

Organizational Redesign Starts With a Holistic Assessment — Not an Org Chart



Organizational redesign isn't an org chart exercise — it's a strategic reset grounded in evidence, not assumptions. HR and operational leaders face increasing pressure to adapt to industry shifts and AI-driven change, yet most redesign efforts fail because they overlook the real drivers of performance: leadership behaviors, culture, people capabilities, processes, and measurement. A holistic organizational assessment provides the clarity needed to redesign with confidence. This article outlines why structure changes alone fall short, what a modern assessment includes, and how leaders can build a future-ready organization that can scale, adapt, and perform.

HR and operational leaders are facing unprecedented pressure. AI is reshaping how work gets done, talent expectations are shifting, and legacy systems are straining under new demands. And somewhere between a board request, stalled initiatives, and limited resources, you're expected to "fix the organization."

If you feel the urgency — but not always the clarity — you're not alone. You want to be seen as strategic, data-driven, and future-ready. But too often, you're handed a mandate without the roadmap or support to achieve it.

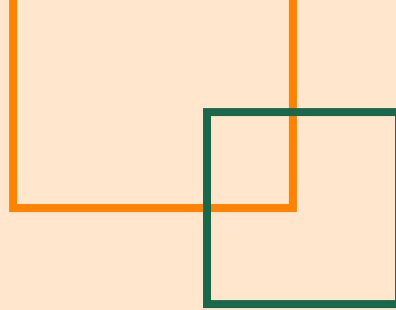
And this is where most redesign efforts go wrong. [*McKinsey research*](#) finds that *less than a quarter of organizational-redesign efforts actually succeed, with many running out of steam or failing to improve performance, which mirrors what we see when organizations jump straight to the org chart without fixing underlying systems.*

Many organizations jump straight into adjusting job descriptions, moving teams, or redrawing reporting lines. They assume the org chart is the redesign; it isn't.



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Behind most failed redesigns is a familiar villain: misaligned processes, unclear leadership expectations, confusing data, and outdated assumptions. When those root issues remain untouched, the structure changes — but performance doesn't. At Orange Grove Consulting, this is where our work begins.

Why Most Redesign Efforts Fail

Leaders often try to solve organizational challenges through quick structural fixes: shifting headcount, consolidating departments, or creating new roles. But these moves rarely address the deeper issues creating friction.

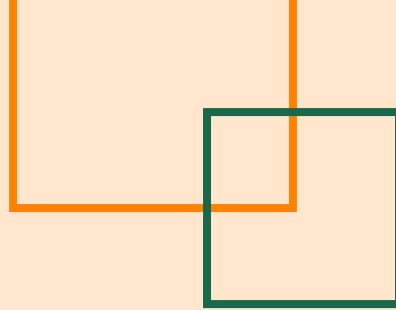
A sustainable redesign requires understanding:

- How leadership is functioning: behaviors, decision-making, accountability
- What culture enables or blocks: trust, clarity, alignment, psychological safety
- Whether people have the skills needed now and in the future
- Where processes are outdated, inefficient, or misaligned
- How success is measured, or not measured, across the organization

When organizations skip this stage, three predictable outcomes follow:

1. *Redesigning based on assumptions, not evidence.* Gut instinct becomes the strategy. Without data, redesigns reinforce existing biases and fail to address real blockers.
2. *Fixing structure without fixing processes.* If you move teams around but don't examine how work gets done, inefficiency doesn't disappear — it simply migrates.
3. *Designing for today's pain instead of tomorrow's needs.* AI, automation, and evolving customer expectations demand proactive capability-building. A redesign that only solves today's issues becomes outdated almost immediately.

The result: a cosmetic redesign that doesn't improve performance — and leaves HR leaders carrying the burden.



A Modern Organizational Assessment: The Foundation of Effective Redesign

To address these deeper issues, leaders need clarity grounded in real evidence — and that’s exactly what a holistic assessment provides.

