Alliance Operations
Effectiveness Assessment
Introduction

March 2020
VitalSigns is a comprehensive assessment of alliance operations

Evaluates business outcomes and the effectiveness of operations, not “fit,” as is the norm in alliance healthchecks. Where appropriate, how effectively key ecosystem partners are engaged and leveraged is also addressed.

**Objectives of Assessment**

- Identify “what is working” to overcome differences in corporate strategy, structure, processes, and culture and apply it across the alliance
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of alliance operations and better leverage the alliance’s resources and those of ecosystem partners to drive financial outcomes
- Highlight strategic tensions between partners that impact business outcomes and create a path to alignment
- Identify and address gaps in collaborative execution among leadership, corporate teams, and in management of the field
- Generate metrics that can be tracked and compared over time

**Essential Questions**

- Is the alliance generating the outcomes and value each partner seeks?
- Does the alliance have a “North Star”? Is alliance leadership guiding the way?
- Do alliance operations foster effective collaborative execution at all levels?
- Is what each partner brings to the table being fully leveraged? Is the alliance ecosystem effectively leveraged?
- Are the parties using their respective strengths to address market challenges?

**Characteristics of Effective Alliances**

Effective alliances minimize the cost of time – by one study, the cost of a day’s delay in getting a drug or new indication to market is $.5M per $1B of peak annual revenue

(Source: AbbVie, 2013)

- Communications flow
- Decisions get made
- Problems resolved
- Resources are provided
- Silos are connected
- Stakeholders are aligned
Develop an hypothesis on the current state and ways to gain better business outcomes based on document review and interviews with key members of the alliance.

Conduct workshops with sponsors and teams as needed to ensure common understanding of results and galvanize action for the path forward.

Develop and administer survey to test hypothesis; analyze and report integrated results.

Project can be conducted within a 90 day timeframe or can align with existing meeting schedule over a longer time frame, as desired. Interview readout and hypothesis occurs within 30 days, assuming availability of interviewees.
Our comprehensive and inclusive approach ensures we arrive at a single version of the truth.

The complexity of the alliance and the number of people involved determines the extent of interviews and data gathering required.

**HYPOTHESIS**
- Agree on objectives and project plan; review documents; identify interview and survey rosters; prepare communications plan and materials; schedule, conduct and analyze interviews; report out preliminary findings and hypothesis

**DATA GATHERING**
- Develop and administer survey; analyze results, including team/committee breakdowns as required; combine with interview findings and prepare comprehensive report; review with project leaders

**ACTION**
- Conduct readouts/workshops with executives and governance committees as desired; provide support and materials for alliance managers to work with individual teams; develop final recommendations and integrated action plan

- The alliance is the client, not either of the partners, thus our view is unbiased
- No finger pointing or casting of blame is tolerated
- Mix of interviews and survey to bring in a wide range of opinions and experiences – from senior leaders to those regularly working with their counterparts and ecosystem partners
- Interviews are 30 minutes each, via telephone, and will cover all governance committees
- Project leaders are apprised of progress, engaged, and consulted throughout the engagement process
- Workshops in action stage ensure robust discussion of outcomes and alignment on resulting recommendations for the path forward and the actions to take to achieve it
The VitalSigns algorithm is based on our framework for high-performing alliances. 
Examines if the behavior of alliance personnel and operation of the alliance are producing desired outcomes.

**Collaboration Inquiry Focus**

- **Coordinate Activities** – How effectively are alliance activities planned and executed? Are roles and responsibilities well-defined and followed?

- **Exchange Information** – Does the quality and timeliness of information flow support agility and effective decision making?

- **Leverage Resources** – Are the financial, people, knowledge, and relationship resources of both partners, as well as key ecosystem partners, being fully utilized to achieve the strategic intent of the alliance?

**Strategic Intent Inquiry Focus**

- **Outcomes** – Are the alliance teams realizing the financial and strategic value as intended by the partners? Do the teams strive for exceptional results? Are strengths of the partners being leveraged to overcome market challenges?

- **Relationship** – Would alliance team members from both partners welcome an opportunity to extend/enhance their relationship? How effectively do the parties manage differences in their cultures and ways of doing business?

- **Reputation** – Does the alliance enhance each company’s reputation amongst potential external partners as an organization that is good to collaborate with? Do the company’s best employees want to work on the alliance?

**Environment Inquiry Focus**

- **Governance** – How effective is the governance process in making decisions, solving problems, establishing priorities and navigating the systems of the partners? How effectively are key ecosystem partners engaged in planning, decision making, and measurement?

- **Accountability** – Are the rights and obligations of each partner honored? Are commitments fulfilled and milestones met?

- **Trust and Respect** – Do alliance team members demonstrate trustworthiness and respect; follow the norms of the alliance, and operate according to the spirit and intent of the alliance?

*Note: These questions represent what the inquiry seeks to discover. The actual assessment questions are customized for each alliance.*
Data gathering occurs in a layered structure that provides a multifaceted perspective on the alliance.

Examine the response to individual questions or roll up to topics and dimensions to get a different perspective. Cut across topics to see a holistic picture of a specific issue.

