About team alignment

The full scope of 'alignment'

1. **Alignment of the enterprise to strategic intent** across strategy, purpose, systems, capability, architecture, values

2. **Alignment of people to the enterprise** understanding of the strategy

3. **Alignment of people with each other** implementation of the strategy (starting with Leadership Teams)

Misalignment happens

INTERPRETATIONS

ASSUMPTIONS

AMBIGUITY

BIASES

INFORMATION GAPS

INFLUENCES

... and it leads to

- decreased productivity
- attempts to fix misdirected efforts
- demotivation, stress and frustration
- reduced drive and innovation
- lost opportunities
- unnecessary expenditures
- increased staff turnover
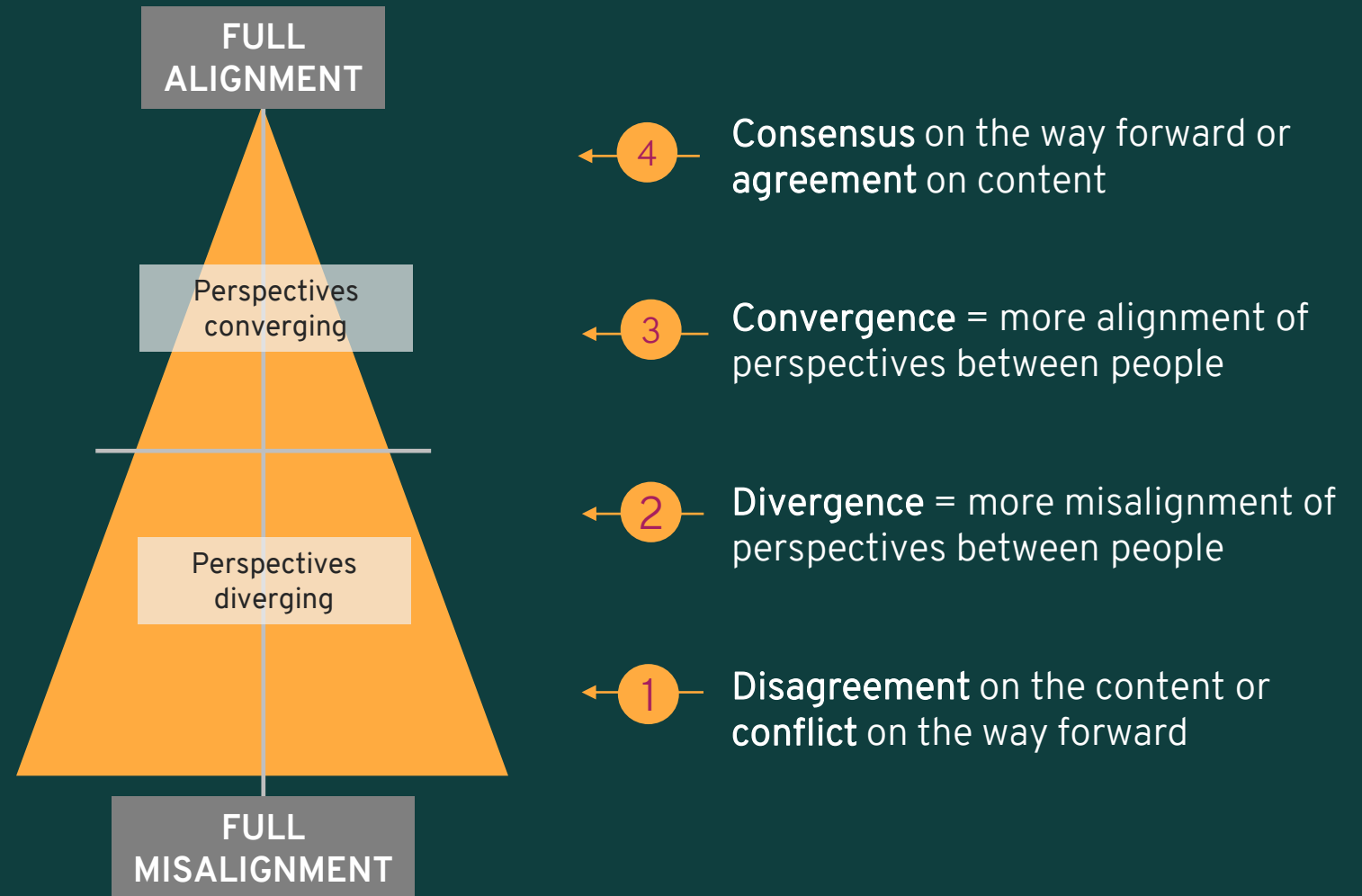- reputational impacts.

