

Improving Cross-Unit Coordination and Effectiveness

OVERVIEW

When organizations are formed it is always difficult to coordinate across functional, business, or geographical boundaries. Getting the macro (vertical) organization right does not mean the lateral coordination processes will work effectively. In most case it is the lateral structures and processes that have never been explicitly designed or developed that are driving problems - such as poor decision making, duplicative resources, accountability, and customer facing problems. The basis issue is coordination - assuring that the activities of different groups mesh together and that control is consistent with strategic needs.

Sapience provides an approach that designs the necessary mechanisms and processes to coordinate work so that the company can work as an integrated enterprise. This is about building a specific kind or organizational capability – the lateral organization. We help design and develop the various types of lateral organizational capability

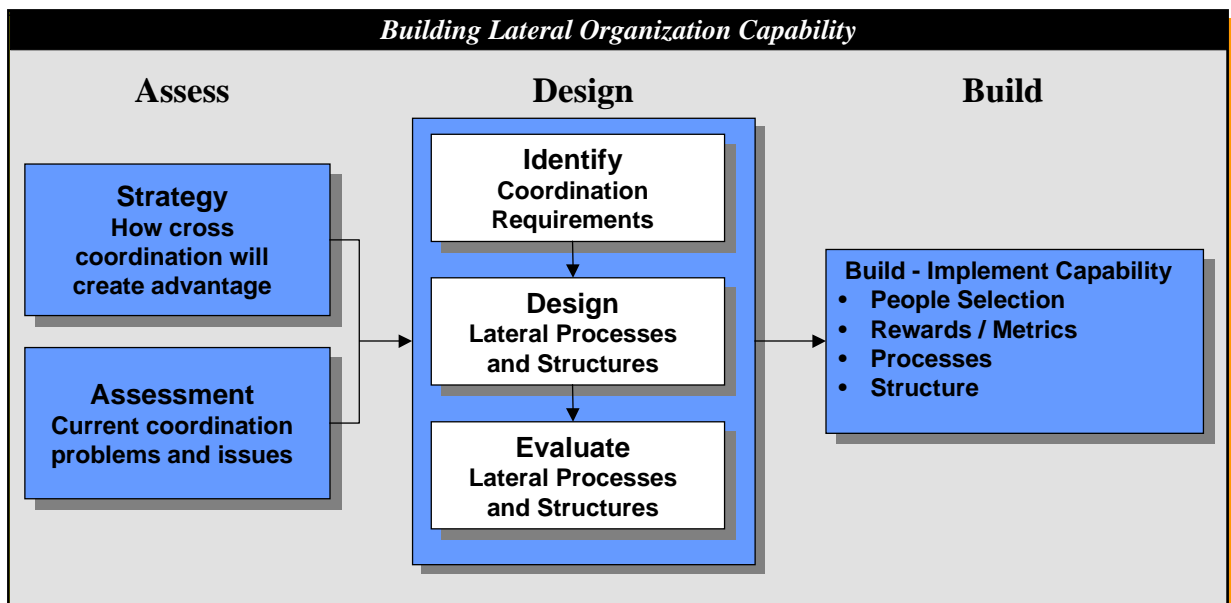


Types of problems that are addressed:

- How do we get our cross-functional teams to work more effectively?
- Cross-unit projects don't get finished.
- Work units are unclear about their responsibilities
- How can we get the matrix to work?
- How can we efficiently get work done while having to coordinate globally?

APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

Sapience provides an approach that starts with strategy by clearly articulating how cross coordination will create advantage, and also assessing current coordination problems and issues. The design steps are next, followed by building the capability in the parts of the organization that will use lateral organization.



METHOD

- Identify objectives and outcomes
- Get ready
- Conduct cross-unit assessment (on-line tool and interviews)
- Identify coordination requirements
- Design lateral structures and processes
- Build and implement capability
- Charter alignment
- Multi-celled planning and goal-setting
- Roles and responsibilities – decision grid
- Team development
- Leadership
- Evaluate outcomes

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

- Improved cross unit work processes
- Better organizational flexibility and speed
- Clear decision making

NEXT STEPS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Draw upon this design experience and have an informal conversation why you feel cross-unit coordination may be an issue you need to address.
2. Request a more formal overview of the cross unit coordination process and benefits.
3. Conduct a cross-unit assessment to identify design related problems and their root causes.