Fusion Cell Playbook - Key Drivers

Key Tenets of Success: There are four key drivers to making a Fusion Cell successful. Some organizations will be drawn toward the flashier aspects of technology or spatial design. In fact, an effective Fusion Cell boils down to critical human factors. Selecting the right people, clearly defining their goal, giving them access to outside decision makers, and empowering them to share across boundaries will far outstrip any other factors in defining the success of a Fusion Cell.

[The four drivers are documented as goals in this StratML rendition.]

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McChrystal Group (MCG)

Description:
McChrystal is your people performance partner. We help organizations leverage human potential to achieve business outcomes by applying our Team of Teams framework to three critical areas of performance: developing your leaders, implementing strategy, and measuring your organization’s performance.

Stakeholder(s):
Chris Fussell: President
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Fusion Cells:
What is a Fusion Cell? A Fusion Cell is a collaborative, cross-functional team intended to rapidly acquire, interpret, and distribute actionable information to organizations, units, or personnel closest to the problem. They are meant to turn raw data into effective action as quickly as possible. By combining personnel, resources, and information from multiple organizations/agencies, the Fusion Cell can achieve far more, at far greater speeds, than its individual member organizations would be able to accomplish alone.

Governmental Leaders:
Fusion Cells offer governmental leaders at the federal, state, and local level a hub to coalesce information, interpret raw intelligence, and drive action.

Government Bureaucracies:
They are able to share data, clarify resourcing requirements, and exchange best practices across government bureaucracies. An interdisciplinary fusion cell can interpret information through the lens of multiple stakeholders, and quickly push insights to those elements with the greatest needs or opportunities.

Mid-Level Managers:
Fusion Cells also provide a unique brand of decision support. They serve as an incubator for unique ideas and recommendations that germinate at the intersection of mid-level managers from both inside and outside the government—catalyzed around the response to COVID-19.

Governors:
Fusion Cells do not circumvent or duplicate the work of the Governor’s or Mayor’s regular staff, but rather remain laser-focused on, in this case, the COVID-19 spread. This allows for specific lanes of coordination, while freeing bandwidth for the many other parts of government to receive necessary and adequate attention.

Mayors:

Vision
Far more is achieved, at far greater speeds

Mission
To coalesce information, interpret raw intelligence, and drive action

Values
Principles: Guiding Principles of a Fusion Cell -- The following four principles should be the “North Star” for all members of the Fusion Cell and should influence all aspects of interaction that members have with each other and their parent organization.

Trust: • The fastest way to earn trust is to give trust. To take a leap of faith that the other members of the Fusion Cell are there for the same reason you are – to help flatten the curve and to save lives. The first step is to always “assume noble intent” in others. Give voice to this intent, every day, with a FC team. • Remember, this may be the first time that people from different organizations are connected. They’ll have different organizational cultures, operating norms,
and views on collaboration. They’ll be from different political parties. Opportunities for misunderstandings abound. Give the benefit of the doubt, work through missteps and stay focused on the mission of helping people.

**Transparency:** • Be clear, concise and forthright in all things. • If there is information that simply cannot be shared, state as much to your fellow FC members. • Share until you’re uncomfortable.

**Communication:** • Sharing is power in a network-fight. • This is how we will win. We will share information with each other, with our parent agencies and departments and across boundaries seamlessly.

**Community:** • We are all in this together. We cannot let any previous organizational biases cloud our judgment. • Our work will help to protect the health and save the lives of our family, friends and neighbors. • We’ll come through this better informed, more closely connected and part of a stronger community.
1. People

Choose the Right People.

**Stakeholder(s)**

**Fusion Cell Members:**

A successful Fusion Cell drives fast-paced, focused activity only if comprised of well-informed, well-connected and action-oriented personnel.

Fusion Cells need individuals who can immediately speak on behalf of their department and who can manage cross-departmental relationships.

1.1. Operations

*Select individuals who have operational familiarity with their home organizations.*

Individual members must thus have deep operational familiarity with their home organizations—this will give them the ability to collect and evaluate information, identify risks, assess the viability of proposed actions, and connect new insights to current operations.

1.2. Access

*Ensure that members have access to their home organization’s senior leaders.*

They must also have access to their home organization’s senior leaders that will allow them to operate as effective representatives in the Fusion Cell.
2. Success

*Define Success*

2.1. Missions

*Document a clear mission.*

Fusion Cells must be given a clear mission.

**Stakeholder(s):**

**Executives:**

*It is critical that the Executive (Governor / Mayor) defines what they expect of the Fusion Cell and clearly relays those expectations to the Fusion Cell Director.*

**Fusion Cell Directors:**

*The Fusion Cell Director, in turn, then makes it clear to every member of the Fusion Cell what his or her role is in supporting the Fusion Cell’s mission.*

2.2. Metrics

*Determine metrics of success.*

Without clear guidance on goals and expectations, the Fusion Cell will be unable to determine metrics of success, and will pivot toward a repository of information versus an action-oriented team.
3. Insights

Get key insights to frontline decision makers with immediacy

Access to the Chief Executive: Fusion Cell members need to get key insights to frontline decision makers with immediacy, and without fear of bureaucratic repercussions. The purpose of a Fusion Cell is to make the city or state faster and more responsive in a time of crisis; this can only be achieved if members are able to cut across normal bureaucratic lanes and communicate directly with frontline leaders.

3.1. Communication

*Empower members to cut across bureaucratic lanes and communicate directly with frontline leaders.*

**Stakeholder(s):**
- Fusion Cell Members
- Frontline Leaders
4. Information

Make Information-Sharing the Priority

A Fusion Cell ‘fuses’ information. Fusion requires the liberal sharing of pertinent information and an honest exchange about each organization’s capabilities, resources, disposition and perspective. The reticence of even a single member can reduce a Fusion Cell’s effectiveness.

4.1. Transparency

Align all members to the norm of full and transparent information sharing.

All members must be aligned to the norm of full and transparent information sharing.

4.2. Voice

Empower every member of the Fusion Cell to speak on behalf of their department, agency or organization.

Reluctance to share or trepidation is often caused by team members who believe that they must ask their parent organization for clarity or permission; every member of the Fusion Cell must be fully empowered to speak on behalf of their department, agency or organization.