



# The Advisor

Organizational Effectiveness News & Trends

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## Adapt Swiftly - Position for Growth



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[www.clearpathalliance.com](http://www.clearpathalliance.com)

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Today's environment calls for prudent, if not radical, actions. However, it is crucial to balance perceived short-term benefits with longer-term consequences. Decisions made now can help or hinder your brand, core business, and ability to gain market-share in the months ahead. Read on to learn three proven ideas you can use to adapt swiftly to immediate challenges while positioning for future growth.

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### Adapt Swiftly - Position for Growth

An old proverb says, "Measure twice, cut once." Here are three ways strengthen the resiliency and fortitude of your organization as you regroup and re-strategize in the face of swirling uncertainty and ambiguity:

#### 1) **Alignment**

Ensure alignment between Strategy, Work, and Talent for improved quarterly results and longer-term sustainable outcomes:

- **Strategy:** your market, positioning, objectives, metrics, initiatives
- **Work:** your internal processes, resources, culture, organization structure, leadership
- **Talent:** your business critical roles, required leadership/technical competencies, leadership bench, leadership pipeline, HR systems

Organizational health is as important as Financial and Product health. The foundation of strong financials and superior market-share is an aligned organization with people inspired by a shared vision and passionately focused on delivering the brand and the mission.

ClearPath Alliance specializes in strategic direction, sustainable change, and succession management.

We bring proven processes, customizable tools, and a holistic approach that can help you achieve superior results.

## 2) **Safety**

Assume people are doing their best. So, make it safe enough to discuss what is on the table, what is under the table, and what is up in the clouds (Marshak, 2006):

- On the Table: topics, thoughts, behaviors considered safe enough to discuss openly to run the business (e.g., strengths, opportunities, financials, processes)
- Under the Table: topics, thoughts, behaviors considered too risky to address openly for fear of punishment (e.g., people's mindsets, negative emotions, politics, anxieties)
- \* In the Clouds: secret hopes and wishes considered too risky to express openly for fear of ridicule (e.g., positive or optimistic thoughts, higher standards, pride in accomplishments)

It is essential now more than ever, "to make visible that which is invisible" (Schein, 1999). Legitimizing what people are truly thinking and feeling can overcome deep resistance, relax their grip on the status quo, and accelerate acceptance for change.

## 3) **Dilemmas**

When encountering a significant difficulty or long-standing business issue, ask, "Is this a problem we can 'solve', or is it an ongoing polarity we must manage well?" (Johnson, 1996):

- Problems: have one right answer (e.g., spell 'cat'), or two or more right answers that are *independent* (e.g., get to the peak - hike, bike, helicopter)
- Polarities: have two or more right answers that are *interdependent* (e.g., centralized AND decentralized, competing AND collaborating, stability AND change)

Managing polarities during these uncertain times will enable you to be more effective in addressing organizational issues, managing multiple priorities, and taking appropriate actions to sustain desired results.

### **Actions to Take Now!**

ClearPath Alliance has helped clients with the above actions, which you, too, may want to start today. To recap:

- Focus on aligning Strategy, Work, and Talent
- Make it safe to surface what's not being said and listen
- Manage polarities to drive actions and deliver more value

Managing uncertainty and ambiguity, while staving off the ever-present pressure to merely react, makes room for clear thinking and informed action to emerge. Begin today!



**Next Steps**

If you are ready to take action and improve your organization's performance, call us at 858-292-5361 for a consultation.

The "Organizational Survey" is quick and effective way to determine the health of your business. Click on the link below to download a free survey and conduct your own confidential self-assessment.

[Organizational Survey](#)

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