ICR
TROUBLESHOOTING
FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Problems are not obstacles to progress. They are signals
guiding organizations back to coherence.

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Paul Joore

Master Your Purpose. Own Your Freedom.

Colophon

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Joore is the founder of the ICR Growth & Success Operating System. His career spans auditing at Arthur Andersen, CFO leadership, interim management, organizational coaching and startup mentoring — giving him a rare, decades-long view inside organizations of every type and size.

Over the years, one pattern kept returning: organizations don't break because people fail — they break because their systems do. Winning as an Organization reflects that insight — and how it has been translated into a coherent way of thinking about organizations.

That insight shaped his life's work. From early years in top-level hospitality — learning how people feel, behave and connect — to experiencing entrepreneurial struggle firsthand while building ICR, Paul's journey became a lived exploration of coherence and alignment: mindset, structure and execution working in harmony.

Today, his mission is simple:
to help leaders and their teams build clarity, rhythm and sustainable performance —
so the whole organization can thrive in daily practice.

Master Your Purpose. Own Your Freedom.
The philosophy behind the ICR Operating System.

This book is one expression of that thinking — positioned between lived experience and the ICR Core Manifesto.

Foreword

Organizations are often described as systems designed to solve problems. In practice, they spend much of their energy responding to them. Pressure builds. Issues emerge. Interventions follow.

What struck me over the years is not how often problems occur, but how familiar they tend to feel. Different organizations. Different contexts. Yet remarkably similar patterns.

What changes is the form of the problem. What rarely changes is the underlying dynamic.

ICR Troubleshooting was not created to offer better fixes. It was created to help recognize patterns. To pause before acting. To invite a different question. Not: How do we solve this? But: What is this problem trying to tell us?

This document reflects a simple belief:

recurring organizational problems are rarely isolated incidents.

They are signals that coherence between ambition, behavior, structure and results has weakened.

If you read this document looking for ready-made solutions, it may disappoint you. If you read it as a mirror, it may help you see which directions truly make sense..

That is its intention.

Paul Joore

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Introduction

ICR Troubleshooting for Organizations

Problems are rarely the problem.

What organizations experience as issues — pressure, misalignment, declining performance, frustration, recurring incidents — are usually symptoms. Signals that something deeper is out of balance.

ICR Troubleshooting is designed to help recognize those signals. Not to fix problems quickly. Not to apply isolated solutions. But to understand what organizational problems are truly pointing to.

From symptoms to coherence

Organizations are complex systems. Ambition, behavior, structure and results are continuously interacting.

When these elements are aligned, progress feels natural. When they are not, problems emerge.

What often happens in practice is that organizations respond to symptoms:

- KPIs are adjusted
- structures are reorganized
- people are replaced
- new initiatives are launched

While the underlying coherence remains untouched. As a result, problems return — sometimes in a different form, often with greater intensity.

ICR Troubleshooting takes a different perspective. It starts from the assumption that recurring problems are not isolated incidents, but expressions of missing coherence within the organization.

Troubleshooting as diagnostic instrument

This document is not a checklist. It is not a step-by-step improvement plan. And it is not a promise of quick results.

ICR Troubleshooting is a diagnostic instrument. It helps leaders, advisors and organizations:

- recognize patterns behind recurring issues
- reflect on what problems are really telling them
- distinguish symptoms from root causes
- avoid premature or superficial interventions

Each problem described in this document should be read as a signal — not as a failure.

The ICR perspective

Within ICR, organizations are viewed as integrated systems. Sustainable success emerges when there is coherence between:

- ambition — the direction an organization consciously chooses
- behavior — how people act, especially under pressure
- structure — the way decisions, responsibilities and processes are organized
- results — what is achieved and reflected over time

This way of thinking is further explored in Winning as an Organization, which describes how coherence enables organizations to become structurally better — and succeed sustainably.

ICR Troubleshooting focuses on the other side of that same logic. It shows what happens when coherence is missing — and how that absence becomes visible through organizational problems.

A conscious choice

This document is intentionally made freely available. Because awareness should not be gated. Because understanding precedes action. And because real change begins with seeing clearly.

