

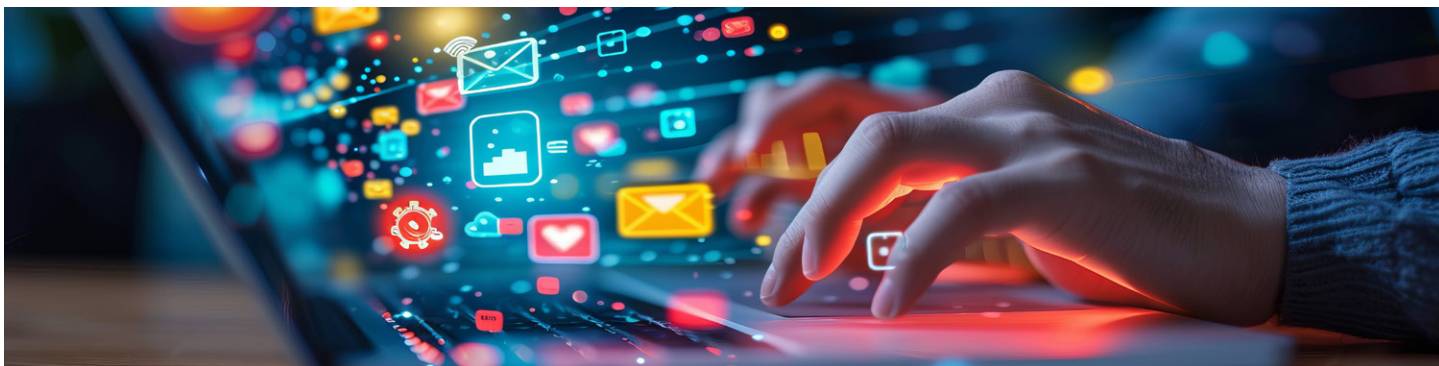
BUSINESS HEALTH CHECK QUESTION BANK



International
Federation
of Accountants



October 2025



INTRODUCTION

This Business Health Check Question Bank is designed to support small- and medium-sized practices (SMPs) in their role as trusted advisors to their small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME) clients. These questions can prompt insightful client conversations, deepen the SMP's understanding of business context, and identify opportunities to strengthen the relationship or provide new services.

The Question Bank is not designed to be a checklist completed in one sitting. Practitioners should choose questions based on relevance to client needs, client maturity, and cultural context. It may be that single questions such as, **“Do you have a written business strategy?”** or **“Where do you see the business in five years?”** are sufficiently thought-provoking to lead naturally to further questions and discussion. Client Classification may also impact the selection of questions.

Practitioners using the Question Bank may find that some clients will seek additional resources for further guidance. Practitioners are encouraged to use the [IFAC Guide to Practice Management for SMPs](#), which contains additional material to support practitioners.

THE QUESTION BANK IS SPLIT ACROSS EIGHT TOPIC AREAS:

SECTION A: Risk Management

SECTION B: Business Strategy and Direction

SECTION C: Compliance Management

SECTION D: Technology and Cybersecurity

SECTION E: Financial and Tax Management

SECTION F: Customer Relations

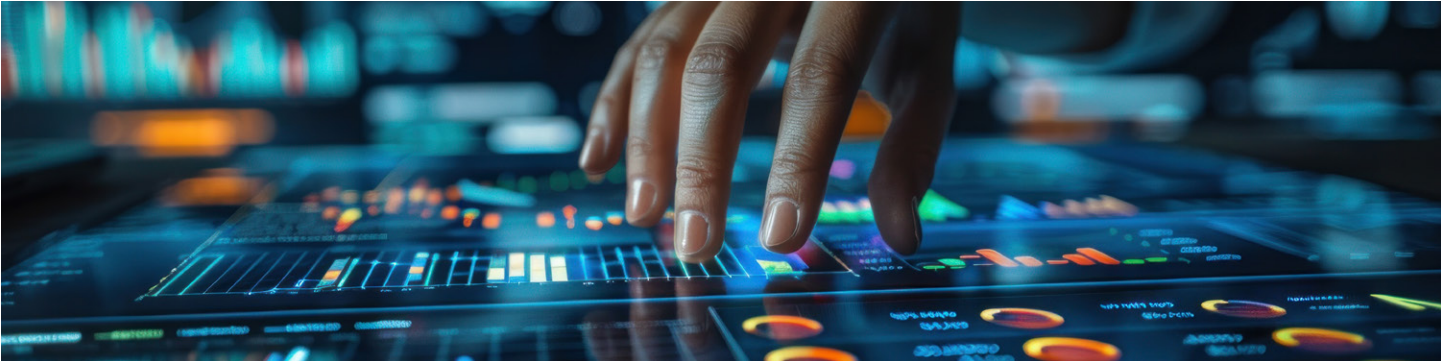
SECTION G: Human Resources and Employee Engagement

