

CEO READINESS Checklist For 2026

1. STRATEGY COHERENCE

Is our strategy still executable under real conditions?

- Fewer than five true priorities for 2026
- Every priority explicitly funded and staffed
- Trade-offs documented, not implicit
- Strategy reflects execution capacity, not aspiration

2. EXECUTION CAPACITY

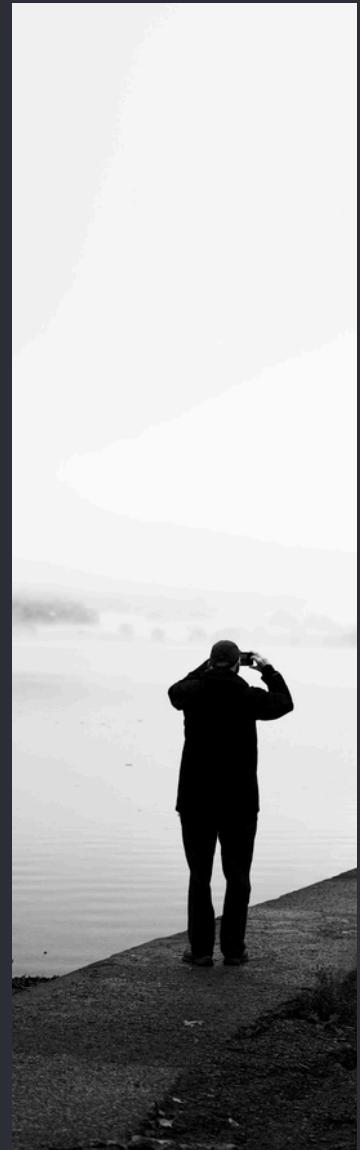
Can the organization actually deliver what it has decided?

- Clear decision ownership at execution level
- Minimized interfaces between functions
- Escalations are exceptions, not default behavior
- End-to-end delivery paths defined

3. OPERATING MODEL FITNESS

Is the organization built for delivery or for reporting?

- Accountability follows outcomes, not org charts
- Middle management has real decision authority
- Coordination mechanisms reduced, not expanded
- Structure supports flow, not control accumulation



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4. GOVERNANCE AND RISK MATURITY

Does governance enable or obstruct execution?

- AI governance embedded into operations
- Compliance integrated into workflows
- Explicit and continuously monitored risk ownership
- Governance reduces friction instead of adding approvals

5. LEADERSHIP BANDWIDTH

Do the CEO and top team still have capacity to lead?

- Decision load actively managed
- Initiatives stopped, not just delayed
- Protected time for system-level thinking
- Escalations reflect necessity, not uncertainty

6. CAPITAL DISCIPLINE

Does capital allocation reinforce strategy or dilute it?

- Capital concentrated where it compounds structurally
- Underperforming initiatives decisively defunded
- Consistent investment logic across functions
- Capital allocation signals priorities clearly



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7. ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS SIGNAL

Would an external observer trust this organization
to execute under pressure?

- Strategy, structure, governance, and capital aligned
- Execution issues surfaced early
- Leadership decisions reduce complexity over time
- Organization operates calmly under constraint

BOTTOM LINE FOR CEOS

Do the CEO and top team still have capacity to lead?

Constraint is structural.

Execution is the strategy.

Governance is leadership.

Readiness beats acceleration going into 2026.