ICR Troubleshooting is not an endpoint. It is an invitation to look beneath the surface. To recognize that problems are not obstacles to progress — they are signals guiding organizations back to coherence.

How to Use This Document

Awareness before intervention

This document is not a checklist. It is not an audit. And it is not a step-by-step improvement plan.

ICR Troubleshooting is a diagnostic mirror. It works best when used to pause and reflect, not to act immediately.

Each pattern described should be read as a signal — not as a verdict. Not to diagnose individuals. Not to assign responsibility.

But to recognize what the organization as a system may be revealing.

Before asking what to do, consider asking:

- What does this problem say about our ambition?
- How does behavior under pressure reflect that ambition?
- Does our structure support consistency or create friction?
- What are results truly confirming?

The value of this document lies in the quality of the questions it provokes.

Some readers may recognize patterns that require deeper exploration. For those cases, ICR offers a separate publication that applies this thinking to concrete diagnostic situations.

Why Problems Persist in Organizations

From Fixing to Understanding

Organizations rarely suffer from a lack of action. They suffer from recurring problems.

Most organizations are active in responding to issues. Yet activity alone rarely leads to lasting improvement.

Problems are often treated as incidents. A cause is identified. An intervention follows. Relief occurs.

But when the organization itself remains unchanged, the conditions that allowed the problem to emerge remain intact.

Classic root cause thinking works well in technical systems. Organizations, however, are complex social systems.

Problems rarely have one single cause. They emerge from patterns of interaction between ambition, behavior, structure and results.

From an ICR perspective, recurring problems are feedback. They indicate where coherence has weakened and where restoration is needed.

Understanding patterns precedes choosing interventions. Without that understanding, solutions tend to repeat the past.

Recognizing Patterns of Missing Coherence
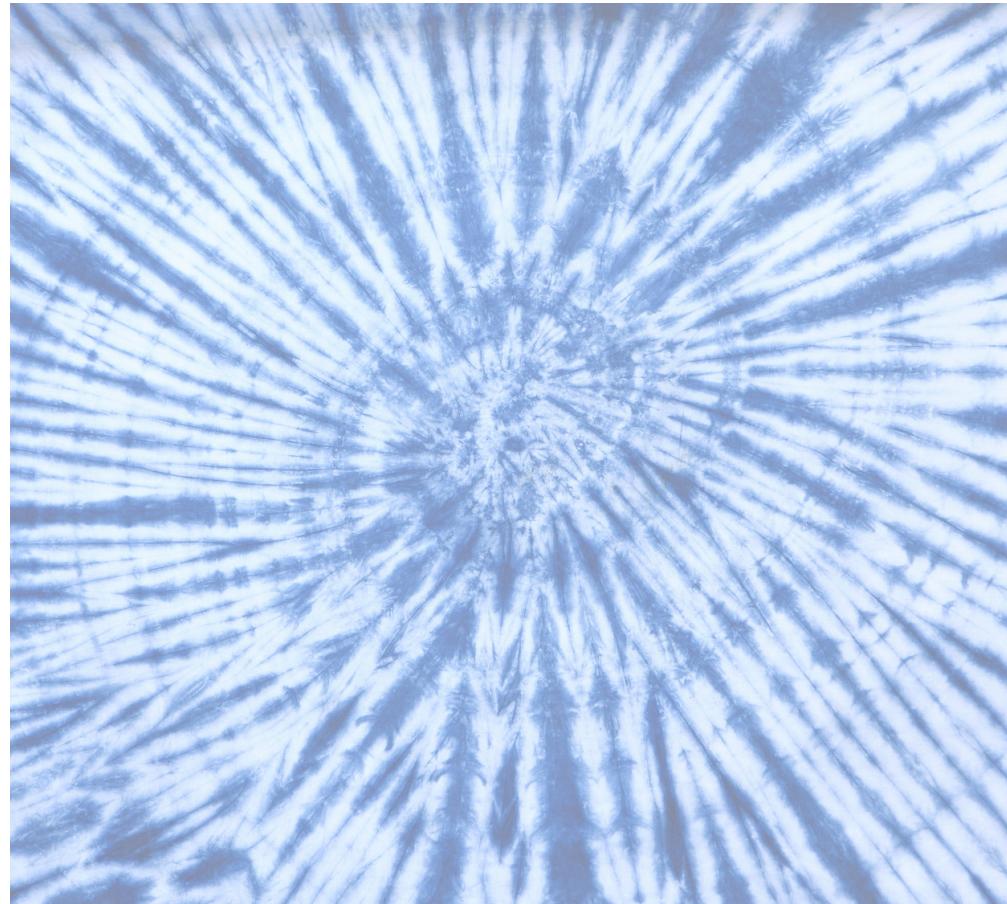
The following sections describe recognizable organizational patterns.

