



**Webinar**

# Who Sank the Boat?

A practical guide to governing  
psychosocial risk in the  
workplace

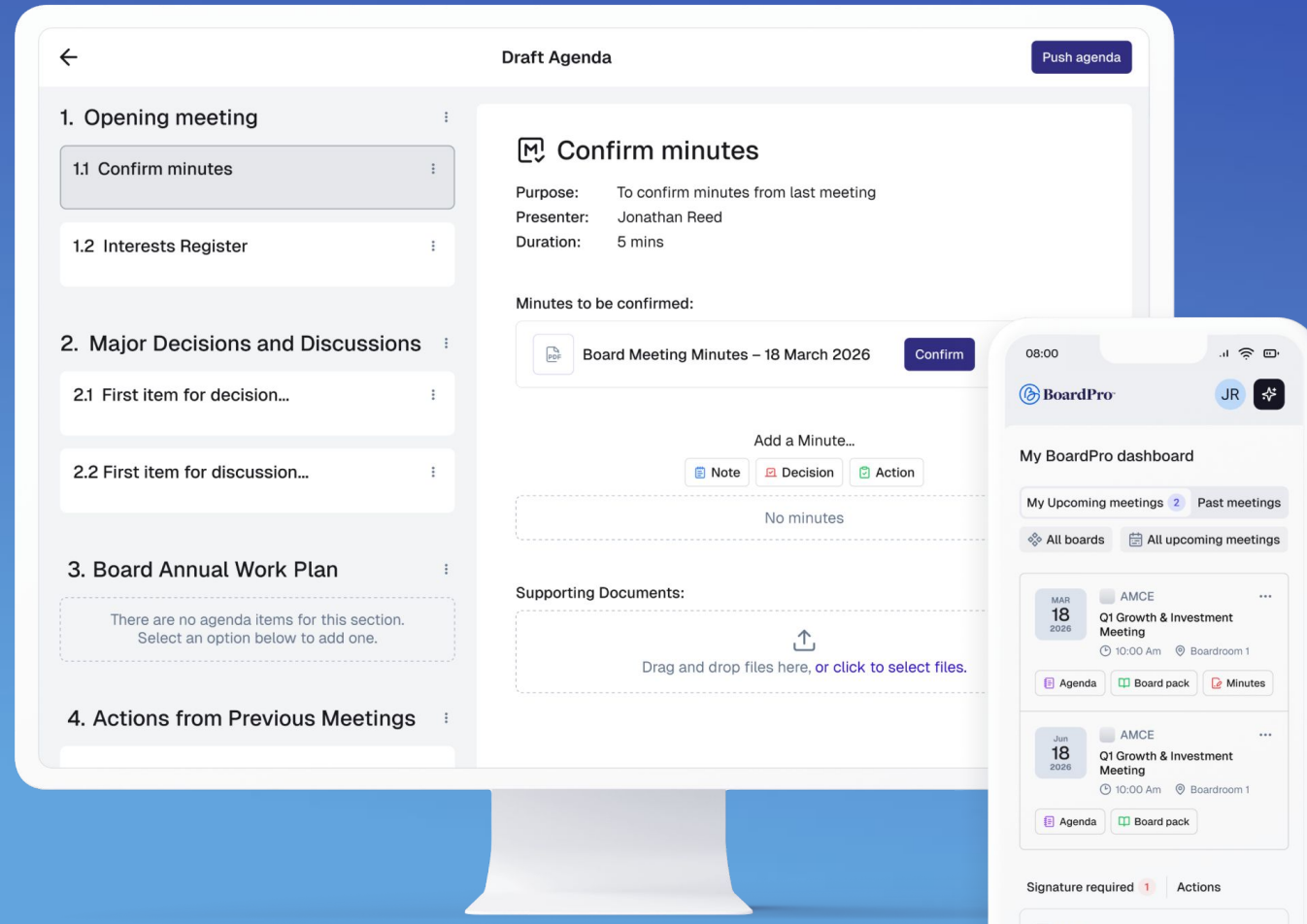
With Kathryn Ruge







Refreshingly simple board management software





# **Making the fundamentals of governance free and easy to implement**



Governance Made Easy

# Governance Resource Center

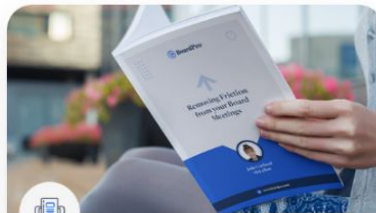
Explore free governance resources for growing your organisation and adopting good governance practises. From meeting minutes templates to CEO reporting templates, our comprehensive guides and templates will cover your governance and business essentials.

