

MODULE 4

ASSUMPTION AUDIT

*Surface beliefs that may be
limiting growth*

From the Brand Operating System Toolkit

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HOW TO USE THIS TEMPLATE

What this template does

The Assumption Audit surfaces beliefs your organization treats as facts—especially the ones “everyone knows” but no one has verified recently. Success breeds certainty. Certainty breeds assumptions. And assumptions quietly erode the curiosity that drives growth.

When to use it

- Before major strategic decisions
- When growth has stalled and you're not sure why
- When leadership disagrees about market dynamics
- When you suspect your strategy is built on outdated beliefs
- Annually, as a discipline

How to complete it

Step 1: Surface your assumptions

List what your organization believes about customers, market, competitors, and yourselves. Be honest. Include uncomfortable beliefs.

Step 2: Assess evidence quality

Rate each assumption: Strong (validated within 6 months), Weak (old data or anecdotes), or None (“everyone just knows this”).

Step 3: Prioritize what to test

Pick the top three assumptions that would most impact your strategy if they were wrong. Define how you'll test them.

Tips for best results

- Include people from different levels—frontline often sees what leadership misses
- The most dangerous assumptions are the ones no one questions

- If an assumption has "None" for evidence quality but drives major decisions, that's your priority
- Don't just audit-commit to testing what you surface

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ASSUMPTION AUDIT

Surface beliefs that may be limiting growth

STEP 1: Surface your assumptions

List your organization's core beliefs. Include the things "everyone knows" even if no one has verified them recently.

About your customers:

What do you believe about who they are?

What do you believe about what they value?

What do you believe about how they make decisions?

About your market:

What do you believe about market size or growth?

What do you believe about what the market wants?

About your competitors:

What do you believe about their strengths?

What do you believe they can't or won't do?

About your own capabilities:

What do you believe you're known for?
What do you believe you do better than competitors?

STEP 2: Assess evidence quality

For each assumption, rate the evidence quality honestly.

Assumption	Evidence quality	Last validated	Source
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> None		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> None		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> None		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> None		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> None		

Strong = Validated within 6 months with data. Weak = Old data or anecdotes. None = "Everyone just knows this."

STEP 3: Prioritize what to test

Top 3 assumptions to validate before your next strategic decision:

Assumption 1:

How we'll test it:

Owner and deadline:

Assumption 2:

How we'll test it:

Owner and deadline:

Assumption 3:

How we'll test it:

Owner and deadline:

KEY PRINCIPLE

Your biggest competitor isn't another fintech or bank. It's the belief that you already understand your market.

The question isn't "How well do we know our customers?" It's "What are we assuming about our customers that might be wrong?"

