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# the TOTAL ALIGNMENT Update

June 2010



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We are pleased to share advances in Total Alignment concepts and their application worldwide. We hope you will find the information valuable. We look forward to your feedback and suggestions.

## [ARIAN Construction](#) Company Uses Total Alignment to align its Strategic Plan and Execution

## News

During the period, January 25th through February 3rd, the Infortrac - Crecento! team began initial work with two major companies in Pamplona, Spain - one in the Construction and the other in the Alternative Energy business.



Dr. Khadem traveled to Mexico during February 15th to 20th in conjunction with the promotion of Total Alignment in Mexico.

## Press Release

The Board of Directors of Pamplona's major construction firm, ARIAN, decided in March 2010 to implement Total Alignment throughout the company including operations in Spain, China and Eastern Europe. The Infotrac - Crecento! team began implementation on April 28, 2010.

Some 50 top executives and managers of ARIAN in Pamplona including its CEO, Mr. Domingo Alonso, Mr. Patxi Sagardoy, and Mr. Manuel Ayerdi gathered for a Kick-off session to begin the Total Alignment process. Dr. Khadem and Linda Joan Khadem, the two co-authors of Total Alignment were present at the gathering. After an introduction by Mr. Alonso, ARIAN's Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. Ayerdi, ARIAN's Total Alignment Project Manager, Dr. Khadem addressed the group to explain how this new management model would enable them to compete more effectively in the world market and how they could become an example of management and leadership for other companies in Spain.

Dr. Khadem indicated that alignment is sorely needed during the current economic crisis by all the companies in Spain. He emphasized that this is an historical juncture for Spain and the moment of opportunity to address some of the systemic issues that have contributed to the crisis. Total Alignment would help this company to address some of these systemic issues, thus enabling ARIAN to become a working model in Spain.

Crecento!, the representative for Total Alignment in Spain and Portugal, collaborated with Infotrac's project director, Mr. Nasr Khadem, to begin the alignment process immediately following the Kick-off session.

Dr. Khadem will be visiting Spain in June 2010. He will meet with CEOs and business leaders during his visits to learn how they are weathering the economic crisis. He will share with them the new management model which helps navigate the organization through change, as described in [Total Alignment](#).

### **Spain**

*June 11-22, 2010*

*For an appointment with Dr. Khadem, contact us through our website: [www.totalalignment.com](http://www.totalalignment.com)*



## In the Media

Institución Futuro, an independent Think tank headquartered in Navarra, Spain included Dr. Khadem in its blog website <http://www.ifuturo.org/es/blog/>.

### AUTORES



Más

## Cultural Transformation at [Muelles MAF](#)



## TOTAL ALIGNMENT

*The  
Management*

*Model*

Total Alignment fosters a culture of innovation, empowerment, encouragement,

and problem solving throughout the organization. It presents a common language for discourse across functions, divisions and countries where the business operates. In many organizations these cultural elements represent a change from the existing mode of functioning. Such a change is not easy nor can it be sustained without a concurrent change in the systems, in the environment and in people's behavior.

At Muelles MAF the cultural change brought about by Total Alignment got a boost in the fourth quarter of 2009 through a systematic coaching process. Nine managers representing diverse functions within the company were selected to become experts in the Total Alignment culture. They became internal coaches for cultural transformation by going through a special training and certification process. They learned how to coach other managers of the company in conducting team reviews and vertical reviews - the twin processes that define the new management model and distinguish the Total Alignment process. The new habits they were striving to develop in their peers and collaborators when conducting team reviews consisted in creating a safe and open team environment conducive to maximizing the participation of team members, encouraging creativity and in-depth problem solving, and fostering cross-functional collaboration. To this end, these internal coaches first received training; then they were accompanied by an Infotrac consultant in performing the coaching activity. This gave them a deeper understanding in action of the philosophy that permeates the Total Alignment process. Finally, after coaching other managers and receiving feedback they gained confidence in the coaching activity. When the Infotrac consultant and the coach-in-training agreed that the trainee was able to coach solo, he or she became certified.

Following this procedure, six managers at MAF received their certification diplomas at a ceremony conducted in the presence of the director general of MAF, Mr. Angus Alvarez and Mr. Manuel Alvarez.

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## DECISION AND RESPONSIBILITY

By Riaz & Linda Khadem

During our consulting work with hundreds of executives we have observed two distinct modes of making difficult decisions. In one scenario, major decisions are made by one person, often with insufficient information and without the involvement of others. On the other extreme the decision making process is dragged out in the interest of building consensus. We have noted that many leaders choose between the two leadership styles of command and consensus. Usually the way decisions are made in an organization depends on the particular leadership style of the decision maker, rather than the requirements of the decision.