BOX, S., & PLATTS, K. 2005 – "BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT: ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING PROJECT ALIGNMENT", BUSINESS PROCESS MANAGEMENT JOURNAL, VOL. 11 ISSUE: 4, PP.370-387)

Alignment is not about everyone thinking the same thing

Alignment is achieved in the process of Group Learning (behavioural)

The most successful teams balance diverging perspectives for ideation and converging perspectives for coordination.

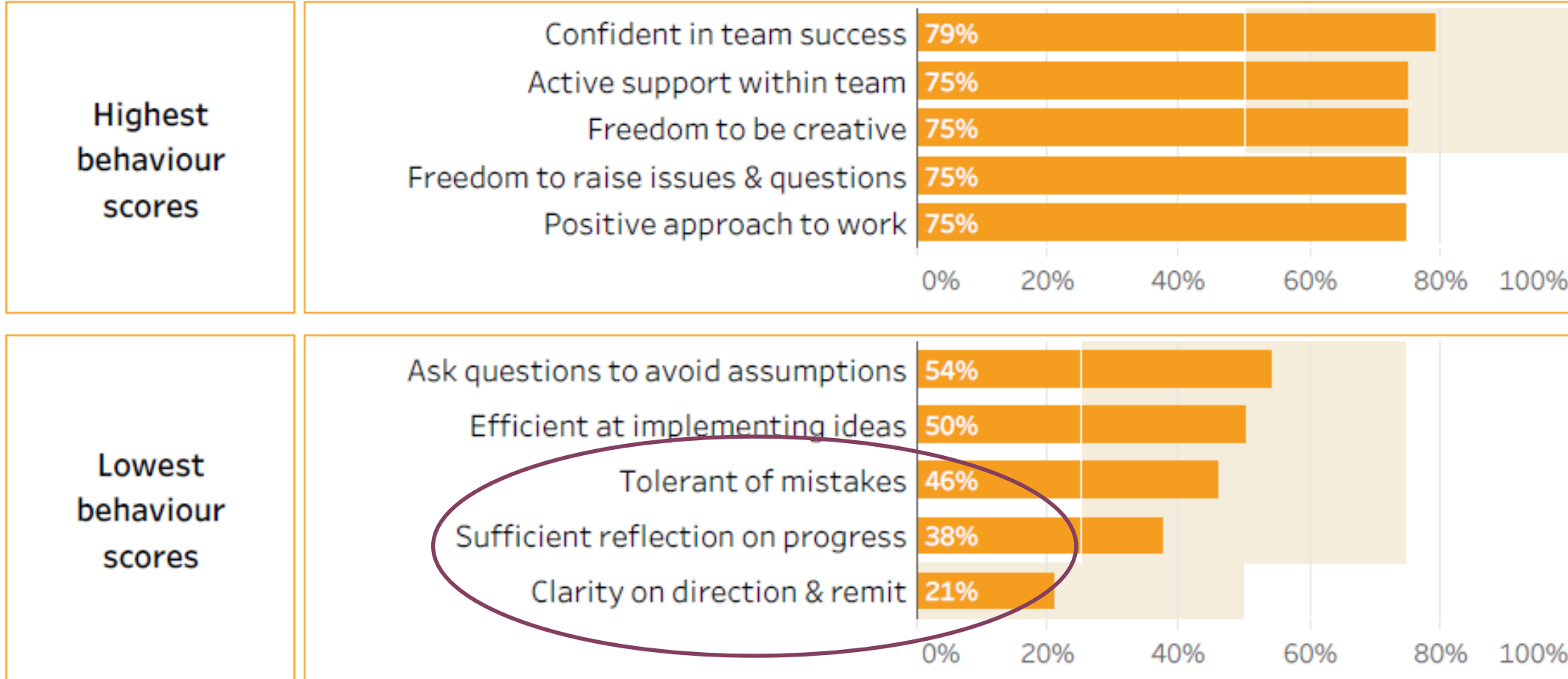Amir Goldberg, Associate Professor Organization Behaviour at Stanford Graduate School of Business