They are not exhaustive, nor are they mutually exclusive.

They are meant to help identify where coherence may be missing — and what that absence looks like in practice.

- When ambition loses direction
- When behavior contradicts intention
- When structure undermines consistency
- When results create pressure instead of insight
- When coherence is missing
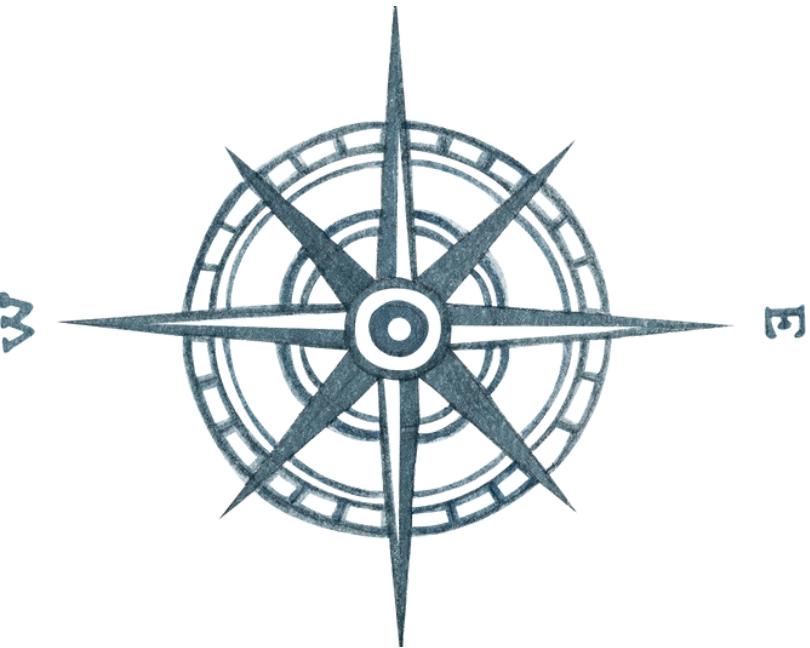
When Ambition Loses Direction

When Ambition Loses Direction - Constantly Shifting Priorities

When priorities change frequently, it often indicates that ambition is unclear or competing.

Without an explicit and shared direction, priorities are continuously renegotiated. What appears as agility is often uncertainty.

This pattern creates decision fatigue, frustration and fragmented effort. Focus becomes temporary. Momentum fragile.

Shifting priorities are a signal that direction has not been consciously chosen — or consistently protected.

When Ambition Loses Direction - Growth Pressure Without Clarity

Growth pressure without clarity suggests that growth has replaced ambition.

When becoming bigger is pursued without first defining what "better" means, organizations lose coherence. Targets dominate decisions. Quality erodes. Tension rises.

Growth, in this pattern, becomes a source of pressure rather than progress. This signals a need to reconnect growth ambitions to a clear and meaningful direction.

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When Behavior Contradicts Intention

When Behavior Contradicts Intention - Leadership Inconsistency

Leadership inconsistency often emerges when ambition is implicit or interpreted differently.

Under pressure, leaders fall back on personal judgment rather than shared direction. Messages diverge. Decisions conflict. Trust erodes.

