

Qimono Virtual Business Advisor

YOUR PATHWAY TO BUSINESS EXCELLENCE



BUSINESS FITNESS

Demo Co

BI
A Business Innovation &
Incubation Australia

1 Introduction

This is your personalized fitness assessment provided by Virtual Business Advisor. Use the assessment as an operational plan for organizational development and review these questions frequently ensuring continuous improvement.

This assessment provides ‘food for business thought’ of typical challenges companies encounter.

2 Business Fitness

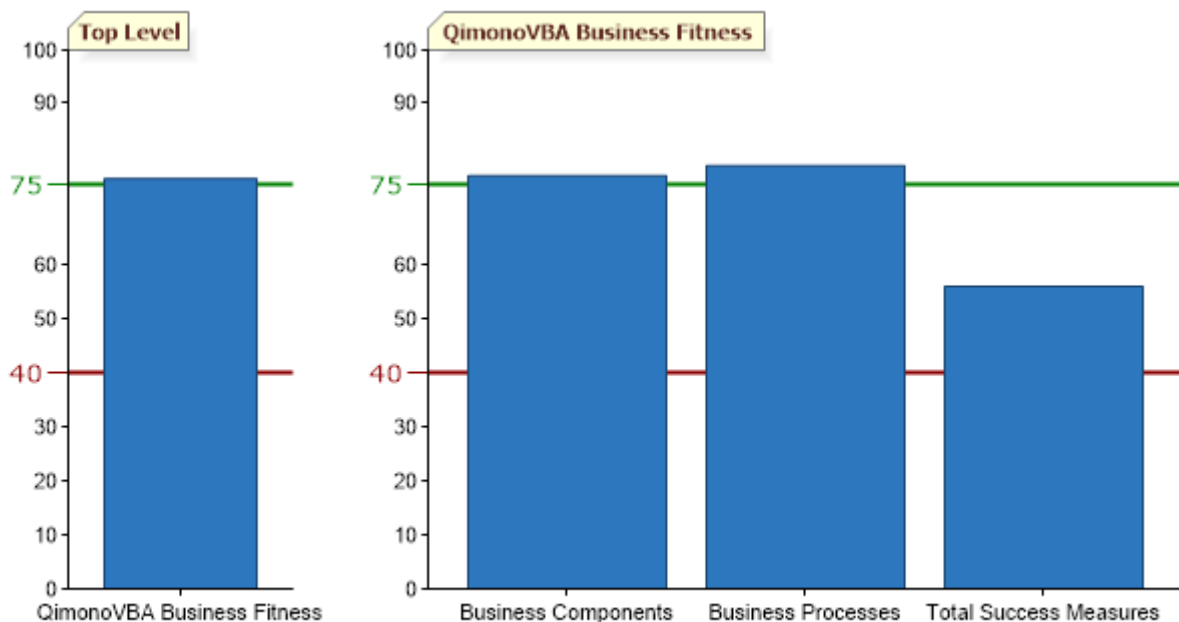
Our questions were designed to assess your overall health and fitness. We define health and fitness as “overview of the total business and identify critical areas that need addressing.” Business profitability and growth can be constrained by dysfunctional processes, communication, and inadequate resources. Enabling proactive utilization of our assessment tool will enable continuous improvement of the challenges and strengths identified.

In order to help make the most of the information provided in this assessment, we have provided ideas and resources that you should take advantage of.

3 High Level Executive Summary

The results highlight the areas that need attention.

- If you have reached the **green line**, you have most things in place under this category and everything is working fairly well.
- If you fall below the **red line**, consider serious and urgent attention to these areas that are holding you back.



