

The Power Audit Checklist

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Instructions:

Pick a current "problem employee" or a "team conflict" you are facing. Answer these questions honestly to determine if the root cause is personal or structural.

Part 1: Authority vs. Accountability

Diagnostic for: Lack of initiative, passivity, "waiting to be told."

- ☐ **The Wallet Test:** Does this person have the budget authority to solve the problems they are responsible for fixing?
- ☐ **The Sign-Off Test:** Can this person make a significant decision (e.g., spending \$500, changing a vendor, altering a timeline) without asking for permission first?
- ☐ **The Fall Guy Test:** If they fail, is it because they made a bad choice, or because they were waiting for your approval?

If you have any unchecked boxes: You are hoarding decision rights. Give them a budget and a boundary, then step back.

Part 2: Structural Friction

Diagnostic for: Interdepartmental fighting, blame games, siloed behavior.

- ☐ **The Alignment Test:** Do the conflicting teams share a common metric (e.g., total revenue), or do their metrics compete (e.g., "volume of leads" vs. "quality of leads")?
- ☐ **The Zero-Sum Test:** If Team A wins (gets what they want), does Team B automatically lose (lose budget, status, or time)?
- ☐ **The Referee Test:** Do they resolve disputes by coming to you to "make the call," or do they have a framework to resolve it themselves?

If you have any unchecked boxes: You have created a competitive arena. Realign their incentives so they can only win if they collaborate.

Part 3: Information & Clarity

Diagnostic for: Poor performance, "not getting it," constant rework.

- ☐ **The "Why" Test:** Can this person explain why this task matters to the company's 5-year goal?
- ☐ **The Standard Test:** Does a document exist that objectively defines what "good" looks like, or is the standard currently in your head?
- ☐ **The Access Test:** Does this person have access to the raw data/reports they need, or do they have to request them from you?

If you have any unchecked boxes: You are hoarding context. Release the information and document your standards.

Part 4: Safety & Feedback

Diagnostic for: Toxicity, gossip, silence in meetings.

- ☐ **The Bad News Test:** When was the last time this person brought you bad news immediately, without trying to spin or hide it?
- ☐ **The Pushback Test:** Have they disagreed with you publicly in the last month?
- ☐ **The Messenger Test:** When someone makes a mistake, is the first question "Who did this?" (blame) or "How did the process fail?" (system)?

If you unchecked any boxes: You are using power punitively. Build psychological safety by rewarding candor, even when it's uncomfortable.