

Truth Temperature Check

A short anonymous survey for a single team. Three statements, scored one to five. The point of the survey is not the score. The point is the difference between the average score and the conversation that follows it.

HOW TO RUN IT

Use any anonymous tool that does not log identity. A paper drop, a Google Form with no auth, a survey on a platform the team trusts. Print this sheet, or send the three statements verbatim. Do not paraphrase them. Do not add a fourth.

Ask the team to score each statement 1 (almost never true) to 5 (consistently true). Run the survey once, share results back to the team without commentary, and book thirty minutes to talk about them. Run it again three months later.

THE THREE STATEMENTS

01. VELOCITY

Our velocity accurately reflects the value we delivered.

Teams that have learned to game velocity will score this low first. Inflated estimates. Stories split to boost throughput. Work marked Done that isn't.

1	2	3	4	5	YOUR SCORE
---	---	---	---	---	------------

02. DONE

Everything marked as Done truly meets our Definition of Done.

The gap between Done and what teams actually accept is one of the most reliable indicators of how much truth distortion the system tolerates.

1	2	3	4	5	YOUR SCORE
---	---	---	---	---	------------

03. REPORTS

Our status reports reflect what we would say privately about the same work.

Read your last three status updates. Then read the last three messages in your team chat. If they describe different projects, the score is low.

1	2	3	4	5	YOUR SCORE
---	---	---	---	---	------------

INTERPRETATION

Average above 4 on all three. The team probably believes its own data. Treat the score as a baseline and watch for movement.

Average between 3 and 4. Truth is being shaped on its way up. Worth asking which dimension is lowest, and why. The answer usually points at a specific stakeholder, metric, or recurring conversation.

Average below 3 on any dimension. Truth is being filtered. The work is to make it safer to be accurate, not to demand more accuracy.

WHAT NOT TO DO WITH THE RESULTS

Do not share the results upward without the team's agreement. Do not use them to "coach" a specific person. Do not announce a new process in response to a low score. The cost of doing any of these is that the next survey is no longer honest.

From Chapter 3, When Truth Becomes a Liability. Truth is shaped on its way up by people doing rational things in the system they are operating in. The survey is a way of letting the system tell you what it has been shaping.