This pattern signals that alignment is assumed rather than anchored. Consistency in leadership behavior depends less on discipline and more on clarity.
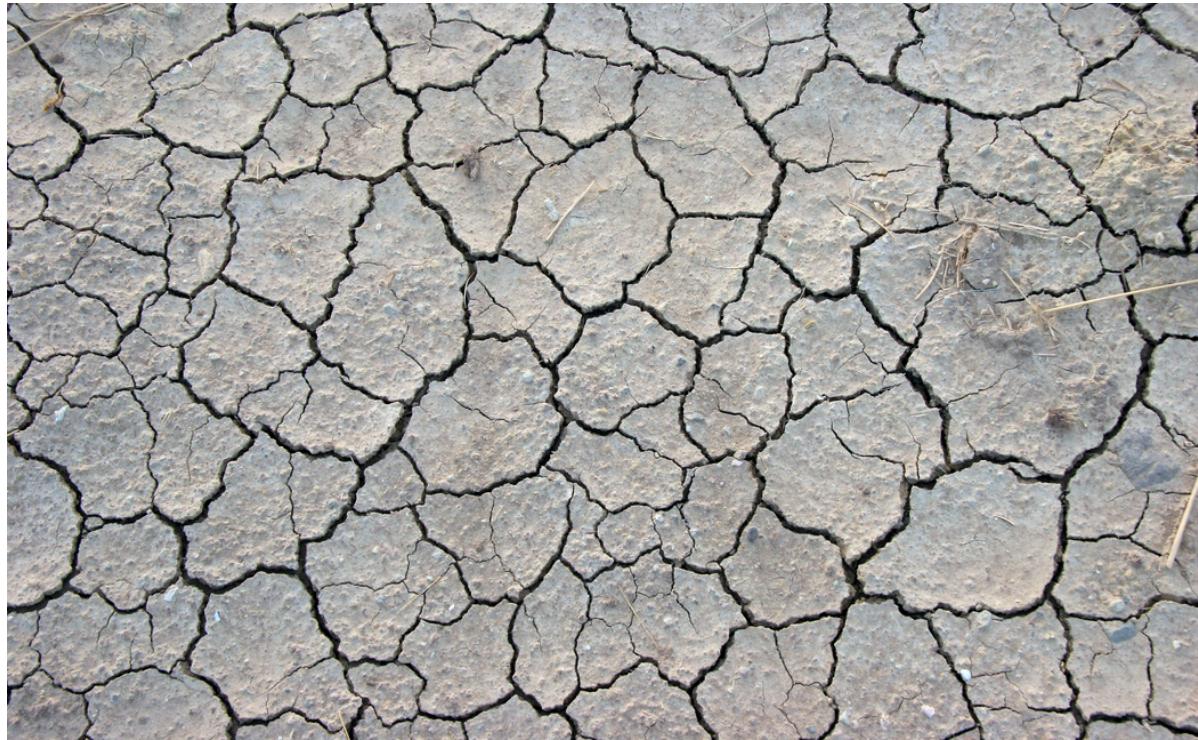
When Behavior Contradicts Intention - Lack of Ownership

A lack of ownership rarely reflects unwillingness.

It often indicates that roles, responsibilities and authority are unclear or misaligned. People wait, escalate or disengage because acting carries risk without support.

This pattern reveals that structure does not enable responsibility — and that ownership is not structurally protected.

