DENVER
BUSINESS COACH

OPERATIONAL CADENCE TOOLKIT

The 5-Hour Cadence Starter Kit

Four worksheets that show you whether your business has an operating system, or whether it just has you.

1. The Operating System Assessment
2. The 60-Minute Weekly Leadership Meeting
3. The One-Page Scorecard
4. The Decision Rights Worksheet

How to use this kit

Work through it in order. Each tool depends on the one before it. Set aside about an hour, and do it with the numbers in front of you, not from memory.

The five elements

The 5-Hour Cadence is named for what it costs you in time. Roughly five hours a month: a 60-minute leadership meeting each week, plus a short scorecard review by each leader before that meeting. Anything heavier tends to collapse under its own weight.

Before you start

Company	
Completed by	
Date	
Quarter this covers	

> **One ground rule.** Score what is actually happening this month, not what is written down somewhere or what you intend to start. The gap between those two is the thing this kit is designed to find.

The Operating System Assessment

Circle one number per row. 1 means the description on the left is closer to the truth. 5 means the description on the right is.

DIAGNOSTIC QUESTION	1 MEANS	5 MEANS	SCORE
Do we have three to five clear company priorities for this quarter?	Everyone has their own list	The whole company can name the priorities	1 2 3 4 5
Does every priority have one owner and a definition of done?	Work is shared vaguely	Ownership and completion standards are visible	1 2 3 4 5
Do leaders have weekly scorecards?	We manage from opinions	We can see performance and exceptions early	1 2 3 4 5
Are decision rights clear?	Everything rolls uphill	Leaders act within defined guardrails	1 2 3 4 5
Does the weekly leadership meeting end with commitments?	Same issues repeat	Decisions, owners, and dates are documented	1 2 3 4 5
Can the owner step away without routine work stalling?	The owner remains the hub	Systems and leaders keep execution moving	1 2 3 4 5

YOUR TOTAL

out of 30

24–30	Your core operating cadence is working. Improve selectively.
18–23	You have pieces of a system, and the gaps are creating drag.
12–17	You are likely acting as the connector between too many moving parts.
6–11	Start with role clarity, scorecards, and weekly commitments before adding tools.

Your lowest-scoring row is your starting point

Lowest-scoring question	
What it is costing us	
Who owns fixing it	

The 60-Minute Weekly Leadership Meeting

Same day, same time, every week. The meeting ends on time even when the issues list does not. Anything unresolved becomes a commitment with a name and a date.

0:00 — **Scorecard review**
Read the numbers. Stop only on the ones off target. On-target numbers get no discussion. Every miss becomes an issue for later in the meeting.

0:05 — **Quarterly priorities**
Each owner says on track or off track in one sentence. No status narratives. Off track becomes an issue.

0:10 — **Last week's commitments**
Read the list. Done or not done. A not-done that has slipped twice goes straight to the issues list.

0:20 — **Issues: discuss, decide, resolve**
The longest block, and the reason the meeting exists. Rank the list first and work top down. Solving three issues completely beats touching nine.

0:50 — **Commitments and close**
Read back every commitment with its owner and due date. Name anything that has to be communicated to the wider team, and who is doing it.

Commitments from this meeting

COMMITMENT	OWNER	DUE	DONE

> **The test of this meeting.** A meeting that produces only discussion is a very expensive conversation. If you finish a week with no new commitments, the hour did not do its job.

The One-Page Scorecard

Five to seven numbers, no more. Each one has a single owner and a target set before the week starts. If a number would not change what somebody does on Monday, leave it off.

Pick from these, or use your own

Gross margin · open pipeline · backlog · labor efficiency · cash on hand · close rate · callbacks or rework · project margin · receivable days · quotes sent · on-time delivery · utilization

NUMBER	OWNER	TARGET	WK 1	WK 2	WK 3	WK 4

Three questions before you commit to a number

QUESTION	WHY IT MATTERS
Does it show up before month-end?	A number that only arrives with the financials tells you what already happened. Leading indicators give you time to act.
Can one person move it?	If nobody can influence the number, it belongs in a report and not on the scorecard.
Would a miss trigger a real conversation?	If a miss would pass without comment, the number is decoration.

> **Watch for scorecard creep.** Every quarter, someone will want to add a number. Add it only by removing one. The dashboard that tracks everything gets read by nobody.

The Decision Rights Worksheet

List the decisions that keep landing on your desk. For each one, set the limit a leader can act inside without asking, and the trigger that brings it back to you. If every exception is escalated, you have trained the company to wait.

Start with the decisions that interrupt you most

Discounts and pricing exceptions · customer credits and refunds · schedule changes · purchase approvals · hiring and offers · overtime · vendor selection · scope changes · write-offs · policy exceptions

RECURRING DECISION	WHO DECIDES TODAY	WHO SHOULD DECIDE	LIMIT THEY CAN ACT INSIDE	ESCALATE TO OWNER WHEN

Worked example

Customer credit	Owner	Ops manager	Up to $500, reported weekly	Above $500, or a repeat for the same customer

Responsibility without authority is not delegation. If a manager owns scheduling, hiring, or delivery but cannot make a meaningful decision without permission, the work still routes through you. The limit column is what makes the handoff real.

Your first 30 days

You do not need all four tools running at once. Pick the lowest-scoring row from Tool 1 and start there. The rest follows more easily than you expect.

WEEK	DO THIS	YOU WILL KNOW IT WORKED WHEN
Week 1	Name the one constraint limiting growth, profit, or your own freedom. Set three to five priorities for the quarter.	You can say the priorities out loud without looking them up.
Week 2	Assign one owner and a definition of done to each priority. Build the scorecard from Tool 3.	Every priority has a name next to it, not a department.
Week 3	Run the meeting from Tool 2. Keep it to 60 minutes even if the issues list is not finished.	The meeting ends with written commitments, owners, and dates.
Week 4	Fill in Tool 4 for the three decisions that interrupted you most this month.	At least one thing gets decided without reaching you.

Where this usually goes wrong

Buying a tool first	Decide what gets reviewed, who owns it, and what happens when it is off track before you choose software.
Meeting more often	The output is what needs standardizing: exceptions, decisions, commitments, owners, dates.
Tracking too many numbers	Five to seven. A dashboard nobody reads is worse than no dashboard.
Keeping veto power	The system has to change your behavior too, or the team will keep waiting.

Want a second set of eyes on your score?

A Business Health & Value Assessment is a structured review of your goals, financial performance, leadership team, and the risks limiting the value of your company. We will identify the operating-system gaps holding back execution, owner freedom, and transferable value.

SCHEDULE A CALL

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