Cooperative Capacity
Partners

AN EXAMPLE CCP GUIDEBOOK FOR BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

BLANK ON PURPOSE

INTRODUCTION TO THE

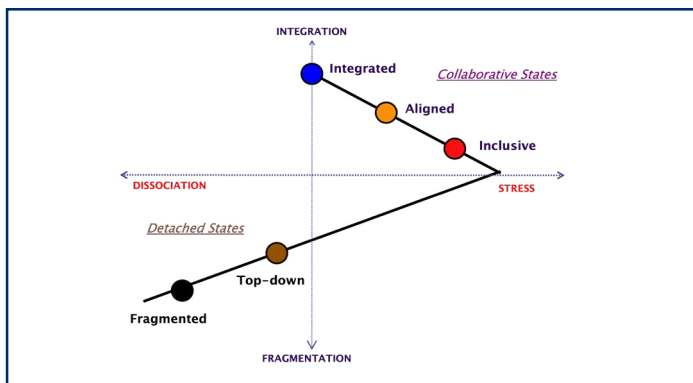# COOPERATIVE CAPACITY GUIDEBOOK FOR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

We live in a world made up of partnership networks. Within our organizations, our partnership networks consist of our relations with our supervisors, our subordinates, and other departments and teams. Externally, our partnership networks include funders, suppliers, end users, customers, communities, local and national government, regulators, and other stakeholders.

These networks strongly influence our effectiveness in all of the ways we measure effectiveness wherever we are in in the network. Breakdowns in collaboration can result in loss of support from those higher up, loss of collaboration from staff or partners, and loss of job or funding. All of this ultimately leads to poor performance typified by failed processes, inefficiencies, unproductive use of time and resources, conflict, and potentially corruption.

Conversely, building collaboration creates mutually supportive stakeholder relations, better reputation with bosses and funders, and the institutional ability to adapt and learn, and perform better.

Cooperative Capacity Partner offers three tools to help managers at all levels to measure and improve two very closely related goals that all managers face, building the performance of their team and the performance of their partnerships. The first tool, the Partner Organization Assessment, helps managers build their own team's ability to perform within their existing partnerships. The second tool, the Partnership Assessment, focusses on building the relationships and performance of partnerships. The third tool, the Partnership Network Assessment, builds on the first two tools to help managers build their network's ability to sustain, scale, and perform.

TOOL 1: OUR TEAM OR ORGANIZATION

TOOL 2: OUR DIRECT PARTNERS

TOOL 3: OUR PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

THIS PAMPHLET: THE PARTNER ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENT

This booklet presents the deliverable managers receive after they have implemented Cooperative Capacity Partner's first tool, the *Partner Organization Assessment.*

The task of a managers or organization builders is to develop coordination among those who work with them so that so they can perform and grow. In the simplest of terms, the role of management or organization builder is to get people to work together to achieve a goal. The ability to guide and enable all personnel to coordinate and collaborate is the core skill set of management and is the foundation for the performance of all other skill sets, processes, and practices that make an organization function.