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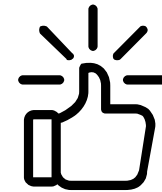
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# Today's conversation



01 Who Sank the Boat?  
→ A metaphor for our times

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02 Are we speaking the same language  
→ Key definitions

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03 Understanding complexity  
→ What Cynefin shows us

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04 Data and signals  
→ Lead and lag indicators

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05 Five governance moves



# 1. Who Sank the Boat?



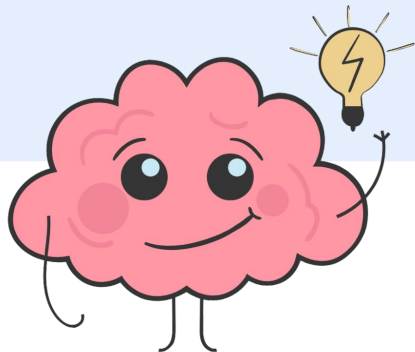


## 2. Are we speaking the same language

### Stress vs Harm

### Hazards vs Risks

### Psychological vs Psychosocial



### Psychosocial hazard

- a workplace condition or factor that **has the potential to cause harm**
- can arise in three areas:
  - work design
  - work environment
  - social factors



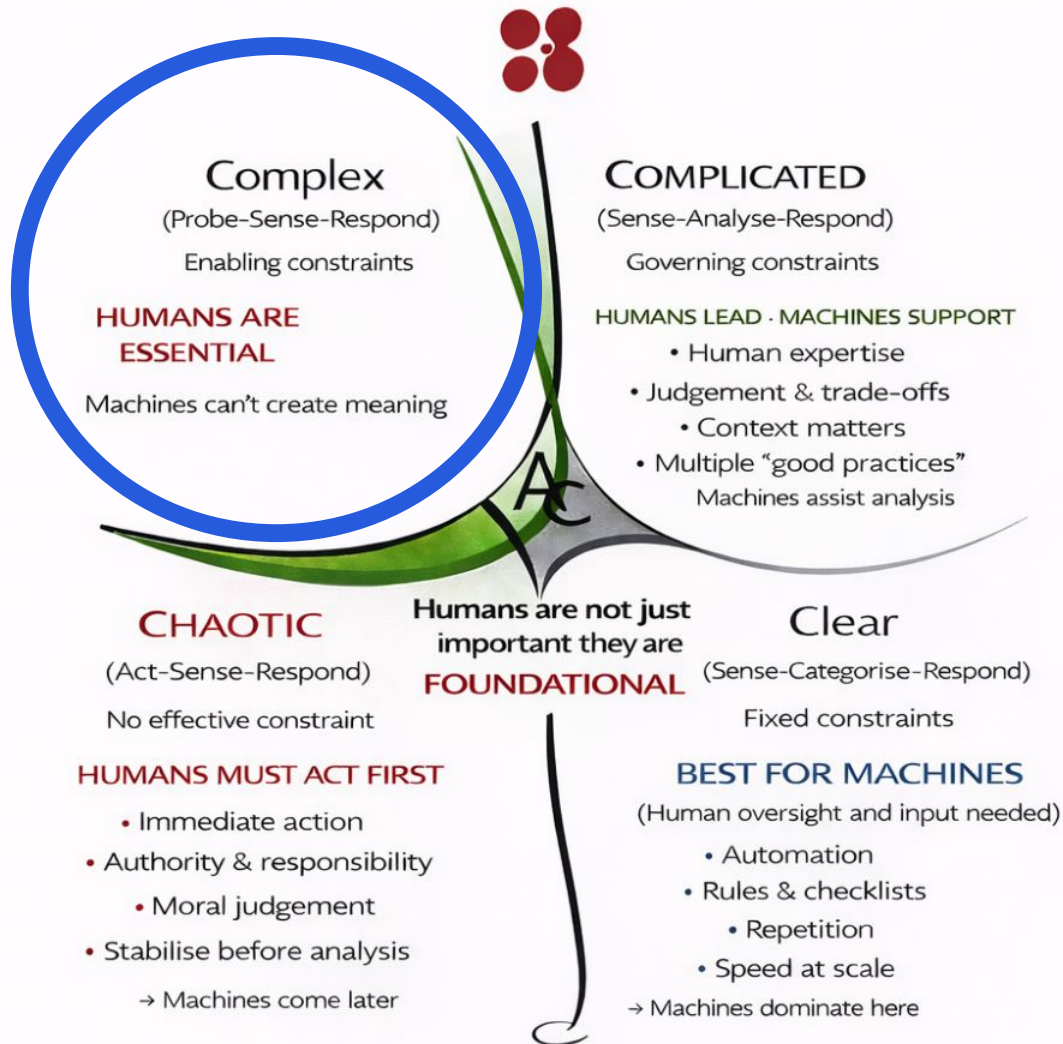
### Psychosocial risk

- the **likelihood and severity of harm** arising **when people are exposed** to one or more psychosocial hazards





# 3. Understanding complexity



Machines excel in the Clear domain.  
Humans are indispensable everywhere else.

## The Cynefin framework

The Complex domain requires a **different leadership approach**

- no linear relationship between cause and effect
- there are 'unknown unknowns'
- actions inside the system can change the situation in unpredictable ways
- experiment, observe, adapt
- if ignored, things will migrate to the Chaotic domain (investigations, public exposure, crisis response)

Source: [The Cynefin Co Newsletter \(LinkedIn\)](#)



## 4. Data and signals

Data	What it tells you	Purpose	Example
<b>Lead Indicator</b>	Predictive and proactive – what’s happening <i>before</i> harm occurs	Reduces likelihood of harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Fearless Scan (psychological safety measure) and other culture data</li><li>● ‘Worker voice’ forums</li><li>● Leadership empathy training</li></ul>
