
PERFORMANCE MOMENTUM

The Conditions Check

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Most of us, when performance dips, reach for more. More targets, more oversight, a little more pressure. This is a short check for the next time you feel that pull. It takes about ten minutes and one honest problem to work on.

CHECKLIST

1. **Name the result that is frustrating you.** Write down the actual number or outcome that is not where you want it, in one plain sentence. Keep it specific and keep it real.
2. **Notice your first instinct.** What are you tempted to add to fix it? More targets, tighter reporting, a harder conversation, closer oversight? Write it down without judging it. That is the push, and it helps to see it clearly before you act on it.
3. **Now look at the environment instead.** Three places tend to hold the answer. Read each one slowly and notice which lands.
 - **Level.** Is the right work sitting with the right people, or are you and others working a level below where you actually add the most value?
 - **Rhythm.** Is there a regular point where the team steps back and thinks, or is every meeting about reacting to whatever is already on fire?
 - **Voice.** Is the truth reaching you early and cheap, or late and expensive? When did someone last tell you something genuinely uncomfortable?
4. **The half second test.** Think of the last time someone brought you news you did not want to hear. How did you respond in the first few seconds? That response, repeated over and over, is the condition you have actually built, whatever your values poster says (Edmondson, 1999).
5. **Choose one move.** Not ten. Pick the single place above where the gap is widest, and decide one thing you will do this week to start closing it. Write it somewhere you will see it on Monday.

Performance you have to push for is performance you will have to keep pushing for. The work of building conditions is steadier than that, and it lasts a great deal longer.