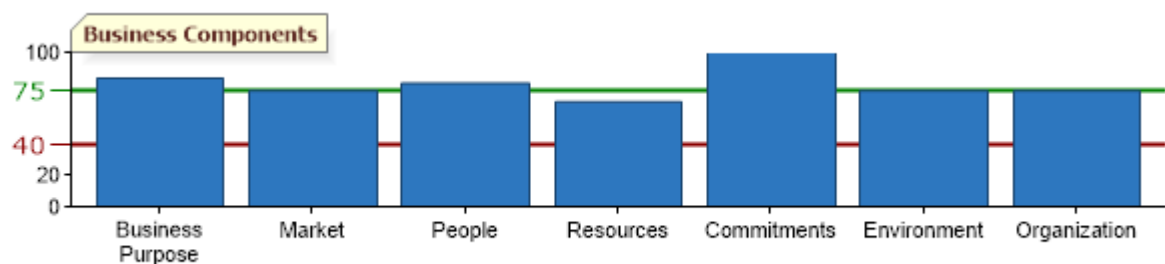
4 Detailed Results

Drilling down further enables you to get focused on the real issues you need to address. **As a reminder:**

- If you have reached the **green line**, you have most things in place under this category and everything is working fairly well.
- If you fall below the **red line**, consider serious and urgent attention to these areas that are holding you back.

4.1. BUSINESS COMPONENTS

A business is made up of its component parts and then the processes that drive these parts. This first section audits the components to identify what is missing or needs attention. You then go on to evaluate the processes



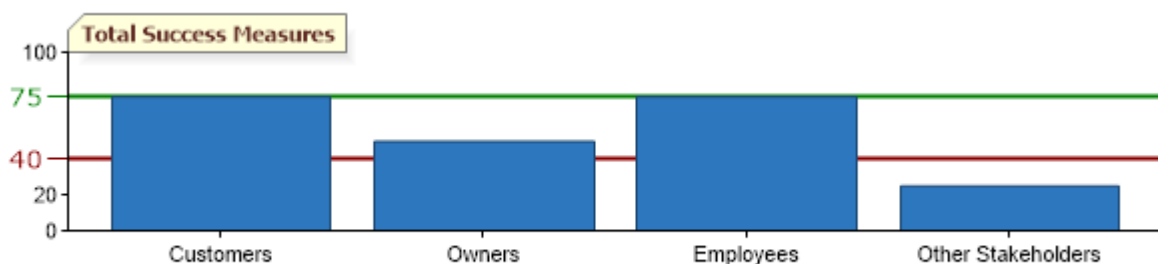
4.2. BUSINESS PROCESSES

These are the systems and methods that the organization uses to drive the components and resources to get things done.



4.3. TOTAL SUCCESS MEASURES

This answers the question 'How well is the organization doing today at meeting stakeholder needs?'



5 Benchmark

This chart looks at your **profile of strengths and weaknesses** against two types of benchmarks:

- The first is against the ideal or best practice which is 10 on this scale.
- The second benchmark is against companies like you where the risks of business becoming unsustainable have been proven to be high when scores over time are below the yellow profile.

It is important that you recognize your relevant strengths and the areas you should focus on, but it is even more important to know where you are in organizational fitness relative to where you want to be.



6 Responses and Suggestions

The table below gives suggestions and links to organizations, training courses, and online materials that will help improve your business particularly in the areas where you have identified weaknesses. The resources are listed in the order of priority:

- Sections labeled in **red**, are priority areas to work on. Consider exploring these areas first before moving on.
- Sections labeled in **orange** are opportunities for improvement. After you have addressed the priority areas, take a look at other aspects of your business that could be improved.
- Sections labeled in **green** are your strengths. You excel in these particular areas so keep up the good work!

PRIORITY AREAS TO WORK ON

Ref	Question	Response
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A3.1	Do you have a dynamic visionary committed to achieving the purpose of the business?	No
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Having a person committed to achieving the business purpose of the organization is critical to the long term success. No matter what the size of the organization, a visionary and a leader is needed somewhere to keep the whole business on track.

Suggested Resources

[SBC:Leadership](#)

There are many different leadership styles and different types of leaders, however, many successful business leaders demonstrate similar traits.

[US Small Business Administration: Leading your Company](#)

Is your leader ready to lead your company to success? Determine if they have key characteristics that will allow them to excel in a leadership role

A4.1	Are all your facilities suitable?	Negative
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Are the office, production, and warehousing facilities suitable in terms of their size, nature, and location?