The ability to cooperate is for a manager, much like the fertility of a field for a farmer. If a farmer measures the fertility of his fields, he knows what is best to plant now; how to optimize yields without wasting resources; and the steps needed to improve the fertility of his fields to increase future yields. With cooperative capacity, the same is true for a manager; he will know what processes and practices to focus on now to optimize performance and which changes to make that will effectively push performance to the next level in the future.
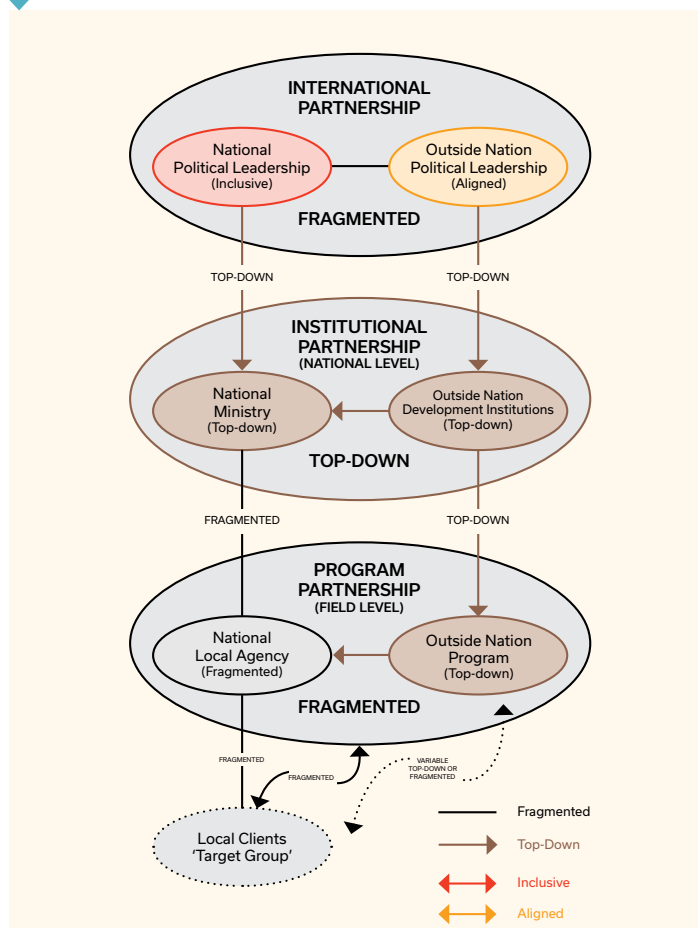
The Partner Organization Assessment is a rapid (one to two week) assessment that determines the current ability of a team, division, or organization to coordinate and collaborate. This gives managers the information they need to efficiently and effectively optimize current performance and then build processes, systems, practices, and culture to move performance to the next level.

The following example is based on a real contract and guidebook CCP has given to a client. The guidebooks are the result of a collaborative process to assess and plan; therefore, the following page provides an introduction to the assessment. This
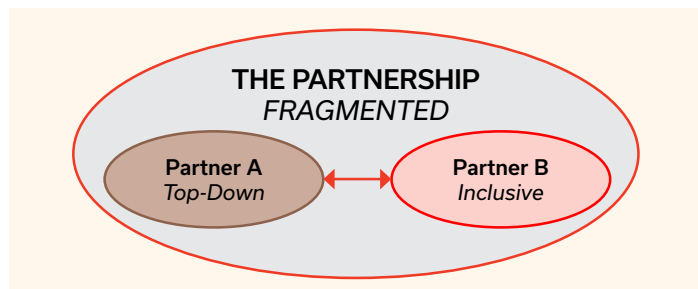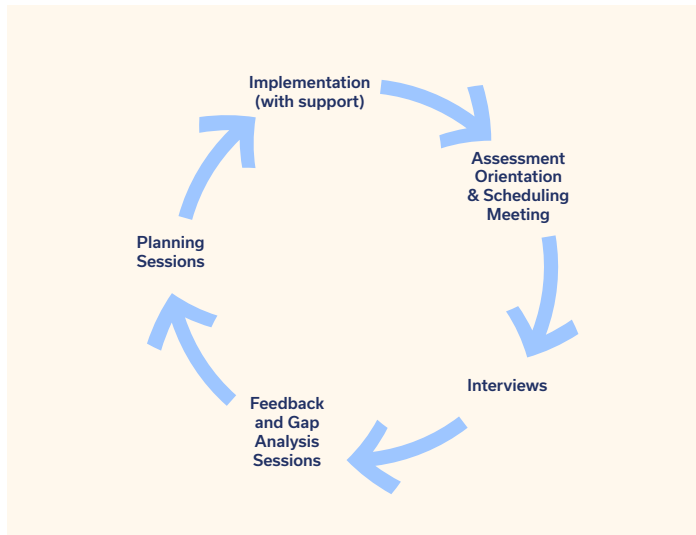
represents the information our client would have while implementing the assessment and planning meetings.

THE CCP PROCESS FOR ASSESSING PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

THE CCP ASSESSMENT CYCLE

The Partnership Organization Assessment follows a typical organizational development process, orientation, data collection, feedback, and planning.

We start with an orientation meeting with the team doing the assessment. In this meeting, we review the purpose and objectives of the assessment, the model used, the process, requirements, and schedule.

