Technology Health Checkup

10 Questions Every Construction Executive Should Be Able to Answer

Nobody schedules a checkup for fun.

But most contractors we work with have a sense that their technology situation could be better. Maybe the outsourced IT provider is fine but not great. Maybe the company has grown and IT hasn't kept up. Maybe nobody is quite sure what "good" even looks like for a company their size.

These 10 questions are a quick health check. They're drawn from the same diagnostic framework we use when working with contractors on their technology strategy. You can answer them yourself, or better yet, hand them to a trusted colleague or advisor and answer them out loud. The questions that make you pause are the ones worth paying attention to.

For each question, we've included a short guide explaining why we ask it and what your answer might be telling you. This isn't a score sheet. There's no pass or fail. It's a lens for seeing your own IT situation more clearly.

1. Who is the person directly responsible for IT at your company? What's their title, and what else is on their plate?

Why this matters

This tells you whether IT has dedicated leadership or is a side responsibility someone inherited. A dedicated IT leader can plan ahead and align technology with business goals. Someone juggling IT alongside facilities, fleet, and office management will always be in reactive mode because IT gets whatever time is left over.

What your answer might be telling you

If the person responsible for IT "fell into it" because they're the most computer-savvy person in the office, that's not a criticism of them. It's a structural problem. The role outgrew the original assignment, and nobody adjusted.

2. Do you have a documented annual IT budget, or does technology spending come out of general overhead?

Why this matters

A budget is a plan expressed in dollars. If there's no IT budget, there's no IT plan. Technology spending becomes invisible at the executive level, and nobody can tell you what IT actually costs the company per year. That makes it impossible to evaluate whether you're spending too much, too little, or on the wrong things.

What your answer might be telling you

If you don't have a budget, every IT decision is being made ad hoc. Companies without IT budgets consistently underspend on prevention and overspend on emergencies.

3. If you asked every department head to list every piece of software their team uses, how confident are you that the combined list would match what IT knows about?

Why this matters

Software sprawl is one of the most common and least visible problems in growing companies. Departments sign up for tools to solve immediate problems. A PM subscribes to a scheduling app. Accounting starts using an expense tracker. Someone in marketing sets up a Canva account. None of these are bad decisions individually. But when nobody inventories the result, you end up with redundant tools, unmanaged security exposure, and subscriptions that keep billing long after people stop using them.

What your answer might be telling you

In most companies we work with, the gap between what IT knows about and what's actually in use runs 30–40%. If your gut reaction to this question was "IT knows about everything," that's worth testing. The most confident answers are often the least accurate, because they usually mean nobody has actually checked. A little uncertainty is actually a healthier sign because it means someone recognizes the gap exists.

4. For your most critical business processes, how much of that work happens inside your ERP versus in spreadsheets someone built and maintains?

Why this matters

Every contractor uses Excel. That's fine. Excel is genuinely the best tool for certain kinds of ad hoc analysis and financial projections. The question is whether your spreadsheets are doing work that your ERP should be handling. If your job cost projections, cash flow analysis, and manpower planning all live in spreadsheets that someone built outside the system of record, that's not a spreadsheet problem. It's a system utilization problem.

What your answer might be telling you

Think about who built your most critical spreadsheets and whether that person is still with the company. A job cost workbook that one controller built five years ago and nobody else fully understands is a single point of failure with a dollar sign attached. Also consider whether the spreadsheets exist because the ERP can't do the work (possible, but less common than people think) or because nobody configured it to do the work (more common than people want to admit). The ratio of ERP-to-spreadsheet work tells you how well your core systems actually serve the business.

5. Once your devices are deployed, how much control does IT have over them? Could IT tell you right now what software is installed on any given laptop in your company?

Why this matters

There's a difference between owning devices and managing them. A company can buy 200 identical laptops and still have zero control over what happens to them after they're handed out. If employees have full admin rights, every machine is a unique configuration within six months. That means higher support costs (every troubleshooting call starts with "what did you install?"), bigger security exposure (no way to enforce patches or policies), and no ability to remotely wipe a lost or stolen device.

What your answer might be telling you

If you're not using an endpoint management platform (tools like Intune or Jamf), IT is effectively flying blind on what's happening across your device fleet. That's not unusual for companies that haven't reached the size or maturity where device management becomes a priority. But it does mean your software sprawl problem is worse than you think (because you literally can't inventory what's installed), your security posture has gaps you can't see, and a lost laptop is a data exposure event with no mitigation. This is one of the clearest indicators of whether IT is in reactive or proactive mode.

6. It's Friday at 3 PM. A Project Manager's laptop dies at a jobsite 45 minutes from the office. He has a Monday morning owner meeting and his presentation is on that laptop. What happens?