Suggested Resources

[Location and Leasing](#)

The Real Estate section will help you choose the right location for your business and understand leasing and purchasing options for your commercial property

[Entrepreneur.com: Finding & Choosing a Business Location](#)

These articles will help you determine the type of facility and location you may need for your business and how to go about obtaining it.

[BizFilings: Making Business Facility Decisions](#)

This article will offer your advice and guidelines for choosing the right space for your business.

Ref	Question	Response
A4.5	Do you have a positive cash flow?	No
<p><i>Cash flow is critical to the overall survival of any business. Cash flows should be positive and backed by cash reserves.</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Budgeting and Cash Flow Management</p>		
<p>This link will direct you to pages where you are able to access articles that will provide you with tips on bookkeeping and cash flow management.</p>		
A6.1	Are there any issues with the local ordinances or other restrictions that threaten the business?	Yes
<p><i>There can be many different issues that threaten the business in the local community (e.g. noise restrictions, objections to expansion of buildings or facilities, etc.).</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Legal Basics</p>		
<p>Legal issues? Educate yourself on how to find and work with an attorney, learn how to guard your intellectual property, fight corruption, and more.</p>		
<p>US Small Business Administration : Business Law & Regulations</p>		
<p>Find out how to handle day-to-day legal issues that could affect your small business.</p>		
B1.3	Is your sales process refined and efficient?	No
<p><i>A sales process should be refined and efficient to take a prospect from interest to sale through to delivery of product / service and payment.</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Sales Management</p>		
<p>Make more effective sales presentations, refine sales strategy, and close deals on your terms</p>		
<p>Finding Sales Leads</p>		
<p>Learn how to identify and prioritize new high-quality sales leads for your business</p>		
B2.1	Do you have an effective and efficient job costing and job management system?	No
<p><i>Service delivery is all about completing jobs effectively and efficiently for clients. These jobs need to be invoiced correctly and have all associated costs tracked so that the efficiency and profitability of operations can be tracked.</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Procurement, Inventory and Production</p>		
<p>Improve demand forecasting and production processes, control inventory and materials, manage vendors and suppliers, and conduct audits.</p>		
<p>Project Management</p>		
<p>As a manager, you need know how to plan your project, conduct project reviews, write project reports and wrap up the project.</p>		

Ref	Question	Response
B4.10	Have you evaluated your tax situation to minimize the tax payments due?	No

Suggested Resources

[Accounting & Finance](#)

Learn how to understand the basics of accounting and finance. Topics include how to fund your business, organize books, and more.

[Entrepreneur.com: Financial Guidelines](#)

When business owners need answers, Entrepreneur.com is their source for solutions. Visitors access the website to find new insights and delve into core issues that affect every aspect of business management. Specifically, this link will direct you to Entrepreneur.com's Financial Guidelines page where you are able to access articles that will provide you with tips on financing your business.

[Gaebler Venture: Financial Guidelines](#)

Gaebler.com is a news and information website that provides useful news and information to small business owners, entrepreneurs, and others who are interested in business. This link will direct you to Gaebler Venture's Financial Guidelines page on which you will find financial advice.

C4.1	Other stakeholders include government, community, environment and special interest groups. Are the expectations of these stakeholders being addressed?	Negative
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There can be many and varied other stakeholders in a business. The most common are government (national and local), local community (your neighbors), the environment, and other special interest groups. Are the expectations of these stakeholders identified and are they being met?

Suggested Resources

[Family Business](#)

This resource lends some insight and provides articles and advice related to running a family business

[Gaebler Ventures: Business Strategies](#)