FULL ALIGNMENT

Perspectives converging

Perspectives diverging

FULL MISALIGNMENT

4 — **Consensus** on the way forward or **agreement** on content

3 — **Convergence** = more alignment of perspectives between people

2 — **Divergence** = more misalignment of perspectives between people

1 — **Disagreement** on the content or **conflict** on the way forward

Breakout

From an OD perspective,
what do you think gets in
the way of alignment?

What kind of alignment gaps?

	WHERE THEY COME FROM	WHERE THEY SIT	CLOSE THE GAPS WITH COACHING	ALONGSIDE
1. Structural gaps	Error, neglect, lack of skills and / or resources	• Processes, policies, and / or procedures and how they work	• Awareness and acceptance of the gap	• Time, money, skills, and adoption of change
2. Information gaps	Error, neglect, lack of skills, resources, and / or misinformation	• The strategic frame • Relevant knowledge or information	• Willingness to close the gap	• Provision of the right information • Provision of a clear strategic narrative
3. Perspective gaps	Complexity, diversity, change, and / or manipulation	• Anything concerned with the shared context, the strategy, what to do, and how to do it	• Effective conversation skills • Open, respectful, and inclusive behaviours	• Connection of different perspectives (build bridges to find new ways forward) • Acceptance of a direction even when it may not be everyone's preferred option
4. Anti-team gaps	Gaps that are intended or unintended, driven by coping strategies or conflicting interests	• Anything in the shared agenda (looks like people hiding information, or being dishonest about intentions or actions)	• Action in the best interests of the team	• Leadership clarity on expected team behaviours and commitment, and consequences of anti-team behaviours

Remote team: March 2020 - London

Highest behaviour scores

Behaviour	Score
Positive approach to work	88%
Confident in team success	87%
Active support within team	85%
Clarity on roles & responsibilities	83%
Level of team positivity	83%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Lowest behaviour scores

Behaviour	Score
Easy to ask team members for help	65%
Committed to team success	63%
Tolerant of mistakes	58%
Sufficient reflection on progress	50%
Clarity on direction & remit	37%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Remote team: June 2020 - Romania

Highest behaviour scores

- Positive approach to work — 88%
- Confident in team success — 87%
- Active support within team — 85%
- Clarity on roles & responsibilities — 83%
- Level of team positivity — 83%

