

# Gaining Strategic Alignment

PART 1

## The impacts of COVID-19 are decimating budgets across industries

Most security programs grow organically, with services being added or expanded as convenient. Now is the perfect time to focus strategic energy on aligning security programs with your organization's mission, values, risks and goals.

In these days of increasingly tight budgets, it is more important than ever for security to be seen as a valuable contributor to the bottom line and not "just an expense."

COVID-19 highlighted the importance of having a reliable platform. How can we shift to greater reliance? The first step in achieving this goal is optimizing resources—stretching every dollar to its maximum while still producing quality results.

## Establish clear expectations

Before undertaking a strategic alignment initiative, it is critical to clearly establish with senior leaders and stakeholders the exact nature of expectations.



Next, ask whether these expectations are in alignment with business priorities. Evolve this conversation to distill a clear picture of exact business needs, organizational risks and cultural expectations. High-level risks may be somewhat consistent across peer organizations (i.e. fraud), but each organization's structure and culture will drive the specifics. Your security program must be crafted to match your organizational culture, or else it is likely to generate friction and resistance. Is a personal high-touch experience a part of your culture, or is it a more independent, self-service environment? What will meet your needs and be acceptable to your end-users?



Focus your strategic alignment on your organization's mission and associated risks.

How does your security program contribute to organizational value? Is it strictly a compliance exercise? A deterrent against unwanted behavior? Or does your program enable employees to bring their best selves to work by contributing to a sense of safety and reducing unwanted interruptions and distractions?

## Creating better organizational alignment

One obvious area to create better organizational alignment is the security officer force. Examine the services your officers provide and measure where they spend their time. Officers provide a number of services, including concierge, wayfinding, escorting guests, assisting visitors with finding their host, signing for packages, entering work orders on behalf of employees, reporting leaks, first aid services, and the list goes on. Balance the right number of officers with the right caliber of officers. There may be opportunity to reduce staff numbers by hiring those with greater experience and level of ability.

In some cases, these services may have grown organically, or been assigned when the company had different priorities. What are today's priorities and do the services offered match? There may be opportunities to trim non-value-add services, such as wayfinding, with better tools. Clear signage provides a self-service option for guests and reduces interruptions to security staff.

Your organization has a unique culture and mission. Taking this opportunity to strategically align your security program with your organization's mission, cultural needs and organizational risks can enhance your business goals.

## Let's start a conversation.

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