### ***Decision Model***

We are proposing a decision making model that focuses on the nature of the decision, rather than the personal style of the decision maker. This model consists of four types of decisions - each with a uniqueness that fits the requirements of the particular situation. Each specifies who should be involved in the actual decision making process. This model provides a guide for CEOs, Directors, and Managers in any organization. The four types of decisions we have identified are the following: Command, Consultative, Consensus and Delegated.

### ***Four Decision Types***

A Command decision is one you make when you don't want anyone's input. You basically command that something be

done. Assuming that you have a position of authority, your collaborators and associates will no doubt obey your command. This type of decision is appropriate in times of extreme emergency when time is of the essence. For example when there is fire, the leader commands everyone to exit a building. When there is an urgent business crisis with no time for discussion, a command of what must be done without delay could be necessary.

A Consultative decision is when you make the decision after consulting with your team. Your collaborators may have valuable input or information to contribute, but the decision belongs to you. This type of decision is most appropriate when involving others in a joint decision might potentially put them in a situation of a conflict of interest. For example, when bonuses are to be distributed, involving the people who benefit from the bonus in the decision could put them in a situation of conflict of interest. Another example is when a positive change initiative needs to be implemented, an initiative that would require people to move from their comfort zone and work differently. In this situation, your decision needs to be consultative, because if you involve them in the decision process, the necessary change initiative could be derailed.

A Consensus decision is a decision made jointly with your collaborators, associates or others. An example of when to use consensus decision making includes building a common vision for the organization or developing strategies to gain market share. Another example is problem solving within a team where a joint action plan emerges to address the problem.

A Delegated decision is a decision that you don't make. You have already delegated the topic to a collaborator. Therefore you consciously avoid making this decision even if your collaborator requests it. In our book, Total Alignment we have suggested guidelines for delegation, where outcome indicators for ongoing processes would settle to the person at the lowest level of the organization who can directly impact the indicator, while indicators for strategic initiatives that build the future rise to the highest appropriate levels of the organization to assure sufficient span of control for their success. With this guideline each individual receives delegation for a mix of process indicators and project indicators.

### ***What is a Healthy Pattern of Decision Making?***

In medium to large organizations with layers of management, most decisions should be delegated with progressively fewer consensus decisions, even fewer consultative, and very few if any command type. In very small organizations, however, a pattern cannot be recommended as much will depend on the availability and competency of resources.

### ***Responsibility & Accountability***

How does responsibility or accountability enter the picture? We suggest that if you are confronted with a decision - whichever type you use - you are responsible. The fact that your collaborators and associates share the joint consensus decision with you should not diminish your responsibility. Nor should the fact that you have delegated a decision to a collaborator diminish your responsibility for the decision he or she has made. This does not mean your collaborator is not accountable to you and should not be required to explain the reason for the decision he or she has made and the results obtained.

### ***Related Responsibility***

Since delegation works when there is competence, as a manager you acquire a related responsibility for the competence of your collaborators. This means paying attention to and evaluating their level of competency in specific core skills, and helping them move to higher levels. In many organizations line managers do not feel responsible for enhancing the competency of the people they manage. They count on the Human Resources department to find them talent and train that talent to do the work. Yet, they depend on the day-to-day decisions of these people they are managing.

The Total Alignment philosophy changes this traditional approach, and puts the responsibility for developing competencies on line managers while requiring the Human Resource department to provide training and support as needed. This management model is designed to build capacity at all the levels of the organization.

### ***Success and Learning***

When your command decision has produced positive results, don't ignore the opportunity for reflection and learning that will improve your decisions in the future, and if the results have been worse than expected, then reflection and learning

becomes even more essential.

When your consultative decision has produced positive results, don't forget to give credit to those people who provided you with valuable input, and if the results have been worse than expected, then reflection and learning becomes necessary.

When your consensus decision has produced positive results, don't take the credit yourself, but celebrate the joint victory with your people, and if the results have been worse than expected, then engage them in reflection to determine what was learned and then in a problem solving process to arrive at an action plan for the future.

When the delegated decision has produced positive results, give all the credit to the person you have delegated to, and if the results have been worse than expected, request explanation of the root causes that contributed to the problem as well as the plan of action for the solution.

### ***Impact of the Model***

When this decision model is understood in the organization, decisions will not be left to the personal style of a manager, nor will they be unduly delayed. Decisions will be made at the right levels by the right people. The participants in the decisions will be more motivated. They will be more candid in expressing their views and less concerned when their views are heard but not adopted. The result of using this model is noticeable improvement in the efficiency, productivity and the profitability of the organization.

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