

Alignment vs. Intensity Checklist

A reality check for leaders



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ALIGNMENT VS. INTENSITY CHECKLIST

A REALITY CHECK FOR LEADERS

This checklist helps you distinguish between effort that compounds, and effort that compensates.

Intensity can look impressive. Alignment produces results.

Use this checklist to notice where energy is working with the system, and where it's quietly leaking

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

- Take 5–10 uninterrupted minutes
- Mark what feels true **right now**
- Don't score. Look for **patterns**.

DIRECTION & FOCUS

- Top priorities are clear and rarely change
- People understand why priorities matter
- New initiatives are filtered against existing commitments
- Saying no is easier than saying yes

If these feel false, effort may be high but direction is diffused.

DECISION-MAKING

- Decisions reinforce stated direction
- Trade-offs are visible and understood
- Decisions reduce rework rather than create it
- Urgency does not override judgment

If decisions create activity without sufficient clarity or coherence, intensity may be masking misalignment.

LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

- Leaders model calm focus, not constant urgency
- Expectations are reinforced consistently
- Issues are addressed early
- Leadership presence reduces anxiety

If leadership feels reactive, intensity is doing alignment's job.

CULTURE & BELIEF

- People believe effort leads to meaningful outcomes
- Accountability feels supportive, not punitive
- Mistakes are treated as learning
- Energy feels purposeful, not frantic

Weak belief cannot be compensated for with more effort.

EXECUTION & SUSTAINABILITY

- Important work moves forward without constant follow-up
- Progress compounds rather than resets
- Success does not depend on heroics
- Pace feels demanding but sustainable

If sustainability is fragile, intensity is being mistaken for commitment.

REFLECTION

Where might you be relying on intensity to compensate for misalignment?

If alignment improved in just one area, what would become easier immediately?

Alignment is quieter than intensity, but far more powerful.

— IrresistibleEdge™ Alignment & Performance System