WHERE THE DIAGNOSTIC STARTS · FREE

Five signals that a gap exists between current performance and what the organization is **now capable of achieving**

GOVERNANCE & TRAJECTORY / FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Governance becomes more consequential when performance has to be renewed before the numbers reveal the need.

> The gap opens where leadership, strategy and technology have stopped evolving together. From the board seat it is hard to see. Strong financial performance does not always reveal it, the information that reaches a board has already been shaped before it arrives, and the signals that indicate whether the organization is keeping pace rarely surface on their own.
>
> This is not a conversation about organizations that are failing. It is about the gap between what organizations are currently achieving and what they are now capable of achieving. That gap widens quietly at first, and then becomes visible all at once.

TOM MAWHINNEY

TOMMAWHINNEY.STUDIO/BOARD-MEMBERS

01

Decisions waiting for consensus while the market has already moved

The organization is consistently arriving at decisions after the optimal window for making them has narrowed or closed. The alignment process is indistinguishable from delay.

> FROM THE BOARD SEAT
>
> *How frequently does the CEO narrative reference alignment challenges, or decisions that required more time than expected?*

Where this is developed: Expanding Expectations Are Redefining Performance →

02

Strategy that reads well on paper but feels detached from market pace

The organization is executing with discipline against a strategy that is increasingly misaligned with current conditions. The assumptions behind it have not been genuinely tested since they were set.

> FROM THE BOARD SEAT
>
> *Are the strategic assumptions the board approved at the last planning cycle still holding, or have conditions already shifted past them?*

Where this is developed: The Speed of Consequence Is Changing Oversight →

03

Technology investment that is fragmented rather than connected

Technology has accumulated rather than compounded. Individual systems solve individual problems, and together they have created a coordination burden that was not there before the investments were made.

> FROM THE BOARD SEAT
>
> *Is the board receiving a coherent picture of how technology investments connect to organizational capability, or primarily a list of implementations and costs?*

Where this is developed: Technology Is Changing What Produces Performance →

04

Leadership discipline that has quietly become drag rather than direction

The structures designed to create accountability and direction are consuming more organizational energy than they generate in value. Overhead has outlived the conditions that warranted it.

> FROM THE BOARD SEAT
>
> *Are there reporting requirements or oversight processes that management maintains to satisfy governance expectations rather than because they change how the organization is led?*

Where this is developed: Why More Reporting Doesn't Improve Oversight →

05

Performance that still looks acceptable but the process has stopped producing learning

The organization is delivering against its commitments but is not getting smarter about what it does. Teams execute more reactively, surprises increase, and it runs harder to hold position rather than building momentum.

> FROM THE BOARD SEAT
>
> *Is the board seeing evidence that the organization is learning and adapting as it executes, or primarily evidence that it is delivering against existing commitments?*

Where this is developed: Why Performance Is Becoming a Less Reliable Signal →

WHERE THIS GOES NEXT

They are indicators, not the full picture, and they are where the diagnostic starts rather than where it ends. A complete diagnostic looks at the maturity of each of the three variables, where synchronization is breaking down between them, and what is creating the gap in your particular context.

If the signals suggest a gap, there are two ways to take it further. *Falling Behind?* walks the full diagnostic seat by seat, at your own pace. When what you are seeing is a pattern rather than a single signal, an outside read is usually faster than working it out alone.

The thinking here is mine: every argument, every position, every judgment about what is worth your attention. Production is AI-assisted, which is what makes it possible to keep this current for three seats and to refresh it when conditions move. tommawhinney.studio/#how-this-is-made