After confirming the objectives of the assessment, the next step of the orientation meeting it so introduce the basics of cooperative capacity model. This helps the group understand what they are assessing.

The CCP model measures five levels of cooperation. We call these levels cooperative capacity states. From worst to best, they are named Fragmented, Top-down, Inclusive, Aligned, and Integrated. We like to represent these states in a graphic we call the 'cooperative capacity ladder' (figure at right). At first,

the only thing we need to know about the graph is that the vertical axis represents performance, and our goal is to move the cooperative capacity of our group up the ladder from Fragmented to Integrated. *Systems and processes cannot function effectively if they are not operating in the proper state.*

The cooperative capacity states have a number of properties that greatly simplify assessment and planning organizational and partnership capacity building actions. For the partner organization assessment, there are two important cooperative capacity properties.

The first is that as a team or partner organization moves up a state, cooperation and performance improves. CCP's experience has been that performance will at least double by any stakeholder measure. The second is that a team or organization can only move one state at a time. Each state provides the foundation for the next higher state. Therefore, for example, a team in the Top-down state can only move up to the inclusive state, and not into the aligned or integrated states.

These properties determine, and limit, the scope of change effort to be made. Once we know the current state of a team, project, division, or organization, we know that *[initially]* we have to choose only those actions necessary to move to the next state.

THE 5 STATES OF THE COOPERATIVE CAPACITY LADDER
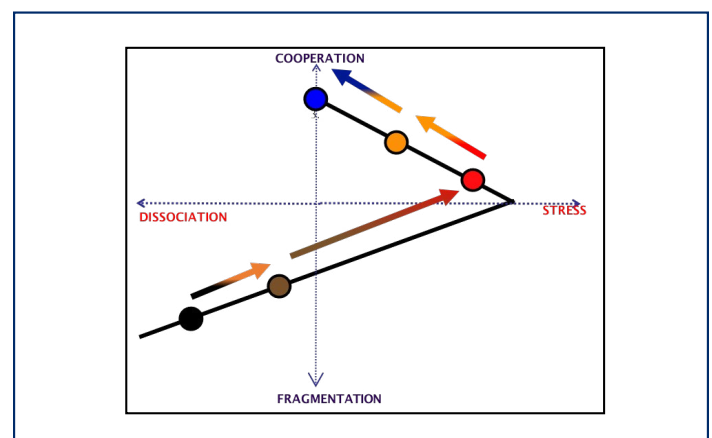
We determine the current state of our client through interviews (either in person or remotely) of all or a cross section of our client's staff about their experience of our client's management systems, performance processes, practices, and key and outcomes. Themes (recurring descriptions) from the interviews are identified and compiled along with supporting anonymous quotes. These are prepared for presentation at the feedback meeting.

At the feedback meeting, the client team will review the themes identified during the interviews, confirm them, and then compare them to detailed descriptions of the cooperative capacity states based on the Cooperative Capacity Maturity Matrix. From this discussion, the group will determine their current cooperative capacity state.

Once their current cooperative capacity state is determined, the client team will compare their current systems and practices with the systems and practices of the next higher state to identify the gaps between the current state and the next higher state.

With the gaps identified, the client team will determine and prioritize actions for the upcoming time period (usually a year) to implement that will move the client organization up to the next higher state.

The results of this process are then written up in a guidebook for managers to use during the year to monitor their progress in moving to the next higher state.

Our guidebooks contain,

- The overall organizational goals for the client

- Description of current Cooperative Capacity State of the client

    - Key indicators from assessment showing the client in that state

- Detailed description of what the client team will look like in the next higher state

- Detailed management change objectives

- Detailed, sequenced actions to achieve management change objectives

- Illustration of the moves on the Cooperative Capacity Ladder for each goal (if there is more than one)

- Dashboard for monitoring the management change actions

What follows is the guidebook for one of CCP's partners that we will call 'The Client Coporation. The assessment covers two aspects of the organization. The first is the state and development of the executive team. This team is made up of 15 members consisting of the CEO, VP's, and division heads. The second was an assessment and development of the five divisions of the Client Corporation.
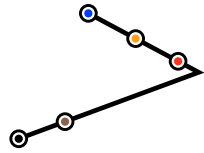
Cooperative Capacity
Partners

