Energy Point Consulting

CLARITY
OUT OF CHAOS

VISION WITHOUT ALIGNMENT IS JUST A SLIDE

The difference between vision and a kickoff deck is alignment and its absence is one of the most consistent predictors of failure in technology initiatives.

Every technology initiative begins with the overview slide: project name, budget, timeline, and purpose. The leadership team nods. The project is approved. And everyone leaves the room with a slightly different understanding of what was just agreed to.

That's not vision. That's a slide.

The difference between the two is alignment, and the absence of real alignment at the start is one of the most consistent predictors of failure in technology initiatives. Not failure at go-live. Failure long before then, baked into the project from the first planning meeting.

> ***"If vision isn't clear, teams will create their own."***
>
> **Britanni Rutledge · Chief Analytics Officer, Energy Point Consulting**

THE MISALIGNMENT TAX

According to PMI research, nearly half of all unsuccessful projects fail to meet their goals due to poor requirements management and unclear objectives. For example, in a land system implementation that looks like Land focusing on speed, Division Orders focusing on payment accuracy, IT focusing on system stability. Each group comes to the same project with a legitimate perspective, and without a shared vision, each will optimize for their own definition of success.

The result is a project that moves in multiple directions at once. Configuration decisions get made that serve one group at the expense of another. Data standards get set by whoever shows up to the meeting. Reporting requirements get added late because no one asked for them early. And the project team spends as much energy on internal negotiation as on actual delivery.

Holly Frankenfield & Britanni Rutledge
Chief Transformation Officer & Chief Analytics Officer · Energy Point Consulting
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$109M

lost for every $1 billion in project spending due to misalignment and poor requirements management.

Most of it is recoverable if you catch it early. Almost none of it once the build is underway.

Project Management Institute, 2014

This is what misalignment looks like in practice. And it's expensive,

The organizations that get it right take the time to lay the groundwork upfront: defining future-state workflows, data standards, and reporting expectations before anyone accesses the system.

WHAT ALIGNMENT REQUIRES

Leadership alignment in the context of VOICE means something specific. It means that leadership in the impacted departments have reached explicit agreement, not assumed consensus, on four things before the project begins:

REQUIREMENT	WHAT IT MEANS
Future-state workflows	How will users work in the new system? What processes change, and for whom? This has to be agreed before configuration begins, not discovered during it.
Data standards	How will we define and standardize the terms and structures that matter most? Are we defining foundational terms the same way across every team?
Reporting expectations	What does the organization need to see, and when? Who owns the accuracy of what gets reported? Set before go-live, not after.
Shared definition of success	What business outcomes justify the investment? What does success look like six months after go-live, and will we know when we've achieved it?

Getting to that agreement requires facilitated conversation across functions, not a kickoff presentation followed by separate workstreams each working toward their own definition of success. It requires someone asking the uncomfortable questions: Are we defining this the same way? What happens when these priorities conflict? Who decides?

OBJECTIVES: THE WHY THAT KEEPS THE PROJECT GROUNDED

Vision defines where you're going. Objectives define why. And the "why" is the most overlooked part of a technology initiative. When the why is clear, it changes how people show up. It gives teams context for why decisions are being made, why priorities shift, why certain tradeoffs matter. Without that context, people fill in the gaps themselves. And that's where misalignment really starts.

Meaningful objectives might look like: reducing process cycle time from 90 days to 30. Eliminating manual reconciliation. Improving compliance readiness. Increasing trust in ownership data to the point where it drives operational decisions rather than just reporting.

These objectives do something a go-live date cannot: they give every decision throughout the project a test. Does this configuration decision move us closer to the business outcome we defined at the start? Does this data migration approach support the reporting and compliance requirements we committed to? If the answer is no, the decision may be wrong regardless of how fast it gets the team to go-live.

> ***"Clarity upfront prevents complexity later."***
>
> **Britanni Rutledge · Chief Analytics Officer, Energy Point Consulting**

THE BOTTOM LINE

Most organizations don't fail at vision because they have the wrong idea. They fail because they never fully aligned on the same one. The slide got approved, the project launched, and every team moved forward with a slightly different definition of success. That misalignment doesn't stay hidden, it surfaces as scope disputes, configuration rework, and data problems that were entirely preventable.

Vision isn't a deliverable. It's a conversation. And the organizations that take the time to have it...before requirements are written, before the vendor is selected, before configuration begins...build everything else on stable ground.

THREE QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING RIGHT NOW

If you're evaluating a technology initiative, or if you're mid-stream and something feels off, these three questions cut through the noise:

- If you asked every leader involved to write down what success looks like in 12 months, would the answers match?
- Does your project have a written definition of success that goes beyond go-live and can everyone on the team articulate it?
- When a scope dispute arises, do you have a shared set of objectives that can resolve it without escalating to leadership every time?

If any of those answers give you pause, the vision work isn't done yet. The good news is that it's fixable at the start of a project at relatively low cost. Mid-project, it becomes a renegotiation. Post-go-live, it becomes rework.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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A results-driven leader with 25 years in Oil & Gas, Holly has led small to large-scale system and data implementations as well as business transformation efforts across Anadarko Petroleum, Chesapeake Energy, Equinor, and Vital Energy. She brings the change management depth and operational credibility that turns ambitious digital initiatives into measurable business outcomes.

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A forward-thinking analytics leader, Britanni has driven transformational impact in the energy sector by leading multi-billion-dollar data conversion initiatives, building scalable analytics frameworks, and delivering data-driven strategies that improve decision-making, reduce risk, and create measurable operational and financial efficiencies.

ABOUT ENERGY POINT CONSULTING

Energy Point Consulting empowers organizations across industries to accelerate digital transformation: selecting and implementing the right software, automating workflows, and embedding best practices. Through organizational change management and business transformation services, we ensure technology investments are adopted, trusted, and sustained. By building and leveraging scalable, integrated systems and data-driven visibility, we deliver process efficiency, compliance readiness, and real-time insights that enable strategic decision-making and sustainable performance.

Learn more at www.energypointllc.com

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