

Audit: Assessing Your Organization's Preoccupation with Failure

How well do the following statements describe your work, unit, department, or organization? For each item, circle the number that best reflects your conclusion: 1 = not at all, 2 = to some extent, 3 = a great deal.

1. We actively look for failures of all sizes and try to understand them.

1 2 3

2. When something unexpected occurs, we always try to figure out why our expectations were not met.

1 2 3

3. We treat near misses as information about the health of our system and try to learn from them.

1 2 3

4. We regard near misses as failures that reveal potential dangers rather than as successes that show our capability to avoid disaster.

1 2 3

5. We often update our procedures after experiencing a near miss.

1 2 3

6. If you make a mistake it is not held against you.

1 2 3

7. People report significant mistakes even if others do not notice that a mistake is made.

1 2 3

8. Managers actively seek out bad news.

1 2 3

9. People feel free to talk to superiors about problems.

1 2 3

10. People are rewarded if they spot potential trouble spots.

1 2 3

Scoring

Add the numbers. If you score lower than 12, you are preoccupied with success and should be actively considering how you can immediately improve your focus on failure.

If you score between 12 and 20, you have a moderate preoccupation with success rather than a fully mindful preoccupation with failure.

Scores higher than 20 suggest a healthy preoccupation with failure and a strong capacity for mindfulness.