

Organizational Performance Review

Examine whether the organization enables the performance it expects. Use observable evidence to separate capability gaps from conditions leaders need to change.

Use this when: Results are slipping, execution depends on repeated workarounds, or the same concerns recur across teams. Review one business outcome or operating boundary at a time.

A suggested 60-minute review

Before: Name the outcome, select recent examples, and invite people who experience the work directly. Include a reviewer with enough independence to challenge the prevailing explanation.

In the room: Define the outcome (10 minutes), test evidence and competing explanations (25), select one or two organizational changes (15), and assign owners and review dates (10).

Condition to examine	Question to test	Evidence to bring
Decision rights	Can the accountable person make the necessary decisions?	Approval delays, reversals, escalations.
Authority and resources	Does accountability match capacity and control?	Role scope, staffing, budgets, dependencies.
Information and feedback	Do people receive what they need to act and improve?	Late inputs, feedback examples, rework.
Leadership reliability	Do leaders honor commitments when interests compete?	Missed commitments, exceptions, reopened decisions.
Candor and fairness	Can people challenge decisions and raise concerns?	Response to concerns, recurring themes, contrasting accounts.
Organizational learning	Does the organization change after repeated signals?	Departure themes, abandoned initiatives, repeat failures.

Companion to: [Employees Get Performance Reviews. Organizations Should Too.](#)

Test the explanation

Complete one sheet for a specific outcome. Record where accounts differ and what evidence would resolve the difference.

Team or boundary reviewed / outcome expected / review period

What happened? Record observable events, dates, and sources.

What did the formal process or role authorize? What happened in practice?

Working explanation	What would support it?	What would challenge it?
Individual capability, judgment, or conduct	Identify the specific expectation and available support.	Find cases where this person succeeds under different conditions.
Organizational conditions	Look for a repeated constraint across people or teams.	Find comparable cases with clear authority and usable resources.

What remains uncertain? Who will resolve it, using which evidence, by when?

Review discipline: A pattern is a reason to investigate. Record contrary evidence and distinguish reported concerns from established findings.

Make the organization accountable

Choose changes within leadership control. Record any individual performance expectations separately so both forms of accountability remain clear.

Organizational condition to change / business consequence of leaving it unresolved

Decision approved / accountable executive / resources or authority required

Action owner / due date / dependencies / escalation route

Individual expectations and support, where relevant

Review point	Evidence of progress
Baseline, recorded now	Select a relevant measure: decision time, repeat escalations, rework, missed commitments, or another observable constraint.
First review, typically 30 days	Confirm the agreed change occurred. Ask the people doing the work whether the constraint actually changed.
Follow-up, typically 60 days	Test whether performance improved. Examine remaining friction and unintended consequences; adjust or close the action.

Measure / baseline / desired change / evidence owner / next review date

For concerns involving senior leadership, name a reviewer and escalation path that can assess the evidence independently.