<b>Lag indicator</b>	Reactive and diagnostic – evidence that harm has occurred (outcome of exposure to hazard)	Reveals where psychosocial risks have materialised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Bullying or stress-related complaints</li><li>● Absenteeism, turnover</li><li>● EAP usage spikes</li><li>● Exit interviews</li></ul>
<b>Quality indicator</b>	How much you can trust either of the above	Measures the integrity and usefulness of your data and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Independent reviews</li><li>● Exit interviews</li><li>● Survey participation rates</li></ul>



# In the real world

- ▶ Your Board receives a monthly people report: turnover is stable, no formal complaints, all training completed and up-to-date, EAP available. Then a bullying story breaks publicly (on social media of course).
  - **What was missing from the picture of assurance?**
  - **What's needed now?**
  
- ▶ A restructure is underway. Workloads increase, role clarity decreases, leaders are under pressure, two senior leaders resign but "everything's fine" and "it's par for the course".
  - **What does good governance look like now, not in six months time?**





## 5. Five governance moves

- ▶ Put psychosocial risk on your risk agenda
- ▶ Ask where exposure is highest
- ▶ Request lead + lag indicators
- ▶ Review speak-up confidence and trust
- ▶ Monitor system improvements, not just individual harm





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# Webinar Schedule

2026

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278.	Induction planning for new directors (3-6-12 months)	May 7
279.	Beyond Compliance: Turning Risk into Strategic Insight	May 14
280.	What is healthy governance?	May 21
281.	The art of presenting to boards	June 4
282.	Tension Tolerance: fostering healthy debate around the board table	June 11
283.	Strategic differentiation - How it informs strategy	June 18
284.	The importance of culture governance	June 25



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