Why this matters

This scenario tests several things at once: whether IT's support model reaches the field, whether files are backed up to the cloud or live only on local drives, and how quickly the company can respond to a technology failure that has a direct business consequence. The situations that cost contractors real money and real credibility rarely happen at the office during business hours. They happen on jobsites, on weekends, and at the worst possible time.

What your answer might be telling you

Think about who actually solves this problem in your company. If the answer is "the PM drives to Best Buy," IT has no field presence and no emergency response capability. If the answer is "he'd just log into another machine because everything's in the cloud," your infrastructure is more mature than most, but ask yourself whether that other machine actually exists at the jobsite. The gap between your IT support model and your actual operational footprint is where real productivity and credibility losses happen.

7. How do new employees get set up on day one? How long until they have everything they need to do their job?

Why this matters

Onboarding is a proxy for IT process maturity. If a new project manager starts on Monday and doesn't have a working laptop, email, Procore access, and ERP login until Wednesday, that's two days of lost productivity with a real dollar value. Multiply that by the number of people you hire in a year. Now consider that the person's first impression of your company is sitting at a desk with nothing to do while someone "figures out" their setup.

What your answer might be telling you

If someone can describe a documented onboarding process with defined steps, assigned responsibilities, and typical timelines, that's a sign of operational maturity. If the answer is "it depends" or "someone handles it," every new hire is an improvised project. That works when you're hiring five people a year. It breaks down when you win a big project and need to hire fifteen in sixty days. The onboarding process is also a test of the handoff between HR and IT. If neither department owns it clearly, nobody owns it.

8. How many times in the last year has your IT lead told you something you didn't want to hear?

Why this matters

A healthy IT function produces bad news regularly. Projects fall behind schedule, security risks emerge, vendors underdeliver, budget estimates come in higher than expected. That's normal. The question is whether that information is reaching you. If your IT lead hasn't brought you a single uncomfortable conversation in the past year, either your IT operation is flawless — or your IT lead has learned that bad news isn't welcome. One of those is much more likely than the other.

What your answer might be telling you

If you can think of specific examples where your IT lead surfaced a problem early, that's a sign the communication channel is healthy. If you're struggling to think of any, consider the possibility that the channel is filtered. IT leaders who have been burned by executive reactions to bad news stop volunteering it. They manage around problems instead of escalating them, which means small issues become big ones before anyone outside IT knows they exist. The result is that executives are blindsided by crises that could have been caught early. This question isn't really about IT. It's about whether your organization's communication culture lets problems surface before they become expensive.

9. Does your IT leader have a seat on the executive committee or senior leadership team?

Why this matters

Whether IT leadership has a seat at the executive table is one of the strongest indicators of how the company values technology. If IT has a seat, the person responsible for technology is part of the conversations about growth, strategy, budgets, and major decisions. If IT doesn't have a seat, technology decisions are either being made by people without technology expertise, or they're being made after the fact when the real decisions are already locked in.

What your answer might be telling you

If your IT leader is on the executive committee as a full participant, most of the governance questions take care of themselves: they're involved in budgeting, they're consulted on major decisions, and they have a direct channel for communicating both good news and bad. If they attend but don't set agenda items or influence decisions, the seat may be ceremonial. If there's no IT seat at all, ask yourself: who makes technology decisions, and do they have the information they need to make good ones?

10. When a major business decision is being made — new office, new market, acquisition, major pursuit — is IT consulted during the planning phase or informed after the decision is made?

Why this matters

Every major business decision has a technology component. A new office needs connectivity, infrastructure, and equipment. Entering a new market might require different software or compliance capabilities. An acquisition means integrating two completely different technology environments. If IT finds out about these decisions after they're made, they're scrambling to build on someone else's timeline with no input on requirements, costs, or feasibility.

What your answer might be telling you

This question is really about how your organization views IT. Is it a strategic input that helps shape decisions, or a downstream service that executes on decisions other people made? Neither answer is inherently wrong at every company size. But if your company is growing and IT is consistently surprised by major decisions, the gap between what leadership expects from technology and what IT can deliver will keep widening. The companies that bring IT into the planning room early spend less, move faster, and avoid the expensive surprises that come from building technology strategy on top of decisions that were made without it.

How Did You Do?

If you answered all 10 confidently and liked what you heard, your IT is in better shape than most contractors we work with. Keep doing what you're doing.

If a few of these made you pause, that's normal. Most companies have gaps they haven't looked at closely. The value of these questions isn't in getting perfect answers. It's in seeing the picture clearly enough to know where to focus.

These 10 questions are a subset of the full diagnostic framework we use with contractors. The complete version covers 36 questions across infrastructure, systems, field technology, software execution, executive governance, and real-world scenario stress tests. To schedule time to go over the full version reach out to Steve Jost by email (steve.j@dbmteam.com) directly or reach out via our contact portal https://dbmteam.com/contact-us/.