



Operational Resilience, by design.

Operational Friction & Margin Protection Audit for Industrial SMEs

A 15-minute self-check for Managing & Operations Directors who want to protect margins and reduce operational tax without ripping everything up or buying more software they will not use.

Gaspard Duthilleul · gaspard@galyos.io · galyos.io

Who This Is For

Managing and Operations Directors and owners of industrial SMEs in manufacturing, engineering, construction, and specialist contracting who:

- Spend most of their time on live projects and key customers
- Know margins are being eroded by rework, delays, and internal inefficiencies.
- Suspect they are paying an **operational tax** every month: time, money and energy lost to bad tools and half-finished internal improvements

*If you look at your business and think “**we run on good people, not good systems**”, this is for you.*

How to Use It

1. Read each statement and rate how true it is **today**, not how you want it to be.
2. Use the **0–3 scale** below.
3. Add up the scores by section, then get your overall score out of 75.
4. Use the interpretation guide to see where your **operational tax** is highest and what to do next.

What You Get

In **10–15 minutes**, you will:

- Score your **operational friction and operational tax** across 5 practical areas
- See where you are relying on key individuals and outdated tools instead of simple, robust systems
- Identify a small number of **internal improvements** that would protect margin and make life easier for your team

It is a structured way to see where **small, targeted changes** to how you operate would have the biggest impact on your P&L.

Scoring Scale

- **0 – Rarely or never true**
- **1 – Sometimes true**
- **2 – Often true**
- **3 – Almost always true**

Be honest. Nobody is checking. The value comes from seeing reality clearly.

Operational Friction and Your Operational Tax

What Is Operational Friction?

Operational friction is the **everyday drag inside your business**:

- Decisions that always come back to the same people
- Tools that do not quite fit the way you work, so everyone works around them
- Information scattered across inboxes, WhatsApp groups, spreadsheets and people's heads
- Internal improvement ideas that never get finished because projects always come first

It is the gap between what your team **could** deliver with clean, simple systems and what they **actually** deliver today.

Why This Matters for Your P&L

You already know how to win work. The question is how much of that work you actually **keep** as profit.

High operational friction means:

- You are **leaving money on the table** on jobs you have already won
- You are paying for tools and licences that do not fit your reality
- Internal improvements that would protect margin are continually postponed
- This audit helps you see **where that tax is hidden** so you can decide what to deal with first.

Your **operational tax** is the share of your capacity and margin consumed by this friction instead of forward progress. As you grow, this tax **rises** unless you deliberately improve your operating system.

Why Operational Friction Compounds

Most problems in an industrial SME aren't technical, they're operational: as the business takes on more work, adds sites or services, and deals with more variation and change, coordination gets harder. People turn over, tools age, and without deliberately designed ways of working, friction grows and your operational tax quietly eats into capacity and margin.

1 Informal, Just About Fine

People talk to each other directly, most knowledge lives in heads, and simple tools still cope. There is some waste, but it is tolerable and margins are mostly protected.

1

2

2 Growing Load, Hidden Strain

Workload increases, new services or customers are added, and the same tools and habits are stretched. Key people spend more time firefighting, updating spreadsheets and fixing small issues. Knowledge starts to drift, but experience and effort cover most gaps.

3

3 Fragmentation and Firefighting

Different teams or sites do things their own way. Information is scattered across email, WhatsApp and old folders. When people leave or are off sick, important knowledge disappears. Maintaining "the way we do things" becomes hard, rework rises, and margin quietly erodes on otherwise good jobs.

4

4 Stuck in Place

The business wants to modernise tools or improve how work is run, but day-to-day pressure wins every time. Digital projects stall, new systems are bolted on rather than designed in, and change depends on a few exhausted champions. The company may still be "small", but it feels heavy, fragile, and difficult to evolve.

The SMEs that stay profitable do not just work harder. They deliberately design how work flows, so increased demand and digital change do not quietly eat their margins.

The Assessment: Sections 1–2

Section 1 – Leadership Bottlenecks and Operational Load

Rate each statement 0–3, then calculate your subtotal.

