

## Project 3: Design Document

**Team Members:** Rowan Lowden & Navaneeth Maruthi

**Project Description:** Alignify, full-stack web application, helps users plan and execute their goals using Cal Newport's multiscale planning method. The app allows users to define long-term quarterly goals, break them down into weekly plans, and schedule daily tasks that align with their higher-level objectives. By connecting everyday actions to meaningful goals, the app encourages intentionality, reduces overwhelm, and helps users maintain focus across multiple time horizons.

We found this approach especially useful because goal planning is often done in static formats such as worksheets or notebooks, where it's easy to lose sight of how small actions connect to the bigger picture. With this app, users can dynamically organize their goals from the big picture down to daily execution, visually seeing their progress as they "chip away" at larger objectives. The result is a planning experience that enhances motivation and productivity: not by focusing only on small habits or daily to-dos, but by clearly linking those smaller actions to a larger purpose. We also included an optional reflection for users to write about their wins and challenges of a given week

### Tech Stack:

#### FrontEnd:

- [React.js](#) with hooks
- Bootstrap
- FetchAPI (AJAX)

#### BackEnd:

- [Node.js](#)
- [Express.js](#)
- Brypt
- Dotenv
- MongoDB Atlas

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### User Personas & Stories:

**User 1:** Alex Ramirez

**Age:** 26

**Occupation:** Graduate Student

**Tech Experience:** high, already uses multiple digital tools for coursework and time management.

**Goals:**

- Stay on track with academic milestones and personal projects.
- Maintain balance between study, exercise, and personal time.

**Frustrations:**

- Overwhelmed by scattered tools (Google Calendar, Notion, sticky notes).
- Struggles to connect daily tasks to long-term academic goals.

**Motivations:**

- Wants to see measurable progress toward big goals.
- Feels motivated when work is visually organized and achievable.

**User Story:** Alex is a 26-year-old graduate student studying computer science. Between classes, research projects, and part-time work, Alex constantly feels like there's too much to juggle. They've tried using notebooks, spreadsheets, and several productivity apps, but none make it easy to see how daily work connects to their bigger professional and personal goals. At the start of each semester, Alex sets intention, like improving technical skills, maintaining fitness, and keeping a balanced routine, but by week six, they lose track of progress.

With Alignify, Alex can set clear quarterly academic and personal goals, such as "Publish my research paper" or "Work out three times per week." Each week, they build a Weekly Plan connected to those goals, listing key milestones like "write proposal", "Finish literature review" or "Start data analysis." On the Daily Schedule, Alex spreads out tasks throughout the week on the daily task cards and can reflect on what they were able to get done, and can see how each task contributes to a larger goal.

**User 2:** Jordan Lee

**Age:** 37

**Occupation:** Project Manager

**Tech Experience:** intermediate, comfortable with the productivity tools provided at work.

**Goals:**

- Align personal career development with company objectives.
- Reduce stress from constant multitasking and context switching.

**Frustrations:**

- Uses too many disconnected apps (Trello, Asana, Google Sheets).
- Loses sight of long-term goals amid daily meetings and deadlines.

#### **Motivations:**

- Wants a single tool to connect big-picture goals with daily action.
- Enjoys checking off completed tasks and visual progress tracking.

**User Story:** Jordan is a 35-year-old project manager. They oversee multiple teams, handle meetings all day, and constantly switch contexts. Jordan loves their work but feels overwhelmed by the flood of daily tasks that don't always feel meaningful. Traditional project tools like Trello and Asana track deliverables for work, but don't show whether Jordan's day-to-day work is actually helping them grow as a leader in their career and reaching their personal goals.

Alignify gives Jordan a space to think strategically in both personal and professional realms. At the start of each quarter, they define goals such as "Improve team communication" or "Develop leadership presence." Each week, they build a focused Weekly Plan outlining priorities like "Run a 1:1 check-in with each team member" or "Attend a management training session." Their weekly and daily tasks are visually linked to those goals. Seeing this alignment helps Jordan cut unnecessary meetings, delegate better, organize their time, and stay connected to what they value most and want to achieve personally and professionally.

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**User 3:** Taylor Nguyen

**Age:** 42

**Occupation:** Freelance Graphic Designer

**Tech Experience:** intermediate, uses design apps and task apps

#### **Goals:**

- Balance creative projects with administrative work.
- Maintain consistent habits while staying flexible.

#### **Frustrations:**

- Feels constrained by traditional planners.
- Finds it hard to visualize progress on long-term creative goals.

#### **Motivations:**

- Wants a visually engaging way to see progress and reflect weekly.
- Enjoys seeing how daily creative work builds toward something meaningful.

**User Story:** Taylor is a 42 year-old freelance designer who thrives on creativity but struggles with consistency. They love starting new projects but often get sidetracked or lose track of deadlines. Most planning tools feel rigid and uninspiring to them, filled with lists that don't reflect the fluid nature of creative work. Taylor wants to build structure without losing freedom.

Alignify provides the balance they've been missing. Taylor begins each quarter by setting high-level creative goals such as "Redesign my online portfolio" or "Complete three client projects." For each week, they create a Weekly Plan that translates those goals into focus areas like "finish portfolio design doc", "Work on homepage redesign" or "Finish branding for Client A." Their Daily tasks shows how smaller tasks can be managed and are flexible enough to rearrange when inspiration strikes. A reflection section helps Taylor record what went well each week and what to adjust. Over time, Alignify helps Taylor stay accountable to creative goals while still leaving room for spontaneity and inspiration.

### Design Mockups:





