The CFO Readiness Questionnaire

You're running — is it ready to scale?

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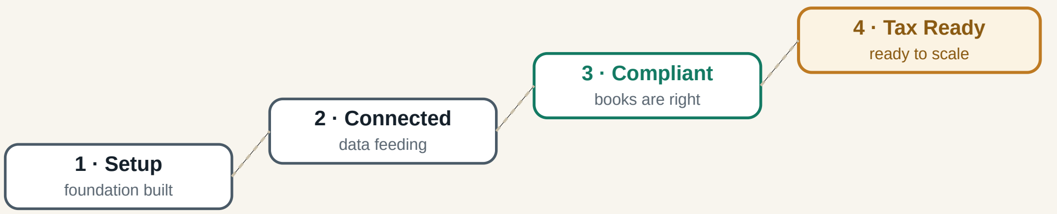
> **This one is for a business that's already up and running** — you have customers, revenue, and probably a bookkeeper or the beginnings of a team. You're feeling the pull to stop running every number in your head and bring in real financial guidance. (Just starting out, or still setting up the basics? Start with the Foundation Checklist instead — this one assumes the foundation is already there.) Answer honestly: the point is to find the gaps, not to score well.

The Financial Maturity Staircase — where does the business stand?



Your Survival Score tells you which step you're on — and what's next.

A. DATA INVENTORY

- The books are **current** (reconciled through last month, not last quarter)
- Bank and credit-card accounts reconcile to the penny
- There is *one* source of truth for financial data (not three spreadsheets and a shoebox)
- Receipts/documents are captured and attached to transactions
- The bookkeeper (or the owner) has the *right* access level — not over-permissioned "for convenience"

B. GOALS & PLANS

- There are written financial goals for the year
- Actuals get compared to a budget or plan (budget-vs-actual actually happens)
- Someone owns the number — it's clear who is accountable for the financial picture
- The plan is revisited when the market gives feedback, not filed and forgotten

C. CASH & FORECASTS *(THE TWO QUESTIONS THAT MATTER MOST)*

- **Do you know how much cash you have in the bank right now** — and are you in the habit of staying on top of it?
- **Do you know how much cash you'll have 30 days from now** — and what that lets you do or can't do?
- Receivables are tracked (who owes you, how old is it)
- Payables are tracked (what you owe, when it's due)
- There's a view of runway: how long can the business operate if revenue paused?

D. AUTOMATION & SYSTEMS

- The routine bookkeeping tasks are systematized (not living in the owner's head)
- The books are structured so a task *could* be handed off — the pre-condition for outsourcing
- Recurring work (invoicing, bill pay, categorization) is at least partly automated
- A follow-up / nurture system exists for leads — *"the fortune is in the follow-up"*

E. KPIS

- A small set of numbers the owner actually watches (not 40 — the 3–5 that matter)
- Gross margin is known and monitored
- Financial statements can be produced on demand and are actually read
- Month-end close happens in a reasonable window (days, not weeks)

F. CONTROLS & RISK

- No single person both approves and pays (or the risk is consciously accepted)
- Large / unusual transactions get a second look
- Accounting data is backed up
- Former employees / stale logins removed promptly
- Insurance and entity structure still fit the size the business has grown to

THE SURVIVAL SCORE

How this rolls up — the same rubric our assessment uses.

Each area maps to our nine-category assessment (scored to **100**). The score tells you which step of the **Financial Maturity Staircase** the business is standing on:

STEP	MEANING
1 · Setup	Foundation is still being built — this owner needs the *Foundation Checklist* first
2 · Connected	Systems are live and feeding data, but not yet trusted
3 · Compliant	The books are right and defensible
4 · Tax Ready	Clean, current, decision-grade — ready to scale and to bring in help

Overall readiness (100-point scale):

- **80–100 — Green:** Ready. Maintain, monitor, and scale with confidence.
- **50–79 — Yellow:** Work needed. Build an improvement plan before adding load.
- **0–49 — Red:** High risk. This is the "process debt" that has to be addressed first.

KEY QUESTIONS

The handful worth asking any operating owner — the ones that reveal whether there's a system underneath, or just the owner's head.

1. Could you take a two-week vacation without the business stopping? What would break?
2. Do you know your cash position **30 days out** — and what it lets you do?
3. If you wanted to hand off one task tomorrow, is it set up so you *could*?
4. What are the 3 numbers you check every week?
5. When a new lead gives you their contact info — **what happens next?**
6. Who owns the financial picture when you're not looking at it?
7. What's the one thing you keep meaning to fix in the books "later"?

Resources

- **Tax-Ready Books** (the foundation that creates clean financial data): https://projectbits.com/taxready/
- **The methodology / Financial Maturity Staircase** (short video): https://projectbits.com/method/
- **Book on business operating systems:** https://a.co/d/buTmO0L

*Just starting out? Begin with the **Foundation Checklist**. · ProjectBits Consulting · projectbits.com · don@projectbits.com*

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