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Organizational Network Alignment

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Organizational alignment is a commonly used diagnostic concept. It draws attention to the relationship between parts, and hence serves as a systems-oriented corrective to a parts-oriented analysis. There is a bare spot in the literature, however. The concept is rarely used to diagnose the external relationships of an organization. This is partly because the concept has not been generalized but is tied to a specific schema of internal parts (i.e., people versus process) or to a specific type of relationship (i.e., a customer). In a project for the military we developed a new concept and measure of interorganizational alignment. We applied it to five varied relationships between major interacting nodes, constituting the bulk of the network that administers manpower and personnel. The concept, data collection apparatus, and results are reviewed, with emphasis on the use of multiple perspectives. The benefits of this method for developing network-centric organization and enterprise-wide robustness are discussed.

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