**GUIDEBOOK FOR
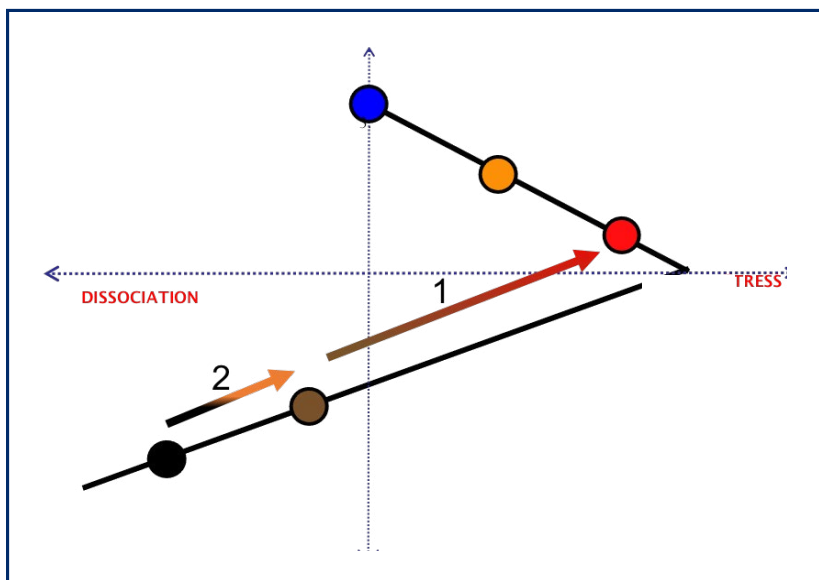CLIENT ORGANIZATION**

(date)

CLIENT
CORPORATION
LOGO HERE

THIS IS THE COVER
OF THE GUIDEBOOK.

TWO ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS FOR CLIENT – CURRENT YEAR:

1. Goal 1: Improve Executive Team performance
2. Goal 2: Improve overall organizational performance

MOVES ON THE COOPERATIVE CAPACITY LADDER FOR EACH GOAL

1. Goal 1: Improve the Performance of the Executive Team

   Move for Goal 1: Move the Executive Team into Inclusive

2. Goal 2: Improve organizational performance

   Move for Goal 2: Shift and consolidate all organizational divisions into at least Top-down

CONTENTS

ROADMAPS TO ACHIEVE EACH GOAL

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GOAL 1

CURRENT SITUATION OF EXECUTIVE TEAM (TOP DOWN)

When you have the backbone of Top-down in place, work and performance are much better than when in Fragmented; however, you are now facing new organizational issues.
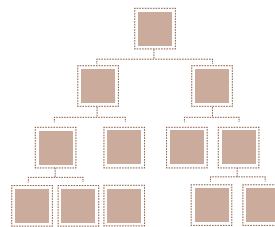
Top-down adds the spine to the organization. It can now control its actions.

In Top-down, communications flow from the leader down the organization. Critical information and ideas do not flow up the chain of command; what information that does flow up is distorted to emphasize the "good news". Your staff works hard to keep their bosses happy. Thus, your leadership is often in the dark about what is actually happening on the ground. This lack of information hurts decision making and frustrates staff. Leaders do not receive critical business information regarding the organization's functioning and performance. Staff are frustrated as their experience and ideas are ignored by leadership.

In Top-down, decision making rests with the leader and organizational systems. Staff are not empowered to make decisions or improvements regarding any aspect of their work. They must follow the leader's commands and the rules of organization's systems. In Top-down, it doesn't matter if blindly following commands or systems results in problems; following orders and "filling the

boxes" is what is important. This results in delays and frustrations as people have to wait for their leaders or the system to produce decisions.

Thus, Top-down organizations can predictably produce outputs, but with key information trapped down the chain of command and an unresponsive staff, they cannot respond quickly to internal problems or external changes that affect the business.

Developing the spine of the organization in the Top-down state requires a top-down alignment of the chain of command.