Statement	Score (0–3)
Routine operational decisions can be made without landing on my desk.	---
It is clear who decides what on projects (commercial, technical, delivery, quality).	---
Project managers know when they can make a call and when they need to escalate.	---
I spend less than 30% of my time firefighting internal issues.	---
Strategic work (growth, key relationships, future planning) moves forward every month, not just in “quiet periods”.	---
Section 1 Subtotal	--- / 15

Section 2 – Tools, Data and Cost of Working Around the System

Statement	Score (0–3)
We have a clear “home” for core information (projects, clients, documents, finances) rather than dozens of disconnected spreadsheets.	---
The team can find the latest version of key documents and drawings without asking three people.	---
Basic operational numbers (pipeline, work-in-progress, job margins, variations, snags) are visible without days of manual reporting.	---
We are using the tools we already have (e.g. Office 365, project software) properly, instead of working around them with side spreadsheets, screenshots and WhatsApp threads.	---
Internal improvement ideas (better templates, better use of systems) actually get implemented, rather than staying on a list for “when things quieten down”.	---
Section 2 Subtotal	--- / 15

- **0** – Rarely or never true
- **1** – Sometimes true
- **2** – Often true
- **3** – Almost always true

The Assessment: Sections 3–5

Section 3 – Firefighting and Coordination Load

Statement	Score (0–3)
Most of the team’s time goes on planned work, not chasing information, fixing mistakes, or redoing work.	---
When something goes wrong on a project, we do a short, structured review and actually change how we work next time.	---
Handovers between sales, delivery, and aftercare are clear, so important details do not get lost and create margin-eating surprises.	---
We have basic rhythms (weekly reviews, site / project check-ins) so we are not relying on constant calls and ad hoc meetings to stay aligned.	---
Urgent issues are resolved without pulling senior leaders into every conversation	---
Section 3 Subtotal	--- / 15

Section 4 – Single Points of Failure and Knowledge Capture

Statement	Score (0–3)
There are very few areas where “only one person knows how this works”.	---
Key processes (quoting, change control, purchasing, quality checks) are written down in a simple, usable way.	---
When people move roles or leave, we can hand over work without major disruption to projects or customers.	---
New starters can add real value within weeks because the way we work is documented and consistent.	---
We regularly tidy up and update basic documentation so it matches how we actually operate today, not how we worked three years ago.	---
Section 4 Subtotal	--- / 15

Section 5 – Execution Discipline and Margin Protection

Statement	Score (0–3)
Jobs are scoped and priced with enough clarity that we are not constantly discovering “unknowns” mid-project.	---
We hit deadlines without relying on the same people working late evenings and weekends.	---
Rework and call-backs are under control rather than a recurring problem, and snag lists are managed in a structured way.	---
We review key projects afterwards and use what we learn to adjust how we quote, plan and staff the next ones.	---
Our delivery is predictable enough that customers and partners trust what we commit to, and final margins are close to what we forecast.	---
Section 5 Subtotal	--- / 15

- 0 – Rarely or never true
- 1 – Sometimes true
- 2 – Often true
- 3 – Almost always true

Your Score and Interpretation

Calculate Your Total Score

Section	Score
Section 1 – Leadership Bottlenecks and Operational Load	___ / 15
Section 2 – Tools, Data and Cost of Working Around the System	___ / 15
Section 3 – Firefighting, Rework and Coordination	___ / 15
Section 4 – Single Points of Failure and Knowledge Capture	___ / 15
Section 5 – Execution Discipline and Margin Protection	___ / 15
Overall Score	___ / 75

Interpreting Your Results

0–25: Held Together by Good People

- Your business runs on experience, memory and effort rather than systems.
- You get projects over the line, but at a cost: stress, late nights, and margin leakage.
- **Operational tax:** Very high. You are paying for friction on every job.
- **Priority:** Stabilise the basics that protect delivery and margin before chasing more scale.

26–45: Structured, but Fragile

- Some systems and tools exist, but they are patchy or depend on a few individuals.
- Firefighting is more or less “under control” today, but you can feel how thin the ice is.
- **Operational tax:** Significant. A busy quarter or one bad project will expose it.
- **Priority:** Strengthen the weakest section in your score, especially where outdated tools and manual work-arounds are eating time and profit.

