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# PAPER STREET

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## SOLUTIONS

### Early Warning Signals: A Leadership Readiness Checklist

This checklist is not an evaluation. It is intended to help leaders notice early organizational signals that often appear before larger challenges emerge.

#### Governance & Decision-Making

- ☐ Board discussions regularly return to the same unresolved issues
- ☐ Roles between governance and operations feel blurred or situational
- ☐ Decisions are delayed due to uncertainty or risk sensitivity
- ☐ Leadership time is increasingly spent managing tension rather than direction

#### Capacity & Workload

- ☐ Staff are technically coping but visibly fatigued
- ☐ Informal workarounds have become normalized
- ☐ Key roles rely heavily on a small number of people
- ☐ New initiative are added without removing others

#### Strategy & Direction

- ☐ Strategic priorities exist but feel disconnected from daily operations
- ☐ Planning conversations feel aspirational rather than grounded
- ☐ There is pressure to “do something” without clarity on readiness
- ☐ Timing concerns are present but rarely voiced

#### Culture & Communication

- ☐ Feedback is cautious or filtered
- ☐ Staff engagement varies widely across teams
- ☐ Change fatigue is reference indirectly rather than openly
- ☐ Leadership senses hesitation but cannot fully name why

#### Risk & Resilience

- ☐ Emerging risks are discussed informally rather than
- ☐ Structurally Reactive decision-making is increasing
- ☐ Leaders feel responsible for holding complexity alone

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### Reflection

If multiple items resonate, it may indicate:

- Readiness constraints rather than performance issues
- Structural pressure rather than individual resistance
- A need for clarity before momentum
- To pause before launching new initiatives or planning processes

These signals are common in public institutions navigating complexity and often go unaddressed until stress increases.

### Optional Next Step

Some organizations choose to explore these signals further through a structures **Operational Risk & Readiness Snapshot**, which helps surface patterns and context before decisions are made.