This resource offers articles and best practices to help you to manage expectations of other stakeholders.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Ref	Question	Response
A1.3	Do you have a clear vision for the business?	Somewhat
<p><i>A clear vision means a specific place you want the business to be at a specific time in the future. It is important to keep this up to date.</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Sample Business Plans</p>		
<p>Are you ready to start a business? Looking for small business ideas? First step: learn how to write a business plan with our business plan template and examples.</p>		
<p>Entrepreneur.com: Business Plan Guidelines</p>		
<p>This link will direct you to Entrepreneur.com's Business Plan Guidelines page, where you are able to access articles that will provide you with tips creating a business plan.</p>		
<p>US Small Business Administration: Create Your Business Plan</p>		
<p>The SBA assists Americans with starting, building, and growing businesses. With this link, you will find step by step guidelines for writing a business plan, as well as other related resources.</p>		
A2.3	Do you have an appropriate channel for your products to get to your customers?	Somewhat
<p><i>Having an appropriate channel for your products is vital. It's no good having great products with great gross margins if customers can't find or get the products. Products (and services) must be made available to the customer in an appropriate and cost effective way.</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Entrepreneur.com: Marketing Guidelines</p>		
<p>This link will direct you to Entrepreneur.com's Business Plan Guidelines page, where you are able to access articles that will provide you with advice and tips on how to market your business.</p>		
<p>US Small Business Administration: Understand Your Market</p>		
<p>Useful tips and resources that will help you learn about your customers, competitors and your industry.</p>		
A2.5	Do you know who your competitors are and what your competitive edge is?	Somewhat
<p><i>You need to know who your competitors are before you can do any further analysis on competition. What basis are you competing on? Your edge is important to define your position in the market against your competitors.</i></p>		
<p>Suggested Resources</p>		
<p>Effective Competitive Analysis</p>		
<p>A competitive analysis allows you to identify your competitors and evaluate their respective strengths and weaknesses. Learn more about competitive analysis.</p>		
<p>US Small Business Administration: Understand Your Market</p>		
<p>Useful tips and resources that will help you learn about your customers, competitors and your industry.</p>		

Ref	Question	Response
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A4.2	Is all your plant and equipment suitable?	Somewhat
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Is all your plant and equipment suitable for the job, i.e. Production plant, computers, tables, desks, meeting rooms, networking, phone and internet systems, climate control, lunch rooms and staff facilities, lighting and general workstation ergonomics.

Suggested Resources

[Equipment](#)

Learn how to manage your office equipment effectively.

[BizFilings: Making Business Facility Decisions](#)

This article will offer you advice and guidelines for choosing the right space for your business.

[Entrepreneur.com: Finding & Choosing a Business Location](#)

These articles will help you determine the type of facility and location you may need for your business and how to go about obtaining it. With this link, you will be directed to Washtenaw County's official webpage. Here, you will find a wealth of services and resources that are able to assist growing businesses in their efforts.

A7.1	Is the ownership structure appropriate for the type of business and the level of protection required?	Somewhat
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Private ownership, limited liability company, trust structures, etc. are all possible and you need to know which is best for your business.

Suggested Resources

[Gaebler Ventures: Forming a Legal Entity](#)

Take a look at various legal entities, from sole proprietorships to corporations to help you choose the best form of legal entity for your business.

[Incorporation](#)

Interested in incorporating your business? Learn about the legal benefits and obligations of a corporation versus a sole proprietorship, partnership, or LLC.

A7.3	Do you know and report on your critical success factors and are they tracked?	Somewhat
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Every business has a small number of things (2-5) that are critical to their success. These must be identified, tracked, and managed carefully.

Suggested Resources

[Entrepreneur.com: Tracking Your Business Success](#)

This article will provide you with three, easy to use financial tools that will help you track your business success.

[Entrepreneur.com: The Best Online Tools for Managing Your Business Contacts](#)

This article outlines specific and affordable online CRM management systems that will assist you in organizing your business contacts and tracking of successes.

