



OPERATIONAL HEALTH CHECK

A practical self-assessment for stronger organisations



Leadership



Finance



Governance



HR & People



Technology



Culture



Processes



SWM Consulting

Part of SWM Services - Two Specialist Brands. One Shared Purpose.



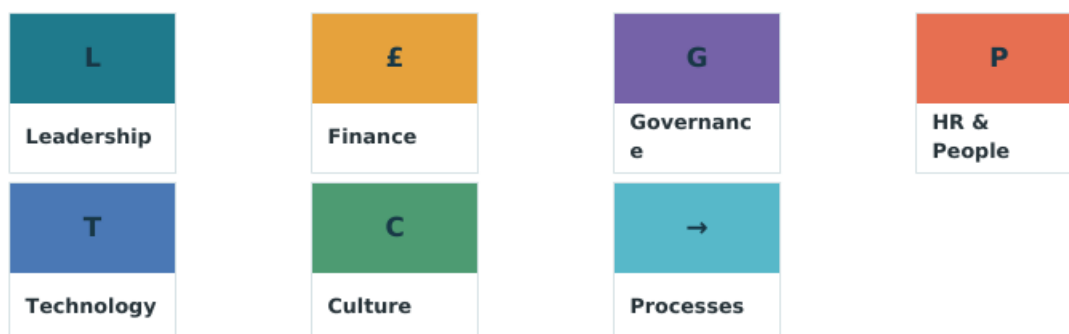
Welcome

Running an organisation can make it difficult to find time to stop, step back and look at the whole picture.

Finance might be performing well, but systems are struggling. Your people might be committed, but managers are overstretched. Governance might be compliant, but board meetings aren't adding enough value. Technology might be working, but processes have grown unnecessarily complicated.

Often, organisational problems don't sit neatly within one department. They overlap.

The **SWM Consulting Operational Health Check** helps charities, SMEs, social enterprises and other organisations take a structured look at seven connected areas.



The aim isn't to achieve a perfect score. It is to identify what's working well, where risks may exist, what needs attention, where improvement could have the greatest impact and what your organisation should prioritise next.

At the end, you'll turn the results into a practical 90-day Organisational Action Plan.

How to Use This Health Check

For each statement, give your organisation a score from 1 to 5.

1	SIGNIFICANT CONCERN	Weak, unclear or creating significant organisational risk.
2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	Some arrangements exist, but important gaps or inconsistencies remain.
3	REASONABLE	The basics are in place, although improvement would be beneficial.
4	STRONG	This area works well and generally supports the organisation effectively.
5	EXCELLENT	A clear strength, consistently embedded and regularly reviewed.

Useful ways to complete it:

- Individually
- As a senior leadership team
- With managers
- At a board or trustee away day
- As part of an annual planning process

For an even more useful exercise, ask several people to complete it independently and compare the results. Different perspectives can reveal just as much as the scores themselves.



Your Organisation

Organisation name:

Completed by:

Role:

Date:

What prompted you to complete this Health Check?

What are the three biggest challenges currently facing your organisation?

1.

2.

3.

L

Leadership

Strong organisations need clarity of direction and leaders who can turn strategy into action.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
We have a clear organisational vision and direction.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our strategic priorities are understood across the organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders communicate clearly and consistently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Responsibilities and decision-making authority are clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders make decisions in a timely and evidence-based way.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managers receive appropriate support and development.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership meetings focus on priorities rather than simply operational updates.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders delegate effectively rather than becoming organisational bottlenecks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Performance issues are addressed rather than avoided.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders regularly create time to think strategically rather than constantly firefighting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Leadership Score

TOTAL: ____ / 50

Reflection

What does leadership currently do particularly well?

Where could leadership be stronger?

Is the organisation too dependent on any one individual?

One leadership improvement we should consider:

£ Finance

Good financial management isn't simply about producing accounts. It should give leaders the

Rate each statement from 1-5.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
We have an annual budget aligned with our organisational plans.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Budget assumptions are realistic and clearly understood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We receive timely and accurate financial information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders understand the financial information they receive.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We regularly compare actual performance against budget.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We maintain an up-to-date financial forecast.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We understand our current and future cash position.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Financial risks are identified and actively managed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Appropriate financial controls are documented and followed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Financial information actively informs strategic and operational decisions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Finance Score

TOTAL: _____ / 50

Reflection

Could you confidently explain your organisation's current financial position today?

