



Intense

THE BUSINESS EXECUTION AUDIT

A practical framework for
finding out why your strategy
isn't showing up in your results

- 6 AREAS
- 30 DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS
- 1 CLEAR PICTURE OF WHERE YOU STAND

Why This Audit Exists

Most businesses don't fall short because their strategy is weak. They fall short because the distance between what leadership decides and what the business actually delivers is wider than anyone realises. That gap rarely shows up as one dramatic failure. It shows up as slow launches, unclear ownership, teams that are busy but not productive, and results that never quite match the ambition of the plan. This audit is built around the six places that gap most commonly opens up: strategic alignment, decision-making speed, campaign and process discipline, operational readiness for growth, cross-functional collaboration, and the difference between activity and outcomes. Work through each section honestly. There are no trick questions, and no business scores perfectly. The value is in seeing, clearly, where your execution is strongest and where it's quietly costing you. Score each area from 1 (rarely true of us) to 5 (consistently true of us), then use the scoring guide at the end to identify your priority focus.



01 Strategic Alignment

Agreement on a strategy is not the same as alignment on how to deliver it. Once a plan leaves the boardroom, every department begins to optimise for its own priorities, and unless there's a shared definition of success, execution fragments even when everyone is working hard.

Ask your business:

- Can every department leader describe success for our current top initiative in the same terms?
- Do teams understand how their individual work ladders up to the overall business objective?
- When priorities conflict between departments, is there a clear way to resolve it?
- Have we defined what success looks like before launching, rather than after?
- Would a new hire understand our current strategic priority within a day of joining?

02

Decision-Making Speed

Slow decisions rarely come from a lack of willingness. They come from processes that quietly require too many meetings, too many approvals and too many stakeholders before anything can move. The cost is invisible on a balance sheet, but it shows up in missed windows and lost momentum.

Ask your business:

- Do we know, for our key initiatives, exactly who has the authority to make the final call?
- Do we distinguish between decisions that are reversible and decisions that aren't, and treat them differently?
- Do our meetings consistently end with a decision, an owner and a next step?
- Has a good opportunity slipped away in the last year because we took too long to decide?
- Would our team describe our approval process as fast, or as a bottleneck?

03

Campaign & Process Discipline

Campaigns and initiatives are often judged only after launch, but their outcome is usually decided weeks earlier, in the brief, the approvals and the revisions. Every change made mid-execution has a cost, even when it looks small in isolation.

Ask your business:

- Is every brief specific enough that marketing, creative, sales and leadership would interpret it the same way?
- Do we have a single owner accountable for driving each initiative from start to finish?
- Are approval timelines defined and understood before work begins, not negotiated as we go?
- Do we identify likely risks and delays before execution starts, rather than reacting to them?
- Have scope changes mid-project recently pushed back a launch date or a deadline?

04

Operational Readiness for Growth

Growth doesn't create operational weaknesses. It reveals ones that were already there. Businesses that scale well build repeatable systems before they need them, rather than relying on a few key individuals to hold everything together.

Ask your business:

- Would our operations still function smoothly if a key team member was unavailable for a month?
- Are our core workflows documented, or do they live mostly in people's heads?
- Do we have a clear way of prioritising new opportunities against our current capacity?
- Have we built decision-making structures ahead of growth, rather than after things start slipping?
- As we've added headcount, has communication gotten easier or harder?

05

Cross-Functional Collaboration

Teams working on the same project are not automatically working towards the same outcome. Without regular alignment, departments naturally drift back towards their own goals, and issues that could have been resolved early become last-minute crises.

Ask your business:

- Do our departments understand how their decisions affect the other teams involved in an initiative?
- Do we check in on alignment throughout a project, not just at the kickoff?
- When departmental priorities genuinely conflict, do we resolve it against the business objective, not the loudest voice?
- Are cross-functional issues surfaced while they're still manageable, or do they arrive as surprises near deadline?
- Would Marketing, Sales, Operations and Finance each describe our current priority the same way

Activity vs Outcomes

A full calendar and a busy team are not proof that a business is moving forward. Unnecessary meetings, duplicated reporting and habitual approvals accumulate quietly, and the strongest organisations regularly ask whether the work they're doing is actually driving results.

Ask your business:

- Do we measure our initiatives by the outcomes they achieved, not just the tasks completed?
- Have we recently questioned whether a recurring meeting or report still earns its place?
- Is our team's time concentrated on work that moves the business forward, or spread across low-value activity?
- Could we clearly explain the business impact of what our team delivered last quarter?
- If we're honest, is being busy sometimes mistaken for being productive here?

Score Yourself

For each of the six areas above, rate how consistently true the underlying statement is of your business right now, from 1 (rarely true) to 5 (consistently true). Circle or note your score, then total it.

Audit area	1	2	3	4	5
1. Strategic Alignment	1	2	3	4	5
2. Decision-Making Speed	1	2	3	4	5
3. Campaign & Process Discipline	1	2	3	4	5
4. Operational Readiness for Growth	1	2	3	4	5
5. Cross-Functional Collaboration	1	2	3	4	5
6. Activity vs Outcomes	1	2	3	4	5

What your total tells you

- 6–14: Execution is currently working against your strategy. This is costing you more than it looks like on the surface, and it's worth addressing before your next major initiative.
- 15–22: You have real strengths, but at least one area is quietly limiting your results. Identify your lowest-scoring section and start there.
- 23–30: Execution is a genuine advantage for your business. The opportunity now is protecting it as you take on more complexity.

Turning This Into Action

This audit is designed to show you where the gap is, not to solve it on its own. Most businesses find that one or two areas explain the majority of their execution problems, and that fixing those areas has a disproportionate effect on results.

If you'd like support interpreting your scores or building a plan to close the gaps you've identified, reach out and we'll walk through it together.