SECTION H: Succession and Retirement Planning



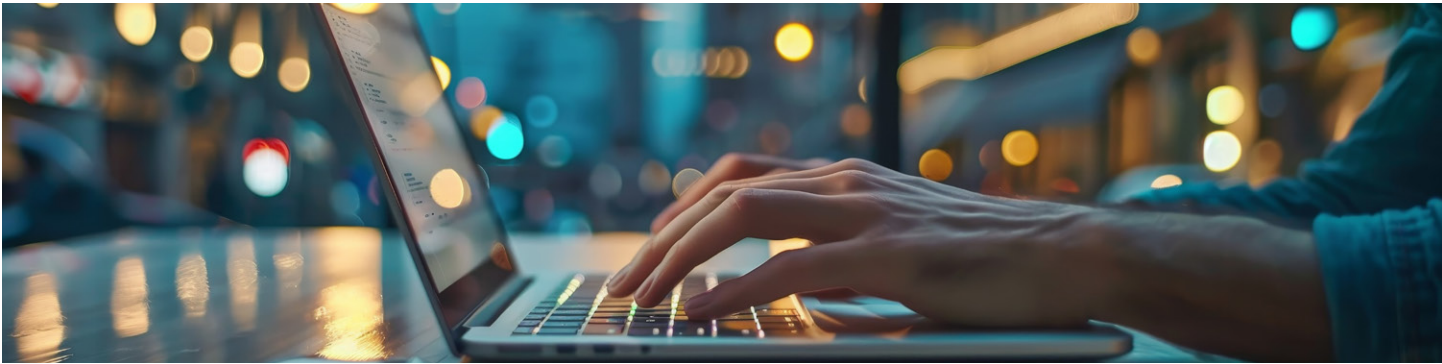
SECTION A: RISK MANAGEMENT

Section	Topic Areas
A1	What aspects of your business keep you awake at night? What are the particular areas of vulnerability or significant risks? How can these be managed?
A2	Are your employees clear about the role they play in managing these significant risks?
A3	Do you have clear, straightforward procedures written down so that someone else could help if needed, or if an emergency arose and you couldn't come to work tomorrow?
A4	Do you have appropriate health and safety plans in place?
A5	Do you have the right levels of insurance in place for your business (e.g., public liability, professional indemnity, asset coverage) and have you appointed a Power of Attorney?
A6	Have you secured adequate personal insurance? (e.g., life, health)
A7	Do you have a disaster recovery plan in place, and is this documented?
A8	Are important documents and passwords stored securely and easily accessible to someone you trust?



SECTION B: BUSINESS STRATEGY AND DIRECTION

Section	Topic Areas
B1	Do you have a written business strategy?
B2	What are your short-term (1–2 years) and longer-term (3–5 years) business goals?
B3	Where do you see the business in five years?
B4	Do you regularly set aside time to think about your business goals and direction?
B5	Do you regularly monitor progress against your strategy?
B6	Do your employees understand your business goals and how they contribute to the achievement of those goals?
B7	What is your Unique Selling Proposition, your value proposition, or niche area?
B8	What would you change about your business if you could?
B9	What is one valuable activity your business is not currently doing but could start doing?



SECTION C: COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT

Section	Topic Areas
C1	Do you have a simple checklist or reminders in place to make sure you meet your tax, legal, and other obligations on time?
C2	Are you confident your business meets the basic health and safety requirements relevant to your industry?
C3	Do you have someone (either you or staff) clearly responsible for keeping on top of compliance tasks?
C4	Do your employees know the part they play in compliance-related obligations that are relevant to their roles?