INDICATORS THAT THE CLIENT'S EXECUTIVE TEAM IS IN TOP-DOWN (FROM THE CCP ASSESSMENT, SUMMARIZED)

- The CEO holds the vision and mission
- All major decisions are made by the CEO
- The CEO balances the needs of each division against the needs of the organization
- The CEO is overworked
- There are delays in work due to waiting on decisions
- Structures and chain of command are clear and followed
- Processes and systems are suboptimal

DESIRED SITUATION FOR EXECUTIVE TEAM (INCLUSIVE)

Moving to Inclusive opens up bottom-up communication and empowers every link in the chain of command.

In Inclusive, leaders drill down into the organization for accurate information. Leadership invites critical information and promotes participation, creating an environment where the truth is valued and brutal facts are confronted. Leadership now get more valuable business information from lower down the chain of command.

Leadership style changes from 'command and control' to 'leading by questions' and engaging in dialogue and debate to find effective paths forward. Responsibility and decision making are pushed down the chain of command. Reviews and 'autopsies' are conducted to find problems and to solve them, not to lay blame.

Staff know the organization's key processes and direction, from mission and strategies to 'big goal' to vision--and are given responsibility for achieving results. Staff now have authority to act to make their work more effective. Often at this point, some training is required so that staff are able to take on their new responsibilities. In Inclusive, the goal of training becomes to pass decision making authority down the chain of command.

In the Inclusive State, however, there are inefficiencies due to weak boundaries and a lack of focus on priorities. Staff, in their striving to achieve results, often take on tasks that over-step other parts of the organization or, being unable to prioritize, take on more than they or their division can handle. This is to be expected, but the confusion over boundaries and over-extension of resources, particularly staff time, results high stress and an underlying culture of loyalty, hard work, and complaint. These inefficiencies are inherent in the Inclusive state and not permanent. These problems should be accepted for the time being; they will be addressed when the organization is ready to move into the Aligned state.
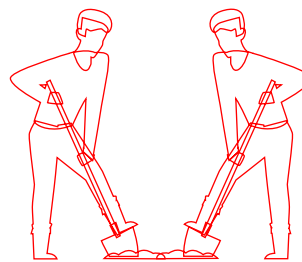
In Inclusive, leadership digs from information from all levels of the organization, delegates, and learns to be responsive.

WHAT CLIENT'S EXECUTIVE TEAM WILL LOOK LIKE WHEN IT IS IN INCLUSIVE

Executive Team

- TThe Executive Team knows CLIENT's direction, from mission and strategies to a "big goal[1]" to vision

- The Executive Team knows CLIENT'S key business processes

- CLIENT's structure is aligned with vision, mission, and strategies

- The CEO asks for, and makes it safe to report, bad news; information, both "good news" and "bad news," flows freely among the Executive Team members

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[1]A 'big goal' is clear and compelling and serves as a unifying focal point of effort– often creating immense division spirit. It has a clear finish line, so the organization can know when it has achieved the goal; people like to shoot for finish lines.

- Executive Team members are responsible and accountable for the results of their departments
- Executive Team members are allowed to execute solutions without permission or guidance
- Every Executive Team member feels responsible for the results of all parts of CLIENT

Client (partners, vendors, customers, other stakeholders) Communication with Executive Team

- Stakeholders understand CLIENT'S vision and mission and strategies
- Customers have channels to provide feedback; that information reaches the executive team
- Executive Team members solicit feedback from clients and share it freely with the division

THE PLAN

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Information, both good and bad, flows freely among Executive Team members

Objective 2: Executive Team members know CLIENT's key business processes

Objective 3: Executive Team members are accountable for the results of their departments

Objective 4: Executive Team members know CLIENT's direction, from mission and strategies to 'big goal' to vision

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES

1. Information, both good and bad, flows freely among Executive Team members

- Training and practice in receiving both positive and negative feedback
- Training and practice in leading by questions and active listening
- Implement systems that ensure that customer feedback, both positive and negative, is reported to senior management

2. Executive Team members know CLIENT's direction, from mission and strategies to 'big goal' to vision

- Review vision and mission
- Establish a 'big goal'
- Develop strategies to achieve big goal
- Institute a formal 'strategic change control processes' within all organizational divisions