Ref	Question	Response
B1.1	Do you have a process for keeping in touch with your market and potential customers?	Somewhat
<p><i>Keeping in touch with the market is crucial to long term survival and success. The process may be formal with market research; (newsletters, etc.) or it may be informal through social media or regular meetings with people in the industry.</i></p> <p>Suggested Resources</p> <p>Center for Empowerment and Economic Development: Marketing Guidelines</p> <p>A guide to creating a marketing plan for your business.</p> <p>Entrepreneur.com: Marketing Guidelines</p> <p>When business owners need answers, Entrepreneur.com is their source for solutions. Visitors access the website to find new insights and delve into core issues that affect every aspect of business management. Specifically, this link will direct you to Entrepreneur.com's Business Plan Guidelines page, where you are able to access articles that will provide you with advice and tips on how to market your business.</p> <p>Gaebler Venture: Marketing Guidelines</p> <p>Marketing a business well is critical to the success of your venture. Find everything you need to know about business marketing here. If it's a marketing tactic, strategy, idea or technique, we've probably got it covered.</p>		
B1.2	Do you have a well-defined process for acquiring new clients or new business?	Somewhat
<p><i>The new business pipeline is crucial to the long term survival and success of any organization. Too many leave this part of the business to chance.</i></p> <p>Suggested Resources</p> <p>Entrepreneur.com: Sales Prospecting</p> <p>Useful articles that will provide you with insight and advice on how to find new prospects for your sales.</p> <p>Finding Sales Leads</p> <p>Learn how to identify and prioritize new high-quality sales leads for your business.</p>		
B2.2	Do you have a formal production planning system?	Somewhat
<p><i>Having a formal production planning system, no matter how simple, is important to ensure problems and unforeseen opportunities are managed appropriately. This type of management is a marketing tool!</i></p> <p>Suggested Resources</p> <p>Procurement, Inventory and Production</p> <p>Improve demand forecasting and production processes, control inventory and materials, manage vendors and suppliers, and conduct audits.</p> <p>Gaebler Ventures: Operations Management</p> <p>Articles covering best practices for production, inventory, supply chain, materials management, purchasing, logistics and other topics related to operations.</p>		

Ref	Question	Response
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B3.2	Do you have a program for staff training, both in-house and external?	Somewhat
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Ongoing staff training is an important component of continuous improvement and is a vital element in maintaining staff morale at high levels.

Suggested Resources

[Employee Management](#)

Tips for performance appraisal, providing employee feedback, retaining your top employees, setting goals for employees, delegating, outsourcing, and more.

B4.8	Do you track profitability at the lowest sensible level?	Somewhat
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Each business is different, but typically profitability should be able to be tracked at a Product Group, Customer, Department, Project, or other such level. Higher levels of reporting may be possible too, (e.g. Branch or Division levels).

Suggested Resources

[Accounting & Finance](#)

Learn how to understand the basics of accounting and finance. Topics include how to fund your business, organize books, and more.

[Entrepreneur.com: Financial Guidelines](#)

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B5.3	Are the business' non-financial filing systems efficient?	Somewhat
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Non-financial business records need to be filed in an efficient system for filing and retrieval of information. Typical examples are project files, customer correspondence, supplier correspondence, etc.

Suggested Resources

[Basic Computer and Communication Tools](#)

Learn about essential computer and communication tools.

[SBC :Busines Security](#)

Ensuring the safety and security of your business, your employees and your customers is of paramount importance.

Ref	Question	Response
C2.1	Is the business meeting income, return on investment, capital gain, and lifestyle expectations of the owners?	Neutral

Owners look for income, return on investment, and lifestyle requirements from a business. Is the business delivering on these?

Suggested Resources

[Gaebler Ventures: Business Strategies](#)

This resource offers articles and best practices to help you manage the expectations of the company owners.

[Family Business](#)

This resource lends some insight and provides articles and advice related to running a family business.

YOUR STRENGTHS

Ref	Question	Response
A1.1	Do you have a clear business purpose?	Yes

This must be a business purpose defined in terms of the client's requirements and needs. This SHOULD NOT be a description of what the business currently does. Instead, it must be a description of the problem that the client wants solved when they use the service/product that the company is offering.

A1.2	Do you have clear promises to your clients?	Yes
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Every business must clearly outline the promises it is making to its customers/clients. These promises outline what clients can expect in the way of performance and services delivered. The promises also highlight to staff what the core requirements are for the business to perform for their customers. Staff must buy into these promises. Promises also give a foundation on which many of the business' systems are built because systems will probably be required to ensure the promises are kept reliably. Promises should be as specific as possible and cover the core values and deliverables the company has to offer.

A2.1	Have you done research to establish that your products /services are well defined?	Yes
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Well defined products are easier to track, market, and understand.

