Infinite Solutions

ENGINEERING MODERNIZATION & TECHNICAL DEBT REDUCTION

SELF-ASSESSMENT · 30 MINUTES · 2026 EDITION

The Modernization Readiness Scorecard

Twenty-five statements across five dimensions that tell you whether your system can absorb modernization safely — and where to start if it cannot. Run it with your engineering leads. Score how things actually work, not how the process document says they should.

YOU GET

A readiness score out of 50, and a per-dimension profile of your delivery system

YOU GET

A scoring guide that routes each result to a concrete first ninety days

YOU GET

The constraint — the one dimension that will sabotage everything else you attempt

SELF-ASSESSMENT · PART 1 OF 2

The Modernization Readiness Scorecard

Before choosing a modernization strategy, establish where you stand. Score each statement: **2** if clearly true today, **1** if partially true, **0** if not true — and score how things **actually work, not how the process document says they should**. Twenty-five statements, thirty minutes with your leads. If two people disagree on a score, that disagreement is itself a finding.

Dimension A — Architecture & codebase / 10

STATEMENT	0	1	2
We can draw the system's main components and boundaries on one whiteboard — and two engineers would draw roughly the same picture.	☐	☐	☐
A change in one part of the codebase rarely produces surprise work in unrelated parts.	☐	☐	☐
No part of the system is off limits because nobody wants to touch it.	☐	☐	☐
Frameworks, runtimes, and key dependencies are current enough that security patches are routine tasks, not projects.	☐	☐	☐
We could replace or extract one component without freezing the roadmap.	☐	☐	☐

Dimension B — Delivery pipeline & release flow / 10

STATEMENT	0	1	2
Any engineer can release to production through the normal path without asking a specific person for help.	☐	☐	☐
A one-line change can reach production in under a day.	☐	☐	☐
CI is trusted: red means a real problem, green means safe to ship. Nobody re-runs the suite "to see if it passes this time."	☐	☐	☐
Releases need no coordination meetings, manual checklists, or scheduled windows.	☐	☐	☐
Rolling back or switching off a bad change takes minutes, not an incident bridge.	☐	☐	☐

Dimension C — Environments & operations / 10

STATEMENT	0	1	2
Every engineer can run the system locally or in a personal environment without tribal setup knowledge.	☐	☐	☐
Staging behaves enough like production that a pass in staging means something.	☐	☐	☐
Environments are provisioned by automation. Nobody hand-configures servers.	☐	☐	☐
Planned work is not routinely interrupted by broken or flaky infrastructure.	☐	☐	☐
Incidents caused by configuration or environment drift are rare.	☐	☐	☐

Scorecard, continued

Dimension D — Ownership & knowledge

/ 10

STATEMENT	0	1	2
Every service or module has a clear owner who can approve a change to it.	☐	☐	☐
Losing any single engineer would not block delivery in some area for months.	☐	☐	☐
A new engineer ships their first confident production change within days, not months.	☐	☐	☐
Technical decisions are recorded somewhere the team actually reads — decision records, a handbook, not chat history.	☐	☐	☐
Senior engineers spend most of their time building, not unblocking everyone else.	☐	☐	☐

Dimension E — Measurement & observability

/ 10

STATEMENT	0	1	2
We track delivery metrics — lead time, deployment frequency, change failure rate, time to restore — and leadership reviews them.	☐	☐	☐
We can see what the system is doing in production from telemetry, without logging into machines.	☐	☐	☐
When something breaks, we usually find the cause from observability data, not guesswork.	☐	☐	☐
We know which parts of the system generate the most incidents and rework.	☐	☐	☐
We can connect engineering investment to an outcome the business understands.	☐	☐	☐

Tally your result

A — Architecture & codebase	____ / 10
B — Delivery pipeline & release flow	____ / 10
C — Environments & operations	____ / 10
D — Ownership & knowledge	____ / 10
E — Measurement & observability	____ / 10

TOTAL SCORE

____ / 50

Interpretation on the next page. Keep the per-dimension scores — they matter more than the total.

Two results matter here. The total tells you how ready you are to modernize safely. The lowest-scoring dimension tells you where to start — it is almost always the constraint that will sabotage everything else you attempt.

INTERPRETATION

What your score means

The score is not a grade. It is a routing decision: it tells you which kind of modernization work your system can absorb right now, and which kind will fail if you attempt it too early.

0–15

Stabilize before you modernize

Your system currently punishes change — and every modernization pattern in this guide works by making many small changes. Attempting a migration now means performing surgery without anesthesia. **First ninety days:** make CI trustworthy, automate the release path, get rollback under ten minutes, stabilize environments. This is unglamorous work, and it is the highest-leverage investment available to you.

16–30

Modernize the constraint — one thing at a time

You have enough foundation to change one part of the system safely, but not several in parallel. Broad programs will stall; a focused intervention will not. **First ninety days:** take your lowest-scoring dimension, identify the single worst constraint inside it, and fix that end to end before opening a second front. Most teams sit in this band — and most underestimate how much one removed constraint improves everything else.

31–42

Ready for incremental modernization

Your delivery system can absorb sustained change. You can run the five modernization patterns — strangler slices, parallel runs, platform extraction — while the roadmap keeps moving. **First ninety days:** pick the domain with the highest business drag, ship the first slice to production, and set an explicit capacity budget so the work survives contact with the roadmap.

43–50

Protect what you have

Modernization is already a capability for you — your risk is losing it. Systems drift back toward entropy the moment attention moves elsewhere. **Ongoing:** make the modern path the default path with paved-road tooling, watch leading indicators like review latency and dependency age, and renew continuously instead of periodically.

Three honest warnings about your result

Teams overscore. When engineering leaders score alone, results run three to eight points above what an outside audit finds — not from dishonesty, but because workarounds have become invisible. If a statement makes you say “mostly, except…”, that is a 1, not a 2.

The total can mislead. A 34 built on two strong dimensions and one dimension at 2/10 is riskier than a flat 30. The weakest dimension sets the ceiling for everything else, which is why the constraint — not the average — should drive the plan.

Scores are a snapshot, not a verdict. Every band above has a workable next step. The only losing move is the default one: deferring the decision until the system makes it for you.

WHAT YOUR SCORE BUYS YOU

You now know more about your delivery system than most boards ever hear

Whatever the number, you are holding two facts most engineering organizations never write down: how ready the system is to change, and which dimension is the constraint. Here is how to spend them.

1

Fix on one constraint — and only one

Take your lowest-scoring dimension and identify the single worst bottleneck inside it. One constraint, fixed end to end, beats five initiatives running in parallel.

2

Read the full field guide

This scorecard is one chapter of the **Engineering Modernization Blueprint** — which covers why modernization stalls, five patterns that work in production, the practical role of AI, and a worked 90-day roadmap. Free at infinitesolutions.ro.

3

Want a second pair of eyes on your result?

Bring your scorecard to a thirty-minute modernization fit call. We will look at where work slows down, what you have already tried, and whether a focused intervention makes sense — teams overscore themselves by three to eight points, and the difference is usually the finding that matters.

Request a modernization fit call

The call is diagnostic, not a pitch. If this is not the right fit, you will be told directly.

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