

Alignment Pulse

The 45-Minute Meeting That Replaces All Others

One focused weekly meeting that replaces ALL standing meetings.

Meeting Structure

Duration: 45 minutes, once per week

Attendees: Leadership team with direct operational accountability

Rule: Hard stop at 45 minutes—no exceptions

The Four-Part Protocol

Minutes 0-5: Numbers (Not Commentary)

Each person **states** their Number. Period.

NOT:

- Explanations
- Justifications
- Contextualization
- Stories

Examples of correct format:

- "Site activation: 31 days, down from 34."
- "Data lock: 168 hours, up from 155."
- "Submission time: 22 days, flat from last week."

Purpose: Everyone knows instantly who's accelerating and who's creating friction.

Minutes 5-15: Rocks (On Track/Off Track/Blocked)

What are Rocks? The 3-7 most important things that must get done in the next 90 days.

Rock Definition:

- 90-day timeframe (long enough for progress, short enough for intensity)
- Exactly ONE owner (not a committee)
- Clear, measurable outcome

Format: Each Rock owner gives a **ten-second update:**

- "Protocol simplification: On track, 60% complete, delivering Week 12."
- "Data platform migration: Blocked, need vendor selection decision by Friday."
- "Site network expansion: Off track, adjusting approach, new target Week 15."

No:

- Storytelling
- Excuses
- Details (unless specifically requested)

Only question: Will you hit your 90-day outcome?

Minutes 15-40: Constraint Solving

25 minutes of focused problem-solving on the biggest organizational bottleneck.

Not discussion—**active constraint elimination.**

Four Key Questions:

1. **What's the actual constraint** slowing everything down?
2. **What would eliminate it permanently**, not just work around it?
3. **Who owns the solution** and what happens by next week?
4. **What resources are needed** to remove this friction?

This is organizational surgery: cut out the constraint, implement the solution, move on.

Minutes 40-45: System Adjustments

Only system-level decisions that change how the organization operates.

Examples:

- "Increasing clinical team's budget authority to \$50K for standard expenses"
- "Changing protocol approval from committee review to CMO direct approval"
- "Automating site payment processing effective Monday"

NOT operational decisions

Those flow automatically through established criteria.

Focus: Changes to how the organizational system operates.

What NOT to Do in This Meeting

✗ DON'T DO THIS	✓ DO THIS INSTEAD
Status Updates	Use real-time dashboards
Information Sharing	Use documentation
Operational Approvals	Flow through pre-defined criteria
Brainstorming Sessions	Focused work sessions with specific outcomes
Relationship Building	Happens through collaborative work

Key principle: “The Alignment Pulse is not a substitute for other meetings. It’s the elimination of the need for other meetings.”

Success Criteria

- **Meeting hours decrease 90%**
 - **Decision speed increases 300%**
 - All coordination happens through systems, not meetings
 - The pulse becomes the heartbeat, not the work itself
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Common Pitfalls

- ✗ **Using pulse for status updates** instead of constraint solving
 - ✓ Status is visible on dashboards; pulse is for decision-making
 - ✗ **Letting meetings run over 45 minutes**
 - ✓ Hard stop trains discipline and forces prioritization
 - ✗ **Allowing storytelling and explanations**
 - ✓ Facts only—numbers, status, constraints
 - ✗ **Skipping weeks because “nothing to report”**
 - ✓ Consistency creates rhythm; always meet
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The Transformation

When you master the Alignment Pulse, you’ll discover:

- The 45-minute pulse isn’t the work
- It’s the heartbeat that confirms the organism is healthy
- The real work happens in the spaces between beats
- Everyone stays aligned without living in meetings

Result: Your organization operates at velocity because coordination is systematic, not ceremonial.

Before Your First Pulse

Prepare:

1. Define each person’s Number
2. Identify current 90-day Rocks with single owners

3. Set up real-time dashboard for Numbers
4. Communicate the new format to all participants
5. Schedule recurring 45-minute weekly slot

First Meeting Focus:

- Practice stating Numbers without commentary
- Practice ten-second Rock updates
- Identify the single biggest constraint
- Make one system-level decision

Remember: The first few pulses will feel awkward. That's normal. Discipline creates the rhythm.

90-Day Target

All coordination happens through systems, not meetings. Your calendar shows:

- One 45-minute Alignment Pulse per week
- Focused work sessions with specific outcomes
- Almost no standing meetings

Success looks like: Empty calendars, full velocity, aligned execution.

From The Velocity Framework: Breakthrough Biotech @ Breakthrough Speed