SECTION D: TECHNOLOGY AND CYBERSECURITY

Section	Topic Areas
D1	Are you using appropriate software tools to make your business as efficient as possible (e.g., accounting, workflow management, human resources, health and safety, appointment booking, customer relationship management, industry-specific software, et cetera) and how well are these integrated with one another?
D2	When did you last update your technology systems or software?
D3	Are staff competent and adequately trained to use technology systems or software appropriately?
D4	What steps have you taken to protect your business against common issues like cyber-attacks or data loss?
D5	Is your business data backed up regularly and securely?
D6	Are you aware of emerging technology solutions that could benefit your business?



SECTION E: FINANCIAL AND TAX MANAGEMENT

Section	Topic Areas
E1	Are you using appropriate software tools to record and access financial information?
E2	Do you regularly check how well your business is performing financially—including how profitable different parts of the business are?
E3	Are you happy with the current profitability of your business?
E4	Are you satisfied with the level of cash your business has available, and if not, what action might you have to take to improve this?
E5	Are there any concerns with the level of debt you have, either personally or by the bank?
E6	Are there any significant amounts owed by customers that cause you concern?
E7	Do you have conversations with your accountant or advisor each year about ways to optimize your tax bill?
E8	Are you aware of any simple tax savings or incentives available to your business?
E9	Have you checked recently whether your business structure (sole trader, company, partnership) is still right for you?



SECTION F: CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Section	Topic Areas
F1	Do you have dedicated internal resources for marketing, or do you outsource these activities?
F2	How effective is your current marketing approach in attracting enough customers and the right customers?
F3	Do you regularly contact your customers to maintain the relationship? How often is this (e.g., every 90 days)
F4	Do you use social media for your business, do you feel it helps you get noticed, and is it worth the cost and time?
F5	Do you produce newsletters or other materials and resources? If so, do these add value?
F6	Do you offer any discounts or other incentives to important or regular customers?
F7	How often do you seek customer feedback?
F8	Do you benchmark against competitors at all? If so, in what areas? Does this incorporate consideration of what your competitors are offering?
F9	Are you providing services that are not cost effective? If so, should you stop?
F10	Is your pricing appropriate? When did you last increase your pricing?
F11	Have customers asked for services or products you don't currently offer but could easily add?



SECTION G: HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Section	Topic Areas
G1	Do you have simple checklists or templates for hiring new staff, performance appraisals, and staff development plans?
G2	Do your employees clearly understand what’s expected of them in their roles?
G3	Do you regularly check in with your employees about how things are going at work?
G4	Do you seek the opinions of your staff on how the business could be improved?



SECTION H: SUCCESSION AND RETIREMENT PLANNING

Section	Topic Areas
H1	Have you thought about what you would like to happen to your business when you retire or move on?
H2	Is there someone in your business who could eventually take over from you?
H3	How prepared are you for the reality that it could take up to three years to get your business ready for someone else to run it?
H4	Have you discussed your thoughts on succession with family, employees, or others?
H5	Can you clearly articulate the value proposition of the business to potential successors?
H6	Are you able to finance a buyer into the business (e.g., payment over several years)?
H7	What are your retirement goals and what is your timetable for retirement?
H8	Do you have a clear idea of how much money you'll need when you stop working?
H9	Are you currently putting aside money or making investments specifically for your retirement or are you relying on the sale of your business to provide this funding?
H10	Do you have an up-to-date will in place?

Exposure Drafts, Consultation Papers, and other IFAC publications are published by, and copyright of, IFAC.

IFAC does not accept responsibility for loss caused to any person who acts or refrains from acting in reliance on the material in this publication, whether such loss is caused by negligence or otherwise.

The IFAC logo, 'International Federation of Accountants' and 'IFAC' are registered trademarks and service marks of IFAC in the US and other countries.

Copyright © 2025 by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). All rights reserved. Written permission from IFAC is required to reproduce, store or transmit, or to make other similar uses of, this document. Contact permissions@ifac.org

Use Restriction: This publication and the information contained herein may not be used for training, developing, or operating artificial intelligence (AI) systems or tools, including large language models, machine learning algorithms, or other automated systems, without the prior written permission of IFAC.

International Federation of Accountants
529 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10017
USA
T +1 212 286 9344
www.ifac.org