3. Executive Team members know the organization's key business processes

- Mapping of the organization's and each department's key business processes
- Discussion of the organization and each department's key business processes until there is common understanding

4. Executive Team members are accountable for the results of their departments

- Training and practice in delegation (both as delegator and delegatee)
- Establish results goals for each division that are general (not necessarily measurable yet)
- Establish routine monitoring processes that focus on results (not activities) and key decision points (decisions for which higher authority is needed)
- Establish incentive that reward the achievement of results

SEQUENCE MANAGEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Objective		
Information flows freely among Executive Team members		
Executive Team members know CLIENT's direction		
CLIENT's structure is aligned with its vision, mission, & strategies		
Executive Team members know CLIENT's key business processes		
Executive Team members are accountable for their results		
Executive Team members execute solutions		
Customers understand the vision, mission and strategies		
Executive Team members solicit feedback from clients		
Customers have formal channels to provide feedback		

DASHBOARD FOR IMPROVING PERFORMANCE FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Key Performance Indicator	Percent Complete				
	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Information flows freely among Executive Team members					
Executive Team members know CLIENT's direction, from mission and strategies to 'big goal' to vision					
Executive Team members know CLIENT's key business processes					
CLIENT's structure is aligned with its vision, mission, and strategies					
Executive Team members are accountable for their results					
Executive Team members are allowed to execute solutions without permission or guidance					
Executive Team members solicit feedback from clients and share feedback freely with the division					
Customers understand the vision and mission and strategies					
Customers have formal channels to provide feedback, and that information reaches affected Executive Team members					

GOAL 2

CURRENT SITUATION (FRAGMENTED)

Fragmented organizations and divisions are like jellyfish; they lack structure and the ability to choose their direction or to control what is happening internally.

Fragmented is like a Jellyfish – The organization has little control over its actions and moves where the ocean takes it.

When your organization or division is fragmented, its direction (vision, mission, strategies) are not clear or not sufficiently understood *[followed]* by managers or staff, and people will act to achieve what is in their own best interests, or their interpretation of what is best for the organization or division.

Leadership is often weak or contested – the leadership is not clear about what it wants and cannot give clear or consistent direction to managers and staff. This lack of clear direction causes managers to have great difficulty leading their divisions, and to face resistance when coordinating activities with other divisions. Much time is spent in unstructured meetings that seldom result in decisions, and even when decisions are made, there is little follow up.

Many of your formal systems are either non-existent, poorly developed, or not enforced. Without clear criteria and formal systems, performance cannot be measured, critical information is held informally by individuals, and finances cannot be tracked. Work gets done through negotiating *ad hoc* agreements with co-workers. This creates the opportunity for people to abuse their positions with impunity and generates opportunities for bad behaviors such as nepotism, theft, and corruption.

Fragmented organizations and divisions perform very poorly and are likely fail.
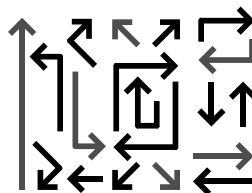
The lack of structure in the Fragmented state results in staff and groups following their own interests without any coordination.

INDICATORS THAT THE CLIENT'S DIVISIONS ARE IN FRAGMENTED (FROM THE LAST TWO ASSESSMENTS)

Based on interviews from 2017, CLIENT was mostly in a Fragmentated state (and had been since its inception and through the ownership transition). By 2018 the Executive Team had moved to Top-Down but much of the organization—many divisions—beneath the Executive Team remained in Fragmented (this was to be expected; change usually flows from the top down).

