opinions and support flowing. Find out if they are committed, and until they are, ask what they would need to get there. Then, ask them to help you get commitment from others too.

Go to www.ExecutiveLeader.com for more information or contact us at (818) 473-LEAD (5323).