

# SCORE™

## A Leader Accountability Check for Performance Management

At Strategic Talent Management, we believe that **performance problems are rarely one-dimensional**. Before concluding that an employee is “the issue,” effective leaders pause and examine their own role in creating the conditions for success.

**SCORE™** is a simple but powerful framework that helps leaders take responsibility *before* taking corrective action.

### The SCORE™ Framework

#### S – Selection

##### Have you chosen the right person for the role or task?

Performance begins with fit. Leaders must ensure the employee has:

- ✓ The skills and experience required
- ✓ The capacity to take on the work
- ✓ The behavioral strengths needed for the role

##### STM Perspective:

You cannot coach your way out of a poor selection decision, but you *can* own it.

##### Leader Reflection:

- ✓ Does this role align with the employee’s strengths?
- ✓ Am I asking them to perform outside their capability or capacity?

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#### C – Communication

##### Has the employee been given the information they need to succeed?

Clear, consistent communication is a leadership obligation, not a one-time event.

Leaders must ensure:

- ✓ Objectives are explicit and understood
- ✓ Priorities are clear and not competing
- ✓ Feedback is timely and specific

##### STM Perspective:

If communication is inconsistent, performance will be too.

##### Leader Reflection:

- ✓ Have I clearly defined success?
- ✓ Have I checked for understanding, or just assumed it?

## O – Obstacles

### What barriers to success exist that are beyond the employee's control?

Strong leaders look beyond behavior to context.

Potential obstacles include:

- ✓ Conflicting priorities
- ✓ Organizational bottlenecks
- ✓ Unclear decision authority
- ✓ Team or cross-functional breakdowns

### STM Perspective:

Accountability without authority creates frustration, not performance.

### Leader Reflection:

- ✓ What is getting in the employee's way?
- ✓ What obstacles am I responsible for removing?

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## R – Resources

### Does the employee have access to the tools, time, and support needed to succeed?

Even the best employees cannot perform without adequate resources.

Leaders should assess:

- ✓ Access to tools, systems, and information
- ✓ Adequate time and staffing
- ✓ Training or development needs

### STM Perspective:

Expecting results without providing resources is not leadership; it's wishful thinking.

### Leader Reflection:

- ✓ Have I equipped this employee for success?
- ✓ What support am I assuming they have that they may not?

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## E – Expectations

### Are your expectations clear, reasonable, and consistently applied?

Expectations must be:

- ✓ Clearly articulated
- ✓ Realistic given role and context
- ✓ Applied consistently across the team

### STM Perspective:

What leaders tolerate becomes the standard.

### Leader Reflection:

- ✓ Have I been explicit about what "good" looks like?
- ✓ Am I holding everyone to the same standard—including myself?

## How SCORE™ Is Used

SCORE™ is best used:

- ✓ Before labeling an employee a “performance problem”
- ✓ As a leader self-check prior to difficult conversations
- ✓ In coaching and development discussions
- ✓ As part of manager training and leadership development

Only after a leader can confidently answer yes to each element of SCORE™ should the focus shift fully to employee accountability.

## Using SCORE™ Across the Talent Lifecycle

### Hiring & Selection

- ✓ Selection: Assess strengths and role fit
- ✓ Expectations: Define success before day one

### Ongoing Performance

- ✓ Obstacles: Remove friction
- ✓ Expectations: Reinforce standards

### Onboarding

- ✓ Communication: Clear priorities and goals
- ✓ Resources: Tools, access, relationships

### Performance Concerns

- ✓ Apply full SCORE™ before corrective action
- ✓ Document leader actions taken

## SCORE™ helps organizations shift from reactive performance management to proactive leader accountability.

- ✓ Reduce performance surprises
- ✓ Improve manager effectiveness
- ✓ Build trust and clarity
- ✓ Strengthen culture and results

## The STM Bottom Line

*Effective performance management starts with leader accountability.*

SCORE™ reinforces a core Strategic Talent Management belief:

**When leaders own the conditions for performance, employees are far more likely to meet or exceed expectations.**



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# STM SCORE™ Leader Tool: Before You Address Performance, Check Yourself

Performance issues rarely live in isolation. Before moving to corrective action, effective leaders pause to assess whether they have created the conditions for success.

Use SCORE™ as a quick accountability check.

## S – Selection

Have I chosen the right person for the role or task?

- Skills and experience align
- Capacity is realistic
- Strengths match the work

## C – Communication

Has the employee been given the information they need to succeed?

- Objectives are clear
- Priorities are aligned
- Feedback has been timely and specific

## O – Obstacles

What barriers exist that are beyond the employee's control?

- Conflicting priorities
- Process or system issues
- Cross-functional dependencies

## R – Resources

Does the employee have what they need to succeed?

- Tools and systems
- Time and staffing
- Training or support

## E – Expectations

Are expectations clear, reasonable, and consistently applied?

- Outcomes defined
- Standards understood
- Accountability applied fairly

**STM Reminder:** If you can't confidently check every box, the performance issue may not belong solely to the employee.



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