Our 2018 interviews found:

- Not all staff know the chain of command and org chart
- There is inconsistent and incomplete understanding of vision and mission
- Information is often shared through informal networks as the organization waits for its integrated MIS sofware to come online
- Not all department or staff have clear performance indicators
- Some work 'drops between the cracks' due to travel
- Fragmented accounting systems
- There remain cliques that still operate as if the old owners still ran CLIENT
- Vendor alliance and product development are inadequately integrated into the rest of CLIENT

IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL DIVISION PERFORMANCE: MOVE FROM FRAGMENTED TO TOP-DOWN

DESIRED SITUATION (TOP-DOWN)
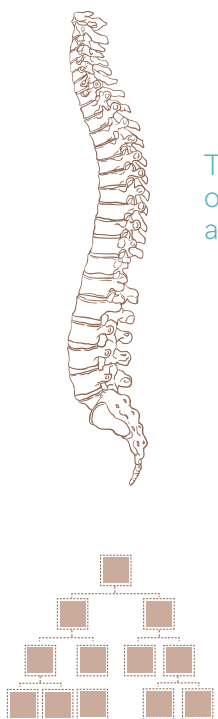
Moving to Top-down adds a spine to your organization and divisions.

Top-down adds the spine to the organization. It can now control its actions.

When your organization or division is in Top-down, you and your leadership know the vision and mission and clear, and direct instructions move down the chain of command. Managers and staff know what is expected and follow directions. Leadership sets the formal systems for the organization and everyone to adheres to them.

If there is any ambiguity or confusion around delegated tasks, staff do not stress themselves deciding which way to go, but seek clarification from their leader. Likewise, conflicts between groups are not to be solved by the groups themselves, but by the leader, who determines how the groups will coordinate.

Obedience to the chain of command and to the systems is paramount. This reduces bad behavior, and also leads to inefficiencies. But in Top-down being inefficient is acceptable. Top-down is where you begin to identify inefficiencies, but solving them waits until the organization moves to a higher state.

While in some ways Top-down makes life easier for staff, it makes it tougher for the leaders who take on responsibility for the actions those who report

to them. Taking on that responsibility is worth the performance gains the organization will achieve. Top-down organizations will produce immediate outputs (not necessarily longer-term outcomes), and thrive in non-competitive environments.

WHAT EACH DIVISION IN CLIENT WILL LOOK LIKE IN TOP-DOWN

- Division leader holds the vision and mission for the division

- All major decisions are made by the division leader

- The division leader controls the priorities of and resources allocation within their own division

- The division leader is overworked

- There are delays in work due to waiting on decisions

- Structures and chain of command are clear and followed

THE PLAN

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: All of each division's members are able to accurately explain CLIENT's vision and mission and their division's role in supporting them.

Objective 2: Division leaders make or approve all major decisions for the division: Division leaders sign off on all plans and track activities and outputs.

Objective 3: Division leaders set up clear structures with well-defined chains of command and clear job-descriptions for all of their members.

ACTION TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES

1. All of each division's members are able to accurately explain the vision and mission and their division's role in supporting them.

   a. At executive team meetings review CLIENT's vision and mission and confirm with the CEO and other division members how each division supports achieving the vision and mission. The goal here is to ensure that all division leaders will be presenting the same information, about CLIENT's vision and mission, and the contribution to each division, to their own divisions.

   b. At each of their division meetings, division leaders present and review CLIENT's vision and mission for division members. The division discusses how this division supports the vision and mission. At the close of the meeting:

      i. Ask each division member to repeat back CLIENT's vision and mission and how their division supports them.
      ii. Instruct division members to describe organization's vision and mission to at least 3 other people each day for two weeks.

2. Division leaders make or approve all major decisions for their division:

   a. Set up goals and activities for each division member that will achieve the division's goals (this may be done in consultation with division members, but the division leader makes final decisions).

   b. Approve these plans in accordance with the organization's planning systems.

   c. Set up a daily, weekly, and monthly meeting schedule:

   d. Track activity completion at both the individual and division level.

The goal here is for the division leader to be able to establish clear plans of activities, monitor implementation and intervene and make corrections early (before errors become too large) and track completion of planned activities.

3. All division leaders set up clear structures with well-defined chains of command and clear job-descriptions for all of their members.

   a. Draw up an organizational chart for your division, be sure to include both filled and unfilled positions. This organization chart should be simple, showing only:

      i. The chain of command.
      ii. Levels of authority within the division, starting with the leader at the top, and working down.

   b. Get approval from CEO.

   c. With HR and, if appropriate, with the staff member, write a clear job description for each position in the division organization chart (make sure all work of the division is assigned to someone).

   d. Approve clear job descriptions for each division member with CEO and HR.

   e. Share job description with each division member, discussing the key tasks they are required to perform, level of decision making before they need to come to you, and how their performance will be evaluated (In Top-down, this should be based on ability to complete assigned tasks).

   f. Use job description and activity completion as basis for staff reviews.

