

✨ How Stakeholder Relationships Drive Operational Success

👉 **Your influence is only as strong as your cross-functional relationships.**

Here's how to strengthen them.

📌 **5 real-world strategies to boost stakeholder collaboration.**

📄 **CCL research across 48,000 leaders reveals a top leadership challenge: building cross-functional partnerships that drive influence and lasting impact.**

I spent years at the intersection of Finance, HR, and IT: a brilliant power triad.

Alignment doesn't just happen. Sometimes we operated in parallel rather than in sync:

👛 **Finance ensures accuracy BUT may not see the early-stage strategy.**

“Tell us the total cost. Don’t surprise us with renewals and late-stage scope changes.”

 HR steers experience BUT relies on others to bring policies to life.

“We shape policy and culture but rely on Finance and IT for co-owned systems and shared data integrity.”

 IT powers integration BUT isn’t always looped in.

“Bring us in early – before requirements are finalized.”

 This is NOT unique to Finance, HR, and IT.

 Here’s my real-world example: Changing Benefits Policy

✓ HR owned policy design.

✓ Finance ensured accurate calcs and payments.

✓ IT updated systems and maintained integration across platforms.

The result?

- ✓ Seamless change execution
- ✓ No compliance or control gaps
- ✓ Positive employee trust

5 practices to strengthen strategic partnerships:

1) Shared Storyboarding + Governance

Early alignment + strong communication + shared ownership.

Finance, HR, and IT co-created the narrative, & established:

- Clear roles and decision rights
- Governance for scope, risks, and escalations
- Unified understanding of goals and constraints

 Cohesion in the story and accountability.

2 Pre-Planning, Not Post-Fix

Involving Finance and IT early prevented rework and friction.

We explored:

- **Scope vs. minimum viable product**
- **Potential scope creep**
- **Resource dependencies and contingencies**
- 📌 **Alignment on priorities before decisions were locked in.**

3 Integrated Operating Rhythms

Honored each function's operating cycles: financial planning, policy windows, and system updates.

Tools to build trust:

- **Quarterly roadmap syncs to spotlight long-range priorities**
- **Joint impact reviews to assess cross-functional outcomes**
- **Aligned timelines for policy, payroll, and platform changes**
- 🤝 **Strengthened collaboration**

4 Fluent Translators, Embedded Early

Involving business analysts with technical and strategic acumen from the beginning:

- Surfaced misalignment before it created friction
- Ensured requirements and intentions were accurately translated

 Preserved trust across all three domains

5 Joint Success Metrics

Aligned on collective progress and shared success indicators:

- Employees experience improvements
- Reduced manual work or error rates
- On-time, on-budget delivery with sustained adoption

 Real partners work toward the same goal, at the right time, with clarity, trust, and mutual respect.

 **What helped you move stakeholders to collaborate?**

