



Open Heart Strategy

Organisational Prescription

Take one immediately. Repeat as needed.

- Patient name: The Modern Organisation
- Presenting symptoms: comfort dependence, strategic numbness, recurring defects, innovation theatre
- Twelve prescriptions to help organisations notice earlier, revise faster, and act before comfort turns into decline

Side effects may include clarity, courage, and reduced tolerance for corporate nonsense.



Prescription 1

Courage, 1 daily

Build courage into the work.

- Protected thinking time, signal reviews, and safe experiments
- Permission to question assumptions before problems become doctrine
- Practical risk assessment so courage has structure, not theatre
- Do not wait for a charismatic saviour with a TED Talk voice

Note: *Innovation is not summoned by saying “be more innovative” in a town hall with bad muffins.*



Prescription 2

Legacy Review, twice monthly

Take with humility.

- Say it plainly: we made the best call we could then, we know more now, so we move
- Review outdated processes, policies in formalwear, and systems quietly held together by glue
- Challenge legacy assumptions before frontline teams pay the price for them
- Useful for leaders emotionally married to past decisions



Prescription 3

Edge Reading, 3 times a week

Best taken before dashboard meetings.

- Look for repeat defects, recurring workarounds, and rising explanation load
- Watch edge cases growing teeth and customer effort hiding behind “acceptable” averages
- Read the edges, not just the centre of the dashboard
- Treat small frictions as directional clues, not background decoration

Warning: *Stable metrics may cause delusions of health.*



Prescription 4

Squiggle Tolerance, as required

Do not discontinue when the graph becomes ugly.

- Expect backtracking, rework, revised assumptions, and pilots that embarrass someone important
- Messy progress is often a sign that the work is real
- Do not confuse a wobbly chart with moral failure
- Normalise learning loops instead of punishing them

Important: *Mess is not always failure. Sometimes it is the work telling the truth.*



Prescription 5

Defect Analysis, after every recurrence

Swallow whole. Do not brush away like administrative crumbs.

- Ask what the defect is revealing and where the design is straining
- Find what keeps recurring in different outfits
- Look for what is being manually rescued that should have been fixed upstream
- Cluster defects to expose pattern, not just pain

Clinical insight: *Defects are directional. They are not just annoying. Rather rude of them, really.*



Prescription 6

Revision Safety, ongoing

For workplaces prone to ego inflammation.

- Make changing your mind look like maturity, not reputational suicide
- Reward being wrong early over being elegant late
- Let people rethink without triggering public ritual sacrifice
- Create social safety for updating the plan when reality changes



Prescription 7

Comfort Interruption, one dose at first sign of complacency

Use when teams begin saying dangerous little things.

- “It still works”
- “Customers are not complaining that much”
- “We have always done it this way”
- “Let us not disrupt what is stable”

Reminder: *Comfort is lovely in blankets. Less useful as a strategy.*



Prescription 8

Numbness Check, weekly

Particularly important after repeated low-grade pain.

- Watch for the same issues becoming background noise
- Notice when teams stop raising obvious truths and workarounds become normal
- Listen for “what is the point” energy and silence mistaken for alignment
- Treat learned futility as a strategic risk, not a personality quirk

Diagnosis risk: *Learned futility dressed as realism.*



Prescription 9

Sedative Phrase Audit, before every strategic meeting

Monitor for excessive use of soothing language.

- “Let us watch it a bit longer”
- “We need more certainty”
- “We do not want to overreact”
- “This has served us well” and “Let us be careful”

Caution: *These may be legitimate in small doses. They may also be emotional anaesthetic in a blazer.*



Prescription 10

Belief Test, before saying “we take this seriously”

If you believe the shift is real, prove it.

- What changed?
- What stopped?
- What got redesigned or re-scoped?
- What are we building and what assumption lost protection?

Assessment: *If nothing meaningful changed, the company may be experiencing theatre disguised as conviction.*



Prescription 11

Frontline Intelligence, daily

Do not use frontline staff as decorative empathy furniture.

- Use them for signal detection, friction mapping, and pattern spotting
- Ask them to identify policy absurdities before they become customer folklore
- Surface customer truth before the boardroom catches up
- Treat frontline insight as intelligence, not grumbling



Prescription 12

Honesty, before polish

Administer generously.

- Reward clear signal, practical challenge, early truth, and useful discomfort
- Make room for grounded experimentation and adult courage
- Avoid over-reliance on polished updates and theatrical optimism
- Do not let tidy lies with excellent formatting run the place