The First Hundred Questions?

This is not an exhaustive list of questions, but can provide the first step in any 'health check'. How does your company benchmark?

I normally have these questions in mind alongside many, many other analysis techniques during the early days of a new assignment.

The real value comes in addressing any shortcomings and external expertise can strongly support this process, both in terms of providing objectivity in facilitating the assessment of the issues, as well as in providing significant practical experience in driving the required improvement.

I have removed some of the questions in order to protect my copyright.

A successful growing business will typically have...		
1.	...a vision, mission and set of values in place to guide the development of the organisation and help it achieve its purpose	**VISION & STRATEGY REVIEW**
2.	...a Strategic Business Plan supported by a Route-Map, setting out the journey from the 'current state' to 'the destination'	**ROUTE-MAP REVIEW**
3.	...a decision-making framework that supports value creation	**MANAGING FOR VALUE REVIEW**
4.	...a clear focus on growth	**FOCUS ON GROWTH REVIEW**
5.	...an obsession with customers from top to bottom within the organisation	**CUSTOMER OBSESSION REVIEW**
6.	...inspirational leaders supporting others to do their best and reach their goals	**LEADERSHIP REVIEW**
7.	...the ability to fully embrace the change required to build from current reality to future vision	**MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE REVIEW**
8.	...well run major programmes delivering key elements of the Route-Map	**PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT & CONTROLS REVIEW**
9.	...empowered employees who are performing at their best whilst developing their potential	**EMPOWERMENT REVIEW**
10.	...a sound operating framework enabling continuity and quality to be sustained	**OPERATIONAL INTEGRITY REVIEW**

1   VISION & STRATEGY REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
1. The company has a mission or purpose statement.	1	2	3	4	?
2. The company has an articulate and compelling picture or vision of the future and set of values in place to guide the development of the organisation and help it achieve its purpose.	1	2	3	4	?
3. All stakeholders buy in to the vision, mission and values and action is taken when people are found to be operating outside of these.	1	2	3	4	?
4. Customers can rapidly associate the mission statement with the company.	1	2	3	4	?
5. There are clearly defined strategic goals and a strategy to deliver them, agreed by the Board which are captured in a Strategic Business Plan and routinely Challenged & Reviewed.	1	2	3	4	?
6. The organisation has a process in place to monitor and evaluate current and future changes in its external environment, especially the market and competition, and how these will impact.	1	2	3	4	?
7.	1	2	3	4	?
8.	1	2	3	4	?
9.	1	2	3	4	?
10.	1	2	3	4	?

2   ROUTEMAP REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
11. The Strategic Business Plan is supported by a Route-Map which sets out the series of interim outcomes (Steps) to move the organisation from where it is now towards the intended outcome.	1	2	3	4	?
12. The Route-Map sets out the key issues, risks, constraints on the organisation to achieving each of these Steps and how these will be dealt with.	1	2	3	4	?
13. A Tactical Business Plan (Within Year) exists and has been signed off by the Board to achieve the next Step.	1	2	3	4	?
14. The Tactical Business Plan is supported by a high-level milestone plan that sets out the key outcomes that need to be achieved.	1	2	3	4	?
15. Accountabilities for each of these outcomes and milestones, the success criteria that need to be met have been defined and are all unambiguous and have been accepted by the accountable person.	1	2	3	4	?
16. A Target Operating Model is in place and periodically reviewed to ensure alignment with the Strategic Business Plan.	1	2	3	4	?
17.	1	2	3	4	?
18.	1	2	3	4	?
19.	1	2	3	4	?
20.	1	2	3	4	?

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3 MANAGING FOR VALUE REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
21. The wider organization understands that Economic Profit/ Shareholder Value is the primary measure of performance along with the difference between good profits and bad profits	1	2	3	4	?
22. The organization uses rigorous, fact-based techniques to help understand and exploit the drivers of value-creation, the core data elements being management accounts and customer records.	1	2	3	4	?
23. Deep understanding of the sources and drivers of value is a key input into strategy development and other processes for maximizing value, e.g., planning, reporting and analysis	1	2	3	4	?
24. Investment prioritisation and resource allocation is based on value-maximising strategies	1	2	3	4	?
25. Strategy is firmly linked to financial performance and translated into tangible goals and action plans	1	2	3	4	?
26. Business performance is routinely and effectively compared to Tactical Business Plan, with corrective actions speedily identified and delivered	1	2	3	4	?
27.	1	2	3	4	?
28.	1	2	3	4	?
29.	1	2	3	4	?
30.	1	2	3	4	?

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4   FOCUS ON GROWTH REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
31. The company has a relentless focus on top line CAGR, linked in a disciplined way to bottom line performance	1	2	3	4	?
32. The company effectively tracks growth by product, customer channel and customer segment against competitors	1	2	3	4	?
33. There is a focus on keeping and growing share by positioning in growing segments or markets, and expanding into adjacencies and other geographies	1	2	3	4	?
34. There is a relentless drive to improve productivity and remain lean	1	2	3	4	?
35. The company can rely on its rapid decision making ability to capitalise on market opportunities	1	2	3	4	?
36. The company clearly targets and sticks to rates of reinvestment that sustain competitive advantage	1	2	3	4	?
37.	1	2	3	4	?
38.	1	2	3	4	?
39.	1	2	3	4	?
40.	1	2	3	4	?

