



20 Questions Every Contractor Should Answer

Purpose:

This self-assessment tool is designed to help you:

- **Identify** your construction company's strengths and weaknesses.
- **Establish** your priorities.
- **Work ON** your business rather than **IN** it.

How to Use:

This is a challenging list of questions which will provoke thoughts in virtually all areas of your business and life. Answer as many of the questions as you can – and rate each one on a 1-5 scale. Put your answers away for a day or so, sleep on them, and take them out again for reflection and review. TAKE ACTION on the one or, at most, two items you think will deliver the greatest impact.

Recommendation:

If you really want to maximize the value of this instrument, have ALL key leaders in your company rate the questions and then compare notes with each other in a two-hour meeting. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how much people appreciate your allowing them to express their opinions and concerns about the present and future of your construction company. TAKE ACTION on the one or, at most, two items you think will deliver the greatest impact.

Answer as many of the questions as you can – and rate each one on a 1 – 5 scale.

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

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| 1. You and each and every one of your employees can accurately state your company mission | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Your key employees and other stakeholders agree is there a concrete, compelling vision for where your company is headed in the next five years | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. You have a written strategic plan that is clearly articulated, shared with all employees, and utilized to drill down to specific activities by specific people with specific budgets and timelines | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. You have regular senior management meetings to discuss your strategic plan, operational performance, capital plan, talent development plan, etc. – and those meetings are energizing with clear direction | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. When an employee’s spouse asks, “how will you keep my husband/wife safe on your jobs?,” you have crystal clear processes to show them – and the safety results to back you up | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Your leadership effectively maintains a culture assuring excellent employee retention, allows for attracting top new talent, and provides a rewarding work experience for all employees | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. You have a clearly defined people strategy including plans for recruiting, hiring, developing, and retaining the right talent for your business | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. You effectively benchmark company performance in key areas (e.g. gross profit \$ and %, net profit \$ and %, revenue growth, backlog, employee engagement/morale, client satisfaction) – and key leaders understand how this performance contributes to business goals | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. The future management of your company clearly defined – and all affected stakeholders know the management succession plan | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. The future ownership of your company clearly defined – and all affected stakeholders know the ownership succession plan | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. You are crystal clear on the most important things on which you should focus your time to make the biggest impact on your business, your employees, and your clients – and you have elevated yourself to your highest and best use and delegated everything else to others in your business as appropriate | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. You take adequate time away from the business – NOT INCLUDING “vacations” at conventions or working vacations – and you prioritize family and other important non-business relationships | 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

Answer as many of the questions as you can – and rate each one on a 1 – 5 scale.

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

13. You know what makes your business special and can list at least three key attributes differentiating your company from competitors when vying for new clients and new work 1 2 3 4 5
14. You have a clearly defined target client/project to seek out those projects for which you can leverage your strengths and/or mitigate exposure to your weaknesses. You know which types of projects, for which clients, and for which durations your team is most successful in delivering a quality product to a satisfied customer 1 2 3 4 5
15. You have written, rational, and standardized go/no go (GNG) mechanisms at the pursuit and bid stages to minimize your chances of bad jobs 1 2 3 4 5
16. You have adequate job cost/control meetings and procedures to prevent profit fade or, worse, catastrophic loss 1 2 3 4 5
17. You have effective “lessons learned” processes to assure mistakes are not repeated, that accurate feedback gets back to estimating on actual costs, errors, omissions, and sub/supplier/GC/trade partner performance, that best practices are recognized and shared, and that the wisdom of your best and most experienced people gets shared with your up-and-coming people 1 2 3 4 5
18. You have grown your management capabilities commensurate with company revenues to assure some redundancy and that you can “run to problems” 1 2 3 4 5
19. You produce accurate and timely financial statements and reliable job cost forecasts to assure the company has a real time, realistic understanding of financial performance – and you have a solid forecasting system to inform about capacities, future personnel needs, cash flow forecasts, and requirements for future work 1 2 3 4 5
20. Your leaders and managers are effective decision makers (good judgement, analytical, perceptive, and courageous) who DO NOT tend to defer/avoid, over-analyze, or misread situational dynamics 1 2 3 4 5

Add up your responses to get your TOTAL SCORE:

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(out of 100 possible)