Operating Model Diagnosis

What it involves, how it works, and what you receive

THE STARTING POINT

Before designing anything, I find out precisely what is broken and why.

Most operating model problems are misdiagnosed. Leaders see the symptoms, such as initiatives that stall, decisions that loop, functions that cannot coordinate, and they reach for structural fixes. Reorganisations, new processes, new technology. The symptoms recur because the root causes were never identified.

A diagnostic is a structured investigation into where execution infrastructure is actually failing. It produces a clear, evidence-based picture of the pattern failures causing the most damage, with an honest assessment of what needs to change at the structural level.

HOW IT WORKS

Seven lines of investigation, run in parallel.

1 **Documentation review**
Strategy papers, org design, process documentation, governance frameworks, and historical transformation materials. Understanding the gap between what was designed and what was built.

2 **Practitioner interviews**
Structured conversations with the people actively executing the work, across functions and geographies where relevant. These are the people closest to how things actually operate.

3 **Leadership interviews**
Conversations with leaders to understand their perception of what is happening, where execution is falling short, and where they have visibility gaps or conflicting narratives.

4 **Governance and planning observation**
Direct observation of governance meetings and planning sessions where possible. Written documentation rarely captures how decisions actually get made.

5 **Systems and reporting review**
A review of available systems, reporting, and tools with people who know them well. The focus is whether technology and reporting supports or hinders execution, not an IT audit.

6 **Performance metrics review**
Review of metrics at the organisational, functional, and individual level. Metrics reveal what the organisation values in practice, and where measurement may be reinforcing misaligned behaviour.

7 **Client feedback review**
Where relevant, a review of client or customer feedback to understand how operating model issues manifest externally. Internal dysfunction rarely stays internal.

HOW I WORK

Led by me throughout

There is no handoff to junior consultants. The person who conducts the diagnostic is the same person who presents the findings.

Confidential by design

Interviews are one-to-one and treated as confidential. Findings are reported thematically, without individual attribution.

Independent findings

A single executive sponsor facilitates access. Their role is logistics, not shaping findings. The diagnostic's value depends on its independence.

Typical duration

4 to 6 weeks is standard. Compressed timelines may be available depending on scope and access. Larger or more complex organisations, or those where documentation and availability of key people is not immediate, should expect longer.

WHAT YOU RECEIVE

A written Operating Model Diagnostic Report.

This is not a summary deck or a list of observations. It is a structured, evidence-based document covering: executive summary, engagement scope and method, organisational context, diagnostic findings across the three-layer operating model framework, consolidated root cause analysis, and recommended next steps with clear rationale.

The report identifies the three to five pattern failures causing the most damage, shows how they connect to each other, and provides an honest assessment of what needs to change. It is written to be read by board members, executive leadership, and the teams who will act on it.

The diagnostic report is the foundation for any subsequent design work. It is also a complete and useful piece of work in its own right.