The seven questions that find the real cause.

Most businesses treat the symptom for months because nobody asked these seven questions in order. Use them before you spend money on a tool, a hire or a rebuild.

01 **What is the symptom, in numbers?**

Not “sales are slow”. How many, how often, against what it was last quarter. A symptom you cannot count is an opinion.

02 **When exactly did it start — and what changed then?**

A new manager, a new supplier, a price change, a branch, a system. Problems rarely start when they are noticed.

03 **Where does it show up first?**

Which branch, shift, product line, route or person. The place it appears first is usually where the cause lives.

04 **What is it costing you every month?**

Stock, refunds, overtime, lost customers, your own time. Put one number on it. That number decides how much the fix is worth.

05 **What have you already tried, and what did it change?**

If a fix changed nothing, the diagnosis was wrong — not the tool. This is where most money is wasted.

06 **Who benefits from the problem staying?**

Someone usually does: a supplier, a manager, a customer, a habit. Name them, or the fix will be undone quietly.

07 **What would “fixed” look like in 90 days, in numbers?**

One measure, one target, one date. If you cannot state it, you are not ready to buy a solution — only to investigate.

> **Why these seven, in this order.** They separate the symptom from the cause before anyone sells you anything. If you can answer all seven, you probably do not need us. If you can answer three, that is where the diagnostic starts.