Could you estimate what your cash position will look like in six months?

What is your biggest financial risk?

One financial improvement we should prioritise:

G Governance

Good governance should help an organisation make better decisions, manage risk and remain

Rate each statement from 1-5.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
Governance responsibilities are clearly understood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The board or governing body has an appropriate mix of skills and experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board members receive effective induction and ongoing development.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board meetings focus on strategy, performance and risk.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board papers are clear, relevant and proportionate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Organisational risks are regularly reviewed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Important policies have clear review dates and owners.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conflicts of interest are appropriately identified and managed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decisions are clearly recorded and followed through.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The relationship between governance and operational management is clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Governance Score

TOTAL: ____ / 50

Reflection

Does your board spend enough time discussing the future?

What governance issue concerns you most?

Are there skills or perspectives currently missing from your board?

One governance improvement we should prioritise:

P HR & People

People are often an organisation's greatest resource - and one of its largest costs.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employment contracts and HR documentation are up to date.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Essential HR policies are current and accessible.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recruitment processes are fair, consistent and effective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
New employees receive structured induction and onboarding.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managers are confident handling people-management responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees receive meaningful and regular feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Performance concerns are addressed appropriately and promptly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We understand the factors affecting employee engagement and retention.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning, development and succession needs are actively considered.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

HR & People Score

TOTAL: ____ / 50

Reflection

What are your organisation's biggest people challenges?

Which roles would be hardest to replace if someone left tomorrow?

Are managers equipped to manage people effectively?

One HR improvement we should prioritise:

T

Technology

Technology should make work easier. Repeated workarounds, duplication and manual processes are

Rate each statement from 1-5.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
Our core technology systems are suitable for our current needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Systems integrate effectively where appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees receive appropriate technology training.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Important organisational information is easy to find.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We minimise unnecessary duplication of data and work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Appropriate cyber-security controls are in place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access permissions are regularly reviewed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Data is backed up appropriately.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We understand which technology investments will be required over the next three years.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Technology generally improves productivity rather than creating barriers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Technology Score

TOTAL: ____ / 50

Reflection

Which system causes employees the most frustration?

Where are people currently duplicating work?

Which manual process could potentially be automated?

One technology improvement we should prioritise:

c Culture

Every organisation has a culture. The question is whether it is the culture you intentionally want to

Rate each statement from 1-5.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
Our organisational values are meaningful and understood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leaders consistently demonstrate expected behaviours.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees feel able to raise concerns and challenge appropriately.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Different views and perspectives are welcomed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Good performance and positive contributions are recognised.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teams communicate effectively with one another.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees understand how their role contributes to organisational goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Problems are discussed openly rather than hidden.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People generally feel respected and valued.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We actively listen to feedback and use it to improve.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Culture Score

TOTAL: ____ / 50

Reflection

How would employees describe your organisational culture?

What behaviours are rewarded?

What behaviours are tolerated that shouldn't be?

One cultural improvement we should prioritise:



Processes

Good processes help organisations operate consistently and efficiently. Poor processes create delay,

Rate each statement from 1-5.

Rate each statement from 1-5.

SELF-ASSESSMENT	1	2	3	4	5
Our most important operational processes are clearly understood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Key processes are documented where appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Responsibilities and handovers are clear.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We avoid unnecessary duplication of work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Important information is captured once wherever possible.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Approval processes are proportionate to the level of risk.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We regularly review inefficient or outdated ways of working.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Employees are encouraged to suggest improvements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Performance information helps us identify bottlenecks and problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our systems and processes could support further organisational growth.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Processes Score

TOTAL: _____ / 50

Reflection

Which process creates the most frustration?

Where do things regularly get delayed?

Which process would you redesign if you could start again?

One process improvement we should prioritise:

Your Operational Health Score

Transfer your seven scores below. The total is useful, but the pattern across the seven areas is even more important.