The goal here is to establish clear chain of commands and to ensure everyone on the division knows, unambiguously, what activities they are responsible for and who they report to, and that they follow the chain of command. The chain of command should be followed strictly. Jumping levels in the chain of command, either bosses going down two levels, or division members going up two levels, should be avoided under all circumstances.
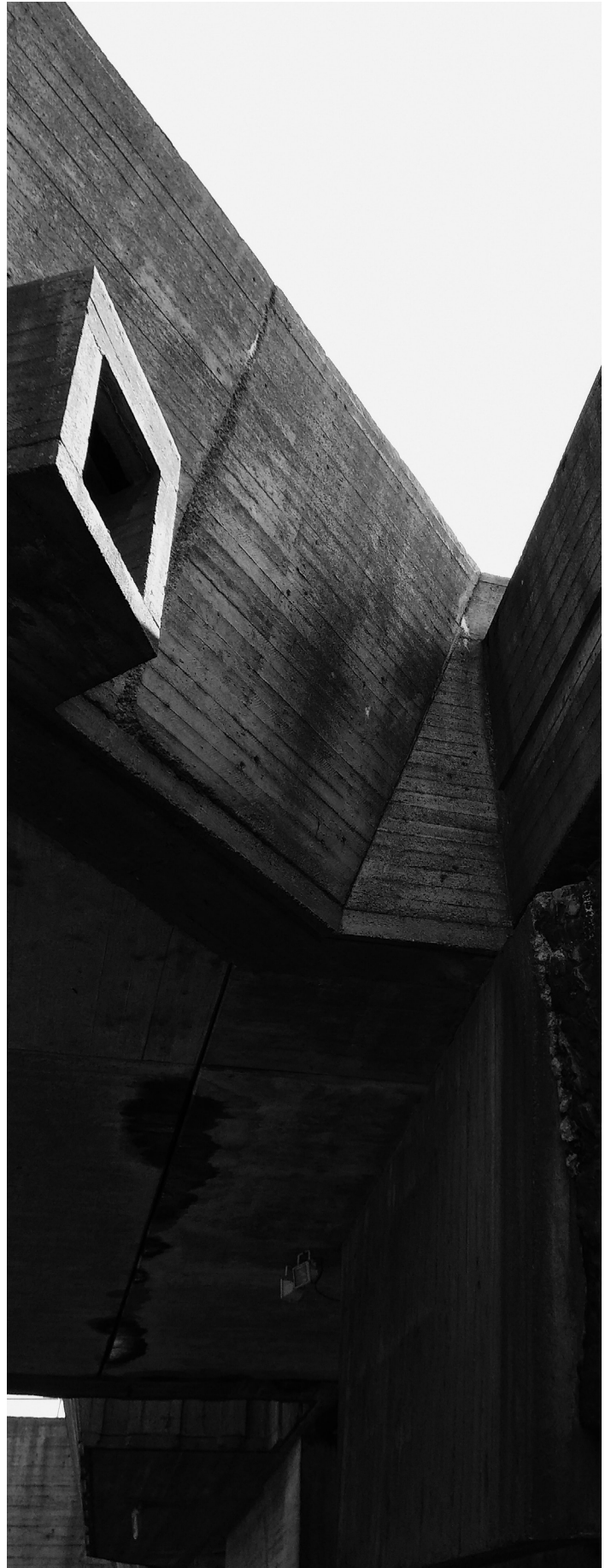
SEQUENCE MANAGEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

All division members know CLIENT's vision and mission			
Well-defined structure and chain of command followed			
Job descriptions prepared for all division members			
Division leader controls division contact with other divisions			
Division leader approves all major decisions for the division and signs off on all work plans			
Division leaders enforce use of all formal systems			
Division leader tracks activities and outputs			

DASHBOARD FOR IMPROVING PERFORMANCE FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Key Performance Indicator	Percent Complete				
	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
All division members know CLIENT's vision and mission					
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