

Is your organization mired in bullshit? Are you having trouble getting your real work done? Are you frustrated with all the initiatives and programs that distract you from getting your job done? Find out how much BS exists in your organization by taking this easy quiz

Determining the BS Quotient of Your Organization

Some organizations are almost immune from fads and other sorts of BS that gets passed off as the latest management tool. Others are so hopelessly immersed in BS it is a wonder they can get any real work done. By answering the questions that follow, you will get a good idea of where your organization stands when it comes to buying in to all this BS.

Each statement is followed by a 5-point scale ranging from 5 Strongly Agree to 1 Strongly Disagree. Circle the appropriate number for each statement, add up your score and see where you fall on the scale. Try to avoid scoring "3" unless you really have no opinion.

1. I can name at least 4 three-letter management programs we have going on in our organization right now.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

2. We have way too many committees and teams working on a variety of programs and projects of questionable value

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

3. We have so many acronyms that it is sometimes hard to understand what people are talking about

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

4. People in our organization routinely spend at least 2 hours a day on activities not directly related to their jobs

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

5. We quickly lose interest in programs and improvement initiatives before giving them a chance to succeed We have corporate ADD

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

6. We always seem to be enamored with the latest management guru

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

7. Our customer relationship management system requires a lot of meaningless data entry that takes time away making sales and building relationships with customers

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

8. We have built this big Knowledge Management data base that hardly anyone really uses – they use Google, Wikipedia or talk to someone who’s an expert

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

9. Our scorecard/dashboard includes a lot of meaningless metrics that managers know how to manipulate to get a good score

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

10. We have spent a lot more money on six sigma/lean training, consultants and meetings than we have ever saved in benefits from the program

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

11. Our ethics program is a joke and has done absolutely nothing to prevent senior executives or board members from being unethical

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

12. We have way too many meetings where nothing meaningful is decided or accomplished

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

13. The conferences we attend are mostly just an excuse to go out of town, have expensive dinners, and drink too much

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

14. Team building activities usually make us realize how many jerks we have to work with and do nothing to make us work better as a team

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

15. Budgets are a big waste of time -everyone asks for more than they need and makes sure they spend every penny whether they need to or not

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

16. Our performance appraisal/management program requires a lot of meetings and paperwork, de-motivates most employees, and almost everyone gets the same rating

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

17. We get stupid trinkets (t-shirts, pens, etc) and certificates as recognition of excellent performance

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

18. Individual development plans are just a way to make sure you get to attend a few training courses or conferences next year

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

19. Almost no one ever becomes a better manager after attending leadership development programs

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

20. We talk a lot about diversity, but most leaders are still grey haired white men who went to the mostly the same universities

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

21. We have mission and vision statements that sound like they are written by Dilbert and are unclear to almost everyone

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

22. We develop grandiose goals and strategic plans, publish them , and mostly forget about them until next year rolls around

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

23. None of the HR/people metrics that we track provide any real insight into whether we have the right people doing the right jobs

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

24. Our customer metrics are limited to annoying surveys and complaints that do not link to financial results like increased spending by customers

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

25. You can't see/read half of the PowerPoint slides that get presented in meetings and people use Powerpoints way too much

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

26. The monthly/quarterly review consists of hundreds of hard-to-read charts and graphs, and managers making excuses for poor performance and trying to blame others

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

27. We are forced to follow a script when doing product demos

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

28. We write policies and procedures for practically everything, and these are mostly ignored

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

29. We do whatever we can to lower costs in our call center or other areas that provide customer service so we can do as little as possible for customers

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

30. We do whatever we can to avoid living up to warranties or guarantees

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

31. We frequently lie to customers and the public when the truth will make us look bad or tarnish our image

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

32. We are always looking for a quick fix for our organizational problems and never stick with anything long enough to see it work

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

33. Almost no one who attends success programs or conferences becomes any more successful - except the person selling the success program who always get paid

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

34. We spend a fortune on consultants who end up selling us many of our current BS programs and initiatives

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

35. Most people pretend they buy-in to all the BS in our organization for fear of being labeled as negative and not being seen as a "team player"

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither Agree	Somewhat	Strongly
Agree	Agree	or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

Determining Your Score

Add the number of 1s, 2s, 3s, 4s, and 5s to come up with a total (175 is the highest you can get)

SCORE RANGE

INTERPRETATION

150-175

Get your hip waders out. Your organization is

so mired in BS it is a wonder that anyone gets any real work done. You need to find a new job or develop a real appreciation for the smell of BS

125-149

You are probably in the range that most big corporations and non-profits are in. If you have

Less than 500 employees I would be really worried. You need to read this book to find ways of sorting through all the BS

100-124

You probably wimped out by answering “3” on many of the questions and have a hard time making a real stance on anything. Or, it could be that you have a low to moderate amount of BS and that the programs and approaches your company uses are really pretty good

0-99

You are either completely full of BS yourself, delusional, afraid of being honest, or just out of college. It could also be that you work in one of those rare organizations that focuses on getting their job done well, and has little tolerance for anything that is a waste of time. If so, you are one lucky SOB and can probably stop reading at this point

From: *Banishing Business Bullshit – How to be a Hero and Save Millions at Work*. Mark Graham Brown and Steve Player (in press, 2011)

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