



Zenith By Design



EXECUTIVE INSIGHT BRIEFING

Issue 001

When the Report Isn't the Problem

Why organizational clarity begins with changing perspective

5-minute executive read time

July 2026



Every month the same thing happened.

The report was rejected.

The revisions began.

Frustration grew.

Nobody seemed able to explain why the problem kept happening. Despite the Project Manager's attempts, he wasn't able to collect the data or present the information in a meaningful way. The COR consistently felt frustrated because she couldn't articulate what it was she really wanted. Even worse, company headquarters didn't have the situational awareness or open lines of communication it thought it had to provide meaningful insight or action to improve the situation. So for several months a repeated pattern emerged:

- Every month, the report was rejected then resubmitted
- Everyone blamed someone different
- The project manager blamed shifting expectations
- The customer blamed poor execution
- Headquarters assumed the PM had everything under control but was blindsided with complaints
- Everyone was describing the same problem only from a different perspective

You see, the more people I talked to, the more convinced I became that everyone was telling the truth. The project manager genuinely believed the requirements kept changing. The customer genuinely believed the contractor wasn't listening. Headquarters genuinely believed the project team had things under control. No one was lying. No one was intentionally creating problems. Yet every month the same disappointing outcome occurred.

What fascinated me wasn't that everyone disagreed. It was that everyone was partially right. Everyone could clearly describe the symptoms they experienced, but no one could see the entire system. The problem wasn't hiding from anyone—it was simply too large for any one perspective to reveal. So every month that frustration mounted, slowing down productivity and causing friction between stakeholders.

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As I reviewed the situation, my experience told me something else was at play here. It wasn't the deliverable, or the PM; it wasn't the COR's dissatisfaction or HQ's lack of perspective.

That's when I realized something that would reshape my perspective of the situation. The report wasn't failing because people lacked effort.

It was failing because the organization lacked clarity.

I reviewed the entire situation and determined the Deliverable needed revision both in presentation and data collection. I further had to develop a specific SOP that outlined the responsibilities and steps AE Headquarters personnel needed to do to help the PM. The result, after implementing changes within two months the situation was not only normalized but showed significant improvement in Deliverable quality, meaning no resubmissions, and no errors, with the COR specifically calling out the quality improvements.

Looking back, I realized this wasn't an isolated incident. Over the years I encountered the same pattern in different industries, different organizations, and different leadership teams. The symptoms changed—subpar deliverables, poor communications, missed deadlines, stalled growth, quality issues—but the underlying challenge remained the same. Organizations often struggle not because people lack talent or effort, but because they lack a shared understanding of how their systems and efforts work together.

That experience helped me changed the questions I asked.

Instead of asking, "What's broken?" I began asking, "What's the pattern producing these results?"

That project taught me a lesson I still carry today. Organizations rarely struggle because people don't care or aren't capable. More often, they struggle because no one has a complete view of how the organization is actually functioning. The challenge isn't finding people who work harder. It's helping people see more clearly.

That realization eventually became the foundation of the Zenith Business Clarity Assessment. Because before an organization can improve its performance, it first has to understand the patterns shaping it.

Perspective Shift

The report wasn't the problem. But it was the focal point where all the stakeholders could identify a problem.

Executive Reflection

Where in your organization are different people describing the same problem from completely different perspectives?

Ready for a clearer picture?

Take the Zenith Business Clarity Assessment

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