



## Aligning the Many Voices on a Project Team as a Foundation for Lean Projects

### MORE THAN A TITLE AND A ROLE

Aligned teams take time at the beginning of meetings and throughout the day to intentionally check in with each other beyond the work of the project.

### A SUPERHERO PRACTICE

While we might dream about the ability to fly or possess amazing strength what we really admire in superheroes are the human qualities and values that lead them to help others. We all have amazing human qualities and values. What are yours? Discuss this within your team.

### PERSONAL STRENGTHS INTO SHARED STRENGTHS

Awareness of the different way that people on a team contribute to others allows team members to build a story about how these shared strengths lead to an aligned team. What story can your team tell?

### SHARED LEADERSHIP

Team intelligence and effectiveness is strongest when people across the team share the responsibility for leading equally. Everyone's contribution is expected and valued. Check that in meetings and conversations everyone on the team contributes ideas and observations. Aligned teams recognize that a foundation of trust built on candor, transparency, and shared leadership fuels connection and high performance.

### PURPOSE ALIGNMENT

A *Purpose Alignment Statement* is more than a mission statement. It is the contribution a team is making expressed in a way that is personally meaningful to every person on the team. It is lived every day on the project and is a visible guide that energizes and powers the team through challenges and obstacles.

## Why Team Alignment Matters if We Take Respect for People Seriously

**RESPECT FOR PEOPLE** is a core lean principle. One translation of the original phrase from Japanese to English is "holding precious the nature of humanity." Part of our nature is to understand ourselves as part of a greater whole in which individual strengths are aligned to add value with lower costs and faster completions.

- Everybody brings unique strengths to a project team. Take time to identify and celebrate those strengths.
- By defining the strengths each person brings to a team, it then becomes possible and desirable to build an understanding of the team's shared strengths and identity.
- People contribute best when they are part of a team committed to making a common meaningful impact that benefits a specific community.
- Conversations and actions that promote connection between team members support clear communications based in trust and mutual care.
- People desire connection: a bond with other people that inspires growth, vision, and purpose. We long to know we make an impact where we live, work, and play. That impact is impossible without connection.

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