AREA	SCORE / 50	RAG
Leadership		
Finance		
Governance		
HR & People		
Technology		
Culture		
Processes		
TOTAL	/ 350	

Understanding Your Results

41-50	STRONG	Maintain standards and identify opportunities for further improvement.
31-40	GENERALLY HEALTHY	Foundations are in place; identify two or three improvements.
21-30	NEEDS ATTENTION	Meaningful gaps or inconsistencies should feature in improvement planning.
10-20	SIGNIFICANT CONCERN	Potential material risks; consider priority action and additional expertise.

Don't Just Look at the Scores

Sometimes the most valuable information comes from disagreement. If a CEO scores leadership 45/50 and managers score it 25/50, the conversation behind those results could be more important than either score.

Where did people score differently?

Why might perceptions differ?

Are senior leaders experiencing the organisation differently from employees?

Which areas generated the most discussion?

Red / Amber / Green Review

GREEN - Working well. Maintain and continue improving. **AMBER** - Needs attention but is manageable. **RED** - Requires priority action.

AREA	RAG STATUS	COMMENT
Leadership		
Finance		
Governance		
HR & People		
Technology		
Culture		
Processes		



Identify Your Priorities

Trying to fix everything at once rarely works. Identify the areas where improvement will make the greatest difference.

Priority 1

What needs to improve?

Why does this matter?

What happens if we do nothing?

Priority 2

What needs to improve?

Why does this matter?

What happens if we do nothing?

Priority 3

What needs to improve?

Why does this matter?

What happens if we do nothing?



Quick Wins vs Strategic Improvements

Not every improvement requires a major project. Separate immediate opportunities from changes that need more planning or investment.

QUICK WINS - NEXT 30 DAYS	STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENTS
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Your 90-Day Organisational Action Plan

PRIORIT Y	ACTION	OWNER	DEADLINE	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

30 / 60 / 90-Day Review

30 DAYS

What have we completed?

What's progressing well?

Where are we stuck?

Has anything changed our priorities?

60 DAYS

What measurable improvement have we seen?

Which actions remain outstanding?

What additional support is required?

90 DAYS

What has improved?

What hasn't changed enough?

Which priorities should continue into the next quarter?

What should our next three organisational priorities be?

1.

2.

3.

Ten Questions for Your Leadership Team

Use these questions to take the conversation further.

- 1 What is currently working particularly well in our organisation?
- 2 What is taking up too much management time?
- 3 Where are we most dependent on individual people?
- 4 What information do we wish we had when making decisions?
- 5 Which organisational process causes the most frustration?
- 6 What is our biggest financial or operational risk?
- 7 What would our employees say needs to improve?
- 8 What are we doing simply because 'we've always done it this way'?
- 9 What could prevent us achieving our strategic objectives?
- 10 If we could improve only one thing during the next 90 days, what should it be?

Strong organisations aren't created through one major transformation. They're built through consistently asking:

**What's working? What's not? What has changed?
 What do we need to do differently?**

Leadership, finance, governance, people, technology, culture and processes don't operate independently. A weakness in one area often creates pressure somewhere else.

Poor processes affect people. Poor information affects leadership. Weak governance increases risk. Financial pressure affects culture. Technology can either enable improvement or create additional barriers.

That is why SWM Consulting takes a **whole-organisation approach**.

How SWM Consulting Can Help

Leadership & Strategy	Strategic planning Leadership development Organisational reviews Change and improvement
Finance	Budgeting and forecasting Management information Cash-flow planning Financial strategy and controls
Governance	Governance reviews Board effectiveness Trustee development Risk management
HR & People	HR advice Recruitment Performance management Policies Organisational development
Training	Practical workshops designed around the needs of your organisation.

Want a Second Pair of Eyes?

Self-assessment is valuable, but sometimes an independent perspective identifies things that are difficult to see from inside an organisation.

If your Health Check has highlighted an area you'd like to explore further, SWM Consulting can help you:

- Review your findings
- Identify priorities
- Develop an improvement plan
- Provide specialist advice
- Support implementation
- Build internal capability

Practical organisational guidance • Finance, HR and governance insights • Leadership advice • Free templates and checklists • New resources • Webinars and training opportunities

Building Stronger Organisations.
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