**Coordinating Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Information is shared far enough in advance of deadlines to allow for effective planning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The planning process is efficient and effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>As work projects are carried out, the coordination among members of both companies is reasonably seamless</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The essential work of the alliance is carried out efficiently and effectively</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Intra-company coordination is sufficient to support effective coordination within the alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</td>
<td>Roles and responsibilities of alliance colleagues are clear and broadly understood</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The areas of responsibility of each partner are clear and broadly understood</td>
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**Additional Topic Examples**

- **Collaboration**: Communication protocols, timeliness & completeness of information, quality of relationships, availability of resources
- **Environment**: Problem solving, decision making, priorities, committee operation, rights & obligations, trust & respect
- **Strategic Intent**: Progress to goals, exceptional results, alignment of strategy, managing differences
Analysis and reporting – Contextually integrated findings and recommendations, supported by widely-sourced data

Analysis conducted and provided with each process step. Full output is synthesis of all data sources and is reported out as actionable findings and recommendations that address all dimensions of the VitalSigns algorithm.

**Process Step**

- **HYPOTHESIS**
- **DATA GATHERING**
- **ACTION**

**Analysis**

- Key themes
- Hypothesis about strengths, challenges, and opportunities

- Analysis of all data gathering to inform a single version of the truth
- Produce findings and recommendations

- Incorporate participants input
- Refine recommendations
- Produce action plan

**Output**

Synthesis combines interview findings and quotes with survey data and comments to provide a comprehensive picture of the alliance and specific actionable recommendations to drive for better outcomes.
Drive understanding, alignment and action through workshops with governance committees

Hold virtual, in person, or combination venue workshop with all governance committees to review results, agree on their meaning, and develop a targeted plan to address the findings – this is the essential step to benefit from the data gathering

Objectives

- Ensure relevant stakeholders have a common understanding of how the partners are aligned and how they are not, as well as an understanding of the causes of misalignment
- With the JSC, examine the challenges and opportunities facing the alliance overall. Using quantifiable criteria, agree to a prioritization of issues
- With governance sub-committees, evaluate results and build focused, targeted individual committee/team plans to act on areas that will have the greatest impact, incorporating them into an integrated project plan that can be managed by the alliance managers to achieve specific outcomes

Outcomes

- As the final activity within the assessment process, the workshop(s) should galvanize forward looking action including:
  - Specific, targeted actions designed to drive business results and overcome challenges
  - Broad communication to further build the alliance mindset among team members
  - Integration of all actions for reporting and monitoring at leadership levels

Deliverables

- Specific assessment results presentations, targeted for each governance committee
- Integrated action plan, with elements for each committee, focusing on actions that will drive immediate efficiency and effectiveness in alliance operations

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The Rhythm of Business Overview

Embed partnering throughout the organization.
Create desired outcomes. Fuel innovation to drive growth.

SERVICES
Consulting
Strategize, build, and integrate your end-to-end partnering practice to demonstrate value to stakeholders and partners and outcomes for customers. Design and activate individual alliances

Assessments
Data-driven, contextual analysis provides deep insights that solves problems and drives measurable improvement

Talent Development
Hands-on coaching, support on challenging alliances, classroom and individual training to grow partnering and alliance management expertise and collaborative skills

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

REPRESENTATIVE CLIENTS
Engagement Team Consists of Senior Leaders with Extensive Experience

- Ground-breaking research and more than 20 years of hands-on work to understand what it takes build and run successful alliances
- Trusted advisors to leaders in biopharma and beyond
- Leaders in the only alliance management professional association, contributors to its certification program, responsible for content across multiple media
- Engagements with 30+ biopharma companies that span from the lab to the salesforce; from virtual companies to the largest global enterprise
- Developed and guided the implementation and maturation of alliance capabilities in multiple industries, for companies large and small
- Guided the alliances for some of the most recognized and successful pharmaceutical brands

Work Directly with Certified Strategic Alliance Professionals with Operational, Academic, and Consulting Pedigrees

Jan Twombly, CSAP
President, The Rhythm of Business
Member of the Board of Directors, Association of Strategic Alliance Professionals
Engagement Lead

Jeff Shuman, CSAP, PhD
Principal, The Rhythm of Business
Professor of Management, Bentley University
Senior Contributing Consultant, Strategy and Alliance Management Expert

“The Rhythm of Business has been our partners in growing the collaborative capability of our organization and expanding our influence. They are always there for us, no matter the challenge.”

— Executive Director, Alliance Management
The Value of Working With The Rhythm of Business

“We were very pleased to take part in the workshop with our partner. You perfectly organized the meeting and it helped us a lot to progress in our discussions.” — SVP, Commercial Operations

**Expertise**

*Creating outcomes through collaboration*

- Our principals are experts in all aspects of collaboration and partnering – both internally and externally
- We’ve a deep understanding of navigating cultural change
- We employ design thinking techniques in all our engagements – putting the customer and stakeholder experience front and center

**Experience**

*Capability building, program and alliance management*

- Cross-industry experience in building program and alliance management in both large and small companies
- Deep understanding of the nuances of approaching collaboration from different stakeholders’ perspectives
- Capability design uniquely shaped for a company’s structure, culture, and strategy

**Commitment**

*Dedicated to your success*

- Collaboration isn’t easy – either internally or with a partner. We focus on the mindset, skillset, and toolset to ensure comprehensive outcomes
- Interact only with our senior principals
- We are passionate about collaboration and partnering – it has been our lives’ work for more than 20 years – and the only way to drive meaningful change