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5 CUSTOMER OBSESSION REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
41. Management KPIs and reporting reflect customer measures rather than internal operational and financial measures	1	2	3	4	?
42. Front line staff recruitment and induction processes are designed around desired customer facing skills and behaviours	1	2	3	4	?
43. There is an understanding of the company's USPs (and their strength relative to competitor offerings) throughout the organisation	1	2	3	4	?
44. Individuals react proactively and take personal responsibility in resolving customer issues	1	2	3	4	?
45. The value of customer segments is well understood	1	2	3	4	?
46. The intended customer experience beyond point of sale is well defined and everyone understands their part in this	1	2	3	4	?
47.	1	2	3	4	?
48.	1	2	3	4	?
49.	1	2	3	4	?
50.	1	2	3	4	?

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6 LEADERSHIP REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
51. A culture of trust exists between managers and their staff at all levels in the organisation and people reflect that trust in how they behave.	1	2	3	4	?
52. It is clear who is accountable for what within the organisation and there are few gaps or overlaps, the RACI model is understood and proactively used.	1	2	3	4	?
53. The company is good at creating and maintaining a shared vision across the organisation	1	2	3	4	?
54. A communication plan exists and is actively followed, feedback loops are in place to review the effectiveness of the plan and action is taken on the findings.	1	2	3	4	?
55. Communication is seen as a two-way street and senior managers make every effort to explain their views, listen to ideas/concerns and adjust their views as necessary.	1	2	3	4	?
56. Robust and appropriate processes exist for the recruitment, reward, management and development of new and existing leadership talent	1	2	3	4	?
57.	1	2	3	4	?
58.	1	2	3	4	?
59.	1	2	3	4	?
60.	1	2	3	4	?

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7   MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
61. Employee and Management resistance to the change is low.	1	2	3	4	?
62. Change initiatives are supported by a compelling business case setting out a clear justification for the initiative and the costs, benefits and risks involved.	1	2	3	4	?
63. There is clear ownership within the organisation for business cases (i.e. Authors see this process as making promises to the Board/Shareholders) and that these business cases allow them to make a clear and informed decision.	1	2	3	4	?
64. A process is in place to ensure that all significant and/or complex change initiatives are captured and authorised at Board level ensuring alignment with strategic goals.	1	2	3	4	?
65. All stakeholders are fully consulted on a change which affects them and a mechanism is in place to ensure that they formally sign off the business case before it is submitted to the Board for approval.	1	2	3	4	?
66. Business cases are proven to be robust in implementation, especially benefits.	1	2	3	4	?
67.	1	2	3	4	?
68.	1	2	3	4	?
69.	1	2	3	4	?
70.	1	2	3	4	?

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8 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT & CONTROLS REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
71. A Programme Plan is in place to track the delivery of the Strategic Business Plan, the Route-Map and Tactical Business Plan.	1	2	3	4	?
72. The Programme Manager is accountable to the Board (albeit via a nominated Director) for managing the process and is proactive in orchestrating the Board into the process to unblock issues and keep the programme on track.	1	2	3	4	?
73. Project Plans exist and are actively managed to deliver each milestone.	1	2	3	4	?
74. Project Managers and Programme Managers adopt a principle level approach to ensure that fit for purpose documentation, processes and controls are deployed to keep the project and programmes on track.	1	2	3	4	?
75. Appropriate project and programme management resources are deployed and the Project/Programme Office function is not seen as an administrative/backside covering task.	1	2	3	4	?
76. Project and Programme Managers are sufficiently knowledgeable and engaged in their projects and programmes that they can accurately forecast the impact of deviation from plan/ changes	1	2	3	4	?
77.	1	2	3	4	?
78.	1	2	3	4	?
79.	1	2	3	4	?
80.	1	2	3	4	?

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9   EMPOWERMENT REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = Disagree (? = don't know)				
81. Individuals possess a clear vision of what needs to be accomplished and the goals to be achieved	1	2	3	4	?
82. Individuals know where they stand in achieving their goals and what they have to do to be rewarded	1	2	3	4	?
83. Individuals are highly motivated and feel empowered to act	1	2	3	4	?
84. Leaders actively support followers in reaching their goals and with the opportunity to do their best, e.g., coaching, mentoring	1	2	3	4	?
85. Individuals are routinely recognised for demonstrating company values as well as high standards of performance.	1	2	3	4	?
86. Individuals actively manage their own Personal Development Plan, and the organisation actively supports continuous career development and training	1	2	3	4	?
87.	1	2	3	4	?
88.	1	2	3	4	?
89.	1	2	3	4	?
90.	1	2	3	4	?

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10 OPERATIONAL INTEGRITY REVIEW

	1 = Agree / 4 = strongly Disagree (? = don't know)				
91. Business controls and contingent plans are robust and routinely reviewed, e.g., security, disaster recovery, in light of changes in the trading environment.	1	2	3	4	?
92. The organisation is routinely and independently reviewed to ensure that it is well managed in terms of financial governance and exposure to financial/ commercial risk.	1	2	3	4	?
93. Health & Safety and the well-being of individuals is genuinely the no.1 priority within the organisation	1	2	3	4	?
94. The organisation constantly promotes improvement and development of people, performance, processes etc, and on the ground all individuals are looking at how everything could be done better	1	2	3	4	?
95. There is a process to ensure that all functional strategy maps, e.g., human capital, technology, align with the Strategic Business Plan and Route-Map	1	2	3	4	?
96. Functional teams are resourced and skilled to deliver the Strategic Business Plan and Route-Map	1	2	3	4	?
97.	1	2	3	4	?
98.	1	2	3	4	?
99.	1	2	3	4	?
100.	1	2	3	4	?