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When Structure Undermines Consistency
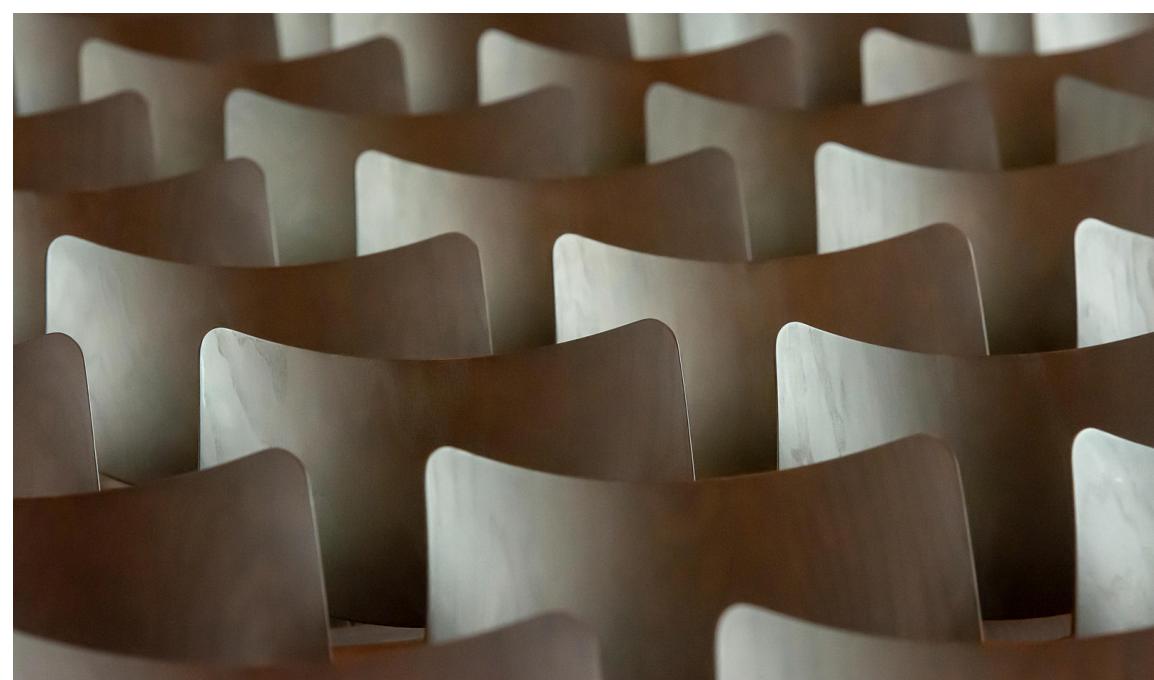
When Structure Undermines Consistency - Overloaded Teams

Overloaded teams are often the result of unclear choices.
When everything matters, nothing is sustainable.
Work accumulates. Pressure increases. Quality declines.

This pattern signals that structure does not protect focus or boundaries. Capacity is exceeded not by effort, but by lack of prioritization.

When Structure Undermines Consistency - High Employee Turnover

High employee turnover is rarely about individuals.

It often reflects a misalignment between stated values, daily behavior and organizational structure. People leave when the organization no longer makes sense to stay in.

Turnover, in this context, is feedback — not failure.

When Results Create Pressure Instead of Insight

When Results Create Pressure Instead of Insight - KPI stress

KPI stress arises when numbers replace ambition.

Indicators become targets. Targets drive behavior. Learning gives way to optimization. Pressure replaces insight.

This pattern signals that results are being used to control rather than to reflect.

Results are meant to confirm progress — not to define direction.

When
Coherence
Is Missing

When Coherence Is Missing - Many Initiatives, Little Impact

When many initiatives run simultaneously without visible impact, effort is present but direction is not.

Initiatives compete rather than reinforce. Energy disperses. Fatigue grows.

This pattern reveals fragmentation — not a lack of ideas.

Impact emerges when initiatives align around a shared ambition.

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When Coherence Is Missing - Change Fatigue

Change fatigue occurs when change is constant but meaning is absent.

People disengage not because they resist change, but because they no longer see direction.

This pattern signals that change has become activity rather than progression.

Sustainable change requires coherence — not acceleration.

Closing – From Troubleshooting To Coherence

Troubleshooting is often associated with fixing what is broken. From an ICR perspective, it serves a different purpose.

The patterns described in this document are not isolated issues to be resolved. They are expressions of deeper organizational dynamics.

Recurring problems do not point to a lack of effort. They point to missing coherence.

When ambition is unclear, priorities shift. When behavior is misaligned, trust erodes. When structure fails to support consistency, pressure accumulates. When results dominate direction, learning disappears.

Seen this way, problems are not obstacles to progress. They are signals.

Signals that invite reflection before reaction. Signals that reveal where alignment has weakened. Signals that ask for understanding before intervention.