A2.2	Do you have evidence that the products/services are priced to meet the market?	Positive
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Products need to be priced to meet market expectations. This is often contravened by businesses that are afraid of losing customers from over-pricing. This occurs when the company's market position and definition is not well defined and pricing is used as the main competitive advantage.

Ref	Question	Response
A2.4	What's your brand awareness amongst your targeted customers?	Leader
<i>Your brand awareness in the targeted market is important as it defines your position and potential.</i>		
A3.2	Do you have sufficient people with critical skills?	Yes
<i>Do you have the people with appropriate skills that are needed?</i>		
A3.3	Do you have a pipeline of new skilled people in the wings?	Yes
<i>This is more important for businesses that are aggressively growing, but all need it to some extent. The process should have skilled people at each stage in the recruitment process before the skills are demanded in the organization.</i>		
A3.4	Is your core team rewarded appropriately?	Yes
<i>Core team people should have a vested interest as a team in the success of the business. Rewarding them as a team is an effective method of gaining 'ownership' from them. There should also be some non-financial rewards as well.</i>		
A3.5	Do you have good advisors in the legal, financial, tax, and business areas?	Yes
<i>Good advice in specialist areas is critical, particularly to smaller businesses that do not have all the expertise in house.</i>		
A4.3	Are your suppliers reliable?	Yes
<i>Do your suppliers provide reliable service within acceptable parameters of quality and delivery timeframes?</i>		
A4.4	Do you have funding available?	Yes
<i>Do you have additional funds available or funding capability to survive downturns and make the most of new opportunities?</i>		
A4.6	Do you understand the credit environment that you operate in?	Yes
<i>This understanding helps you assess the credit risk you face in terms of suppliers who you need to pay and the payments you expect from customers.</i>		

Ref	Question	Response
A4.7	Do you have or are you able to obtain all the technology you need to deliver your products and services?	Yes
	<i>You need to have access to, or be able to develop all the technology that is needed. The technology needs to live up to expectations too. If it does not, then your company is at serious risk of under-delivering on promises and leaving your customers disillusioned.</i>	
A5.1	Do you have any personal or business financial commitments that could affect the business?	No
	<i>Personal or business financial commitments may affect the business because the financial demands may draw funds that are badly needed away from the business.</i>	
A5.2	Do you have any personal or business contractual commitments that may affect the business?	No
	<i>,Personal contractual commitments may prevent the business from certain strategic options, if for example you are under a restraint of trade agreement from a previous position.</i>	
A6.2	Are there any legal constraints that affect the business?	No
	<i>Legal constraints may limit the business and its operations.</i>	
A6.3	Are there any international trends or changes that threaten the business?	No
	<i>Changes in international markets and other international events may affect the business especially in the long term.</i>	
A6.4	Do you have all the licenses, qualifications, memberships, and/or permits needed to operate your business?	Yes
	<i>Many businesses need licenses and/or permits from government and local government. You may also need special qualifications and/or professional memberships before you can practice.</i>	
A7.2	Are people's responsibilities and targets well defined?	Yes
	<i>For a business to operate effectively everybody's role must be well defined and the targets they are to achieve must be well set out.</i>	
A7.4	Are you adequately protected with shareholder, key man, and general insurance?	Yes
	<i>There is often a case for protection against risks that insurance can cover for.</i>	

