



The Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model

Designing an Enterprise Built for Insight and Action

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Executive Summary

Organizations across industries are investing heavily in data, analytics, automation, and artificial intelligence. Yet despite these investments, many fail to realize meaningful enterprise-wide value. The root cause is rarely technology alone. Too often, smarter tools are added on top of operating models that were designed for a different era. The Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model focuses on building intelligence directly into decision making and execution, instead of treating it like an add on.

This topic matters now because organizations are operating under increasing pressure: economic uncertainty, workforce constraints, rising stakeholder expectations, and rapidly accelerating technology adoption. Traditional operating models designed around static reporting, periodic planning cycles, and hierarchical decision-making struggle to keep pace.

This paper presents Momentum's perspective on the Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model, grounded in real-world consulting experience. Readers will gain a practical understanding of what an intelligent operating model looks like, why it is becoming essential, and how organizations can begin evolving toward this state in a pragmatic, execution-focused way.

Overview

The idea of the "intelligent enterprise" has been around for a while, usually tied to analytics, AI, and modern digital platforms. The problem is that many organizations still think of intelligence primarily as a technology upgrade. In practice, that mindset misses the point. Intelligence only creates real value when it's built into how the organization operates, how decisions are made, how work flows, and how accountability is set up.

Across both public and private sectors, the environment that organizations are operating in has become far more complex. Teams are more distributed, the volume of available data has exploded, and leaders are expected to make decisions faster and with greater transparency. Traditional operating models weren't designed for this reality. They were built for stability, predictable change cycles, and periodic reporting, not for constant feedback and adjustment.

The Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model takes a different view. It treats intelligence as a core design element, not a feature. The focus is on how strategy, structure, processes, governance, and technology come together to support learning, adaptation, and responsive execution as part of normal day-to-day operations.

The Challenge

Organizations attempting to become more intelligent commonly face several interrelated challenges:

- **Fragmented Decision-Making:** Data is often readily available, sometimes in large volumes, but it's not always clear who owns which decisions. Insights may arrive too late, or they're presented in ways that aren't easy to act on. When that happens, teams tend to fall back on gut instinct, emails, or spreadsheets to move work forward.
- **Operating Models Misaligned with Technology:** Many organizations invest in advanced platforms while continuing to operate with legacy processes, annual planning cycles, and rigid governance structures. In these situations, intelligence is layered on top of the organization instead of being built into how it actually works.
- **Organizational and Cultural Resistance:** Even when good insights are available, people don't always trust them. Automated recommendations may be viewed as oversight rather than support, and analytics can feel disconnected from day-to-day realities. Without trust and clarity, intelligence is unlikely to be used consistently.

Momentum Perspective

We view the Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model as an evolution in how organizations design for execution. Instead of trying to overhaul everything at once, we focus on getting clear on what matters, aligning around it, and intentionally designing a few key areas that directly affect how work gets done.

In multiple large public sector programs, we've worked with organizations that invested heavily in enterprise platforms—Azure DevOps, SharePoint Online, modern case management systems—yet still relied on spreadsheets, email threads, and manual coordination to make day to day decisions. Those platforms generated plenty of data, but it wasn't integrated into how work was planned, prioritized, or governed. Teams regularly pulled data out of these systems into spreadsheets just to track status or brief leadership, which created parallel ways of working alongside the official tools. The issue wasn't missing data—it was that the tools weren't aligned with who actually had the authority to make decisions.

We've also seen ongoing governance friction caused by unclear ownership and a general hesitancy to make decisions, especially in highly regulated environments. Even when analytics and recommendations were available from trusted data sources, leaders often required multiple layers of review before taking action. As a result, project teams escalated issues that were fundamentally operational because governance models hadn't kept pace with the need for timely, distributed decision making. That hesitation slowed execution and pushed teams back toward manual workarounds, despite broad agreement on the value of more intelligent, automated approaches.

Finally, we've seen too many cases where technology teams built solutions with a "build it and they will come" mindset, only to find they didn't meet the needs of business teams or the customers and constituents they serve. More recently, we've been working with agencies to engage end users directly through user experience sessions—observing how people actually interact with solutions, what works, and what creates confusion. These conversations surface real pain points and help shape solutions that aren't over engineered or overpriced, but fit for purpose and focused on helping organizations serve their customers and constituents more effectively.

Based on these experiences, we approach the Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model across four integrated dimensions:

- **Strategy and Value Focus:** Intelligence is anchored to clear business outcomes and well-defined decision points. The goal isn't more data, it's insight tied to decisions that matter.
- **Operating Structure and Governance:** We're intentional about clarifying ownership and accountability so teams can act on insights without unnecessary delays or second-guessing.
- **Enabled Processes:** Core processes naturally use and generate insight as part of normal operations, with feedback loops built in for continuous learning and adjustment.
- **Technology as an Enabler, Not the Driver:** Tools and platforms reinforce how the organization intends to operate. Technology supports the model; it doesn't define it.

Implications

For leaders, adopting an Intelligent Enterprise Operating Model starts with a shift in mindset. Success isn't about finding the next great tool, it's about creating an environment where intelligence is understood, trusted, and actually used to drive decisions and action.

That often means taking a hard look at how the organization is set up today. Governance structures may need to be simplified, roles and responsibilities clarified, and capabilities intentionally developed over time. Moving too fast always carries risk, but so does standing still. Organizations that delay making these changes risk falling further behind as complexity and expectations continue to increase.

Key Takeaways

- Intelligence only delivers value when it's built into how work actually gets done.
- Many AI initiatives fall short because the operating model never changed.
- Adoption happens faster when it's clear who owns decisions.
- Trust and culture matter just as much as the technology itself.
- Steady, phased change beats large scale redesign every time.

About the Author

Curt Mills is the Director of Project and Portfolio Management at Momentum, Inc., where he helps organizations improve how large, complex initiatives are planned, governed, and executed. He has more than 35 years of experience across technology, operations, and program delivery, with much of his work focused on public-sector organizations operating in highly regulated environments.

Throughout his career, Curt has worked closely with business leaders, IT teams, and end users to translate strategy into practical operating models that support real decision-making and execution. His experience spans application development, business analysis, project and portfolio management, and enterprise transformation initiatives, bringing a steady, execution-focused perspective to how organizations adopt new capabilities, including data, analytics, and automation.

About Momentum

Momentum Inc. is a management and technology consulting firm focused on helping organizations move forward with clarity and confidence. We combine technology expertise with a people-first approach to deliver transformation that is practical, sustainable, and aligned to real business outcomes.

Our core service areas include:

- Management Consulting
- Process Improvement
- Product and Project Management
- Implementation Support

We partner with clients across public and private sector organizations to bring structure, clarity, and execution discipline to initiatives ranging from strategy through implementation.

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