Sustainable improvement does not begin with solving problems. It begins with recognizing what those problems are telling the organization as a whole.
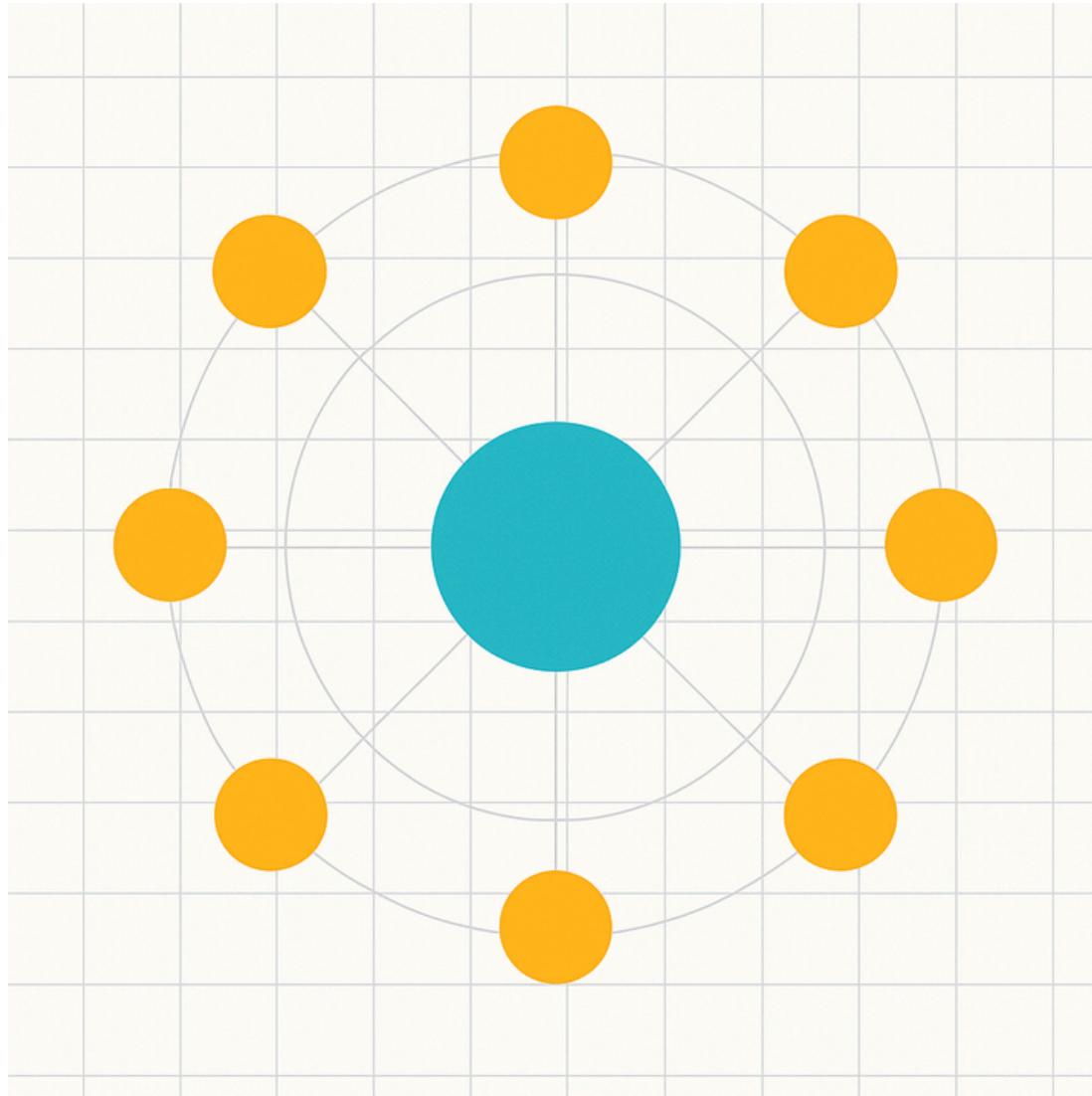
Coherence as a Way of Thinking

Organizations do not lack intelligence. They rarely lack effort. What is often missing is coherence.

Problems are not interruptions of progress. They are feedback from the system. Seen through that lens, recurring problems are not something to fight — they are something to listen to.

ICR Troubleshooting exists to support that shift in perspective. Not to provide answers. Not to prescribe solutions.

But to help organizations recognize where coherence has weakened — and where it may need to be restored.

That awareness is where meaningful change begins.

Master your purpose. Own your freedom. With ICR.