

## Vocabulary: Entrainment

What is the definition of the word 'entrainment' within the context of inter-organizational relationship transformation?

In the context of inter-organizational relationship transformation, the term entrainment refers to the synchronization of processes, behaviors, or rhythms between two or more organizations as they evolve and interact with one another over time. It is a concept borrowed from biology and physics, where systems align their internal rhythms or behaviours to an external cycle.

Applied to inter-organizational dynamics, entrainment highlights how organizations adapt and adjust to one another's operational cycles, decision-making patterns, and strategies as they form partnerships or collaborations. Over time, the organizations may become "entrained" to each other's processes, fostering better coordination, alignment of goals, and joint problem-solving. This synchronization can enhance the effectiveness of the collaboration and facilitate smoother organizational transformation as they grow and adapt together.

"Entrainment" refers to the synchronization or alignment of activities, processes, or behaviours between different organizations over time. It describes how organizations adjust their rhythms, strategies, or operational patterns to match or complement each other as they work together, often in response to external pressures, shared goals, or mutual interdependence.

In such settings, entrainment can occur in various dimensions, such as:

1. **Strategic alignment** – Organizations adjust their long-term goals or strategies to be in sync with one another, ensuring a smoother collaboration.
2. **Operational coordination** – Daily workflows, production cycles, or decision-making processes between organizations become aligned, facilitating efficiency and reducing conflict.
3. **Cultural synchronization** – The organizational cultures of the partnering entities gradually become more aligned, which helps in fostering better collaboration, communication, and trust.

Entrainment in this context ensures that despite the independent nature of organizations, they evolve in a complementary way, enhancing collaboration, adaptability, and responsiveness to external challenges.

The concept of **entrainment** between two organizations can be summarized as:

***Through continuous adaptation and interaction, the internal processes of both organizations become synchronized over time.***