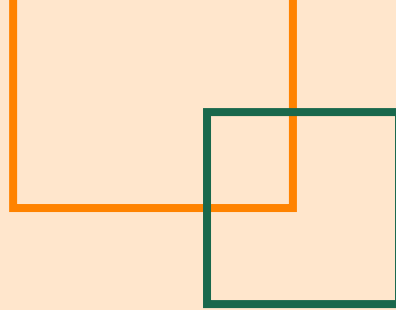
Effective redesign starts with a rigorous, holistic assessment across five interconnected components: leadership, culture, people, processes, and performance. These areas must be examined collectively, not as silos.

1. We examine communication patterns, accountability norms, and decision-making speed — the behaviors that either accelerate or inhibit performance. *Research from the Center for Creative Leadership shows that current leadership skills are often insufficient for future organizational needs, reinforcing the importance of evaluating leadership behavior and capability as part of any redesign.*
2. We analyze how employees experience the organization: clarity, trust, psychological safety, and alignment. Culture determines whether redesign efforts succeed or stall. *As HBR points out, the cultures that enable innovation and execution are often more demanding – high on accountability and clarity as well as psychological safety – which is why culture must be assessed, not assumed, in any redesign.*
3. We look at role clarity, competencies, development pipelines, and emerging skill needs, particularly as AI reshapes work.
4. This is where redesign lives. We assess where handoffs break down, where automation could reduce manual labor, and where processes no longer support the strategy.
5. We evaluate how success is measured and whether leaders have the data needed to make confident decisions.



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Taken together, these five elements reveal the true sources of friction, and the most strategic opportunities for redesign.

What a Holistic Assessment Actually Looks Like

A holistic assessment isn't theoretical; it's a structured, evidence-based process that maps how work *actually* gets done, not just how it's described on paper.

We bring together multiple data sources, including:

- Document and process reviews: strategy decks, SOPs, role descriptions, workflow maps
- Interviews with leaders and employees to understand decision rights, bottlenecks, and norms
- Employee surveys that identify patterns around clarity, trust, capability, and alignment
- Focus groups that surface cross-functional friction
- HR data analysis including turnover, engagement, performance, and workforce trends
- Structural review of org charts and reporting flows to examine alignment with the strategy

Our assessments typically occur over about 90 days — short enough to maintain momentum but thorough enough to surface root issues clearly and credibly. This multidimensional approach uncovers issues a simple org chart can't.

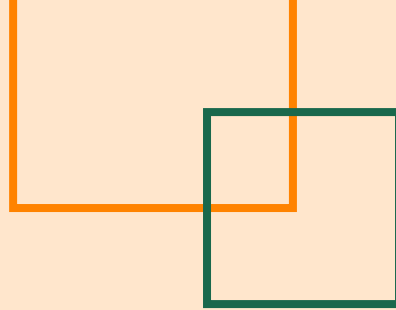
A Real Example: When Structure Changes but Performance Doesn't

A mid-sized technology organization recently reorganized a 300-person product group to improve speed and collaboration. The new structure looked clean on paper — but delivery actually slowed.



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Our holistic assessment revealed why:

- Workflow reviews showed critical handoffs still spanned four disconnected systems
- Interviews uncovered unclear decision rights, creating constant escalations
- Survey data pointed to confusion around roles and accountability
- HR data analysis revealed turnover spikes in roles with inconsistent expectations
- Structural analysis showed responsibility and authority were misaligned

The root problem wasn't the org chart, it was the underlying processes and clarity. Once those were addressed, performance improved without another disruptive restructure.

The redesign succeeded because it was rooted in how work actually happened, not how leaders *assumed* it happened.

Let's explore how your HR team can move from overwhelmed to empowered by rethinking your organizational structure for the future. [Contact us to take the first step.](#)

About Orange Grove Consulting



Learn More

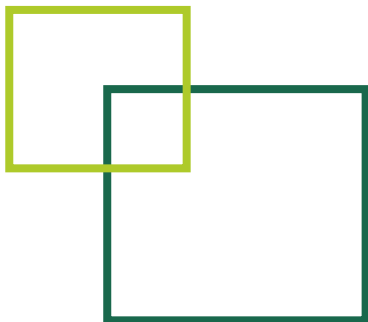
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