Lowest behaviour scores

- Easy to ask team members for help — 65%
- Committed to team success — 63%
- Tolerant of mistakes — 58%
- Sufficient reflection on progress — 50%
- Clarity on direction & remit — 37%
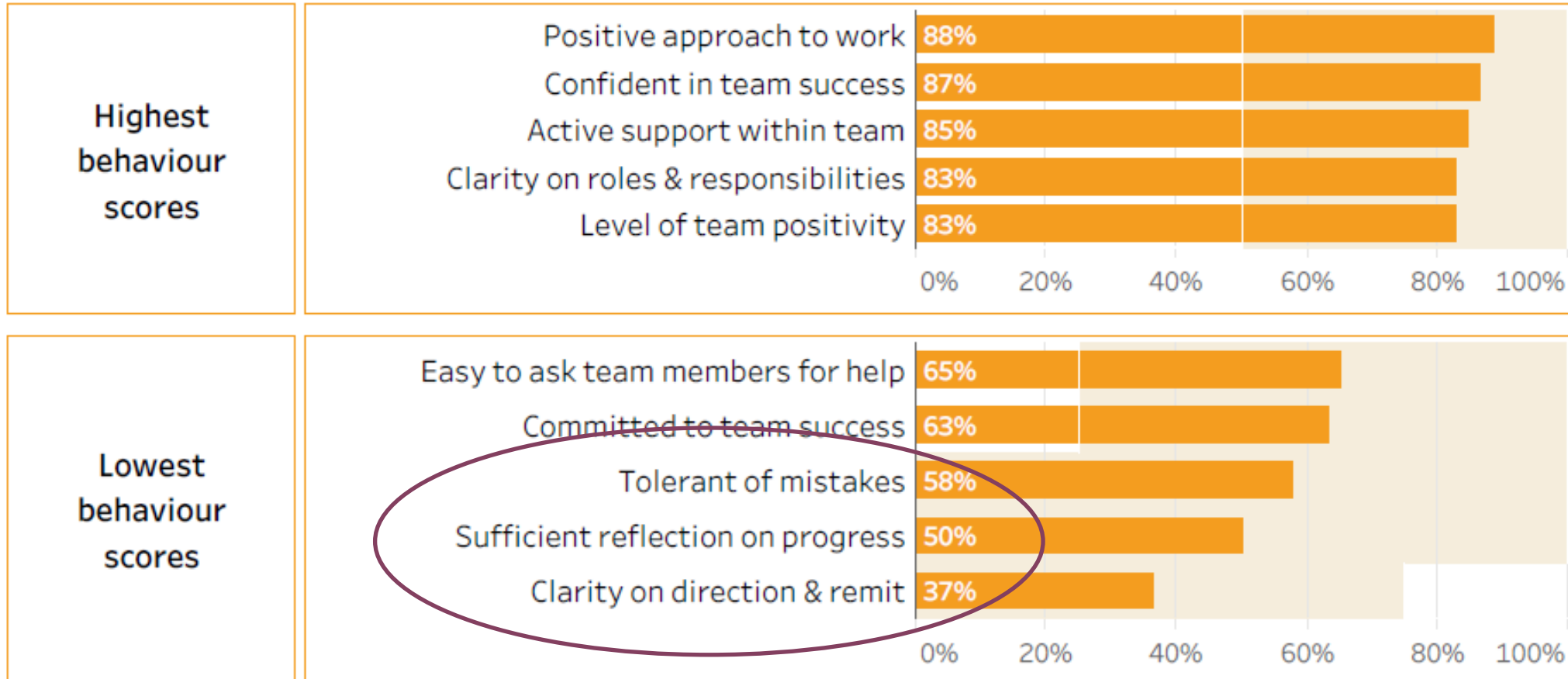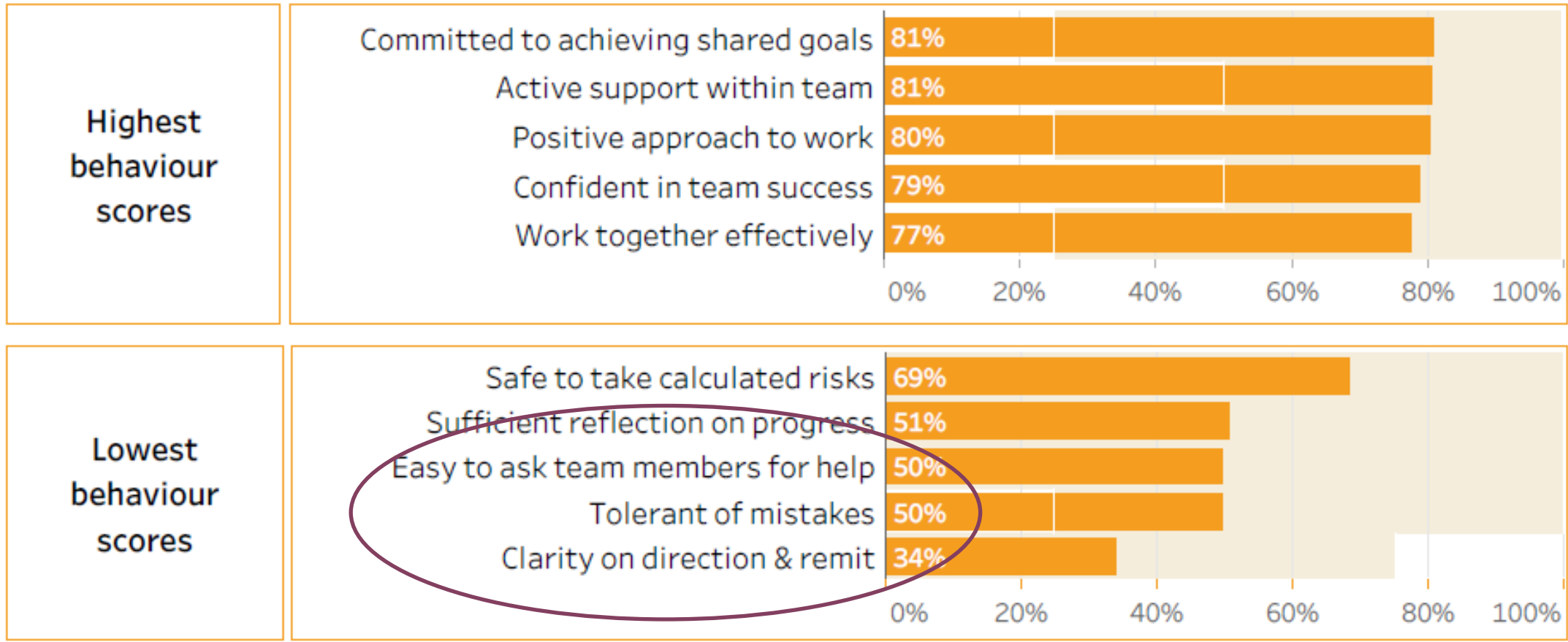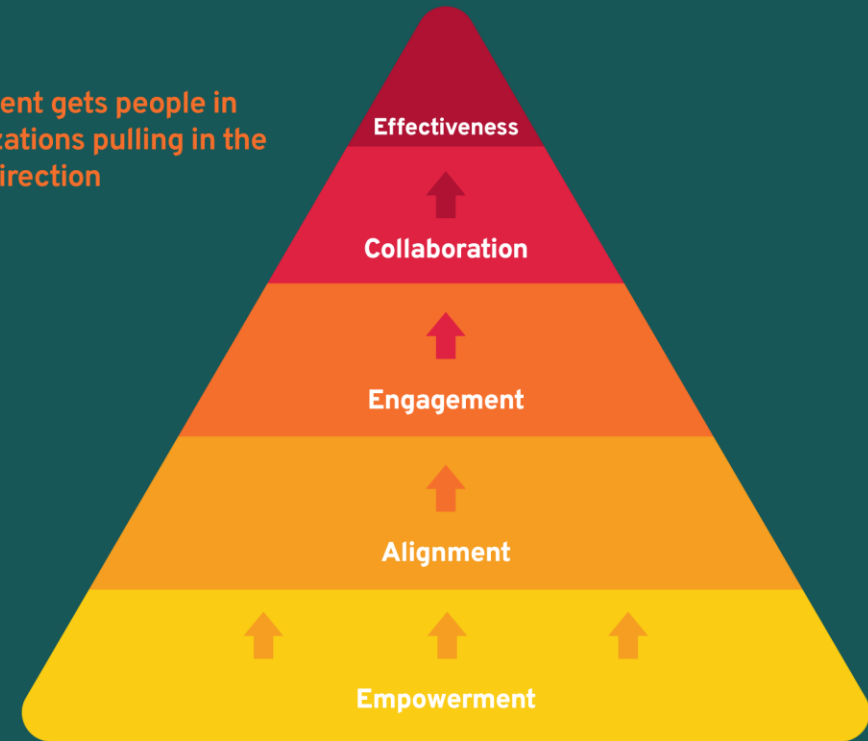
Alignment is …

- Meaning that sits in the space between people

- About compatibility or consensus - not necessarily people thinking the same thing

- Cognitive (what we understand) and behavioural (how we collaborate)

- Not fully achievable – some misalignment is always present

- Constantly evolving

- Not something that happens automatically

- Risk avoidance

- An enabler of engagement and effectiveness.

Alignment gets people in organizations pulling in the same direction

Effectiveness

Collaboration

Engagement

Alignment

Empowerment

Breakout

How could an OD process help to minimize misalignment?