46–60: Solid Foundations, Hidden Weak Spots

- You have the makings of a reliable operating system.
- Most things work, but you know exactly where the mess lives.
- **Operational tax:** Manageable but noticeable in a few areas.
- **Priority:** Choose 1–2 sections to improve deliberately to protect margins as you grow and key people change.

61–75: Deliberately Designed Operations

- You have real resilience: the business can take on more work without falling apart.
- Issues still happen, but they are managed systematically, not by last-minute heroics.
- **Operational tax:** Low. You are keeping more of what you earn.
- **Priority:** Maintain discipline and keep tuning your operating system as the business evolves.

What to Do Next

1

Path 1: Work on This Internally

If you want to keep this fully in-house, use the audit as a starting point:

1. Share the results:

Bring your leadership / project leads into the conversation. Ask them to fill it in separately, then compare scores.

1. Pick the lowest-scoring section:

Do not try to fix everything. Choose **one area** where improvement would most protect margin or reduce stress.

1. Run a 90-minute working session:

In that session, answer three questions:

- What is actually happening today? (3-5 concrete examples from recent projects)
- What would "good enough" look like in 6 months?
- What 3-5 changes to tools, templates or processes would move us in that direction?

2. Assign ownership and a simple timeline

- Who owns each change?
- What will be done in the next 30 / 60 / 90 days?

3. Review progress monthly:

30 minutes once a month to check: What has improved? What is still stuck? What needs unblocking?

You do not need a grand "transformation programme".

You need **a handful of small, boring internal improvements** that reduce operational friction where it hurts your P&L the most.

2

Path 2: Bring in an External Operator

If you know you will not get to this on your own, or if you want a faster, more structured route, this is the work I do with clients.

Strategic Ops Audit for Industrial SMEs

A short, focused engagement to:

- Map where your operations actually creak today
- Quantify the impact on margins, capacity and risk
- Design a practical, staged plan to reduce your operational tax without stopping the business

Typical outcomes:

- Clear view of where you are over-relying on individuals and outdated tools
- Practical decisions on which tools to keep, simplify or replace — and what internal improvements to finally finish
- A 90-day plan focused on a small number of high-impact changes that protect margin

Typical engagement:

3-4 weeks to produce a detailed operational blueprint and hands-on implementation support.

Depending on the findings and level of support required, this can continue as a focused implementation project or an ongoing strategic operations partnership.

Stop firefighting. Keep building.

Start a Strategic Operational Audit

Learn More

Ready to start an operational audit? Contact contact@galyos.io

Start Building Resilience Today

Assess

Use this audit to quantify your current operational friction and identify the highest-leverage areas for improvement.

Design

Design tailored operating systems that fit how your business really runs, your culture, and your priorities, rather than dropping in generic frameworks.

Implement

Build the infrastructure, train the teams, and embed the discipline required for sustained operational excellence.

Whether you choose to tackle this internally or partner with an expert, the critical step is acknowledging that operational resilience doesn't happen by accident. It's designed.

About Galyos

Operational Resilience, by Design.

Galyos works with industrial SMEs in construction, manufacturing and engineering to cut the day-to-day friction that eats into profit, capture what your best people know in clear, simple ways of working, and put in place the structures that make your business safer to run and easier to grow.

Our Areas of Expertise

- **Operational Architecture:** Clarifying decision rights, governance, and the day-to-day cadence that keeps work moving without constant escalation
- **Business Engineering:** Designing workflows, metrics, and systems so experts stop chasing data and can focus on doing the job
- **Commercial & Industrial Resilience:** Structuring commercial operations so contracts are won, delivered, and defended with less margin risk

Founder – Gaspard Duthilleul

I founded Galyos to remove operational friction that limits business performance. With experience in industrial operations and leading global SaaS businesses, I help leadership teams capture their business logic and turn it into systems and processes that make expertise predictable and high-performing.

Previously, as COO of a global AI company in waste management, I led operations and commercial teams across 20+ countries, designing and refining the systems, workflows, and governance needed to optimise day-to-day operations, scale technology in tough industrial environments, and deliver complex contracts reliably.



Connect

- Email: gaspard@galyos.io
- Website: galyos.io
- LinkedIn: [Gaspard](#)
- LinkedIn: [Galyos](#)



Galyos — Operational Resilience, by design.