Ref	Question	Response
B1.4	When customers or prospects raise a question, problem, or issue, do you have a system to follow through to completion?	Yes
	<i>Following through to completion for a customer is crucial if customers are to feel like your business has their interests at heart.</i>	
B2.3	Are your inventory systems accurate and up-to-date?	Yes
	<i>Having accurate and up-to-date inventory systems are vital to the successful operation of a business that depends on inventories.</i>	
B2.4	Do you have reliable source(s) for raw materials and components used in the production process?	Yes
	<i>Having reliable and cost effective sources for raw materials and components is crucial to production and delivery of products to specification and on time.</i>	
B2.5	Do your dispatch people ship orders accurately?	Yes
	<i>It's not unusual to have dispatch departments with a low accuracy level. In these situations orders are missed or shipped inaccurately with wrong products, wrong amounts, and inaccurate delivery addresses. All these problems lower the level of trust the client has in the business.</i>	
B3.1	Do you have regular communication with your core team?	Yes
	<i>Regular communication is crucial and should consist of meetings, newsletters, and events that encourage both formal and informal exchanges between people.</i>	
B3.3	Do you have a regular personal staff evaluation program?	Yes
	<i>A regular staff evaluation program allows both the staff member and management person to review and fine-tune the role the person is playing in the organization. This is vital to the long term success of the business.</i>	
B4.1	Do you do daily or at least weekly bank reconciliations and cash forecasting?	Yes
	<i>Regular bank reconciliations are essential to managing cash properly.</i>	
B4.2	Is your invoicing system efficient and accurate?	Yes
	<i>Invoicing systems should be efficient and effective even if manual. They should allow accurate and timely creation of invoices from orders or sales.</i>	

Ref	Question	Response
B4.3	Do you have a debt collection program?	Yes
<p><i>Debt collection can be a problem area for many businesses. If debt collection is well planned and managed then the process can be forgotten or neglected, resulting in overdue debtors that are higher than necessary. Also when clients get 'used' to not paying regularly they get trained into poor payment habits and this can be difficult to change.</i></p>		
B4.4	Do you have clear End of Month procedures?	Yes
<p><i>Clear end of month procedures are important to close a month off and produce the reports that management need.</i></p>		
B4.5	Do you have clear End of Year procedures?	Yes
<p><i>End of year procedures should close down a year ready for tax accounting purposes, produce the reports required for management, and do whatever processing the information system requires starting a new financial year.</i></p>		
B4.6	Do you have processes in place to complete Tax, Company, and Statistics reporting requirements?	Yes
<p><i>Sales Tax, Payroll, Income, and other tax systems must be recorded and reported in an accurate and timely fashion.</i></p>		
B4.7	Do you budget sales and expenses on a monthly basis?	Yes
<p><i>Budgeting is an important tool in determining if business plans are on track or not.</i></p>		
B4.9	Are all assets tracked and managed effectively?	Yes
<p><i>Effective management of assets means knowing which assets belong to the business, where they are located, and where costs are to be attributed (e.g. depreciation).</i></p>		
B5.1	Are your administration systems well-resourced and well run?	Yes
<p><i>Administration systems are often the last on the priority list and in smaller business are carried out intermittently and/or at night as the last thing. Preferably administration must be done efficiently and regularly to keep everything up to date.</i></p>		
B5.2	Do you have a Customer Relationship Management tool?	Yes
<p><i>CRM systems allow you to keep track of all customers and prospects. All phone calls, meetings, correspondence, emails, reports etc. by anybody in the organization should be kept in a common repository.</i></p>		

Ref	Question	Response
B5.4	Do you have reliable backup systems for critical information, especially computer based information?	Yes
<i>Having reliable backups for critical information, both paper and computer based, is essential insurance against disaster. Backups need to be supported by disaster recovery plans.</i>		
B6.1	Do you have a program in place to develop new products and new markets?	Yes
<i>New products need to be developed regularly to continue to meet the needs of the client within the purpose of the business.</i>		
B6.2	Do you have a program of on-going product development and refinement?	Yes
<i>Existing products can always be developed and refined.</i>		
C1.1	Are customers receiving full value from the products and services offered with all safety issues addressed and in a caring relationship with the business?	Positive
<i>Customers need to be receiving full value, with all safety concerns addressed, and they must feel cared for and treated with respect and integrity.</i>		
C3.1	Are the expectations of employees being met in terms of financial rewards, recognition of the value they are contributing, a safe work environment and supportive social culture?	Positive
<i>Employees need to be paid well, recognized for their contribution, be in a safe environment within a supportive and positive social culture. Is the business delivering on these expectations?</i>		

7 Conclusion:

It is recommended that you develop this document to become your working plan for improvement by developing your own activities in the critical areas identified. You should then retake the assessment to check on progress and ensure that you are improving your fitness levels..