Dr Elizabeth King
Leadership in Uncertainty

Governance Learning Toolkit

Table of Contents

Attention Budget Toolkit

COLLECTIVE ATTENTION ASSESSMENT

Rate your board's current attention management (1-5 scale)

1=Rarely observed, 3=Sometimes observed, 5=Consistently demonstrated

Attention Awareness

Directors notice when collective focus drifts during meetings   _____
Energy levels are monitored throughout sessions   _____
Attention quality is considered when scheduling complex discussions   _____
Cognitive overload is recognized and addressed when it occurs   _____

Focus Allocation

Highest-stakes decisions receive prime attention time   _____
Routine matters are processed efficiently without consuming strategic bandwidth   _____
Complex topics are scheduled when collective mental capacity is strongest   _____
Attention allocation matches stated strategic priorities   _____

Cognitive Load Management

Information volume is managed to preserve analytical capacity   _____
Meeting structure supports sustained focus on important matters   _____
Breaks and transitions are used strategically to restore attention   _____
Directors arrive prepared and mentally ready for engagement   _____

Collective Flow

Board achieves synchronized focus during strategic discussions   _____
Ideas build effectively across different director perspectives   _____
Creative solutions emerge from collective thinking   _____
Discussions feel energizing rather than draining   _____

TOTAL SCORE ____ / 80

1. Attention Point Allocation

Assign points based on complexity and strategic importance:

1 point: Simple updates, routine approvals
3 points: Moderate complexity, some analysis required
5 points: High complexity, significant strategic implications
7 points: Critical decisions, multiple stakeholder considerations
10 points: Transformational choices, long-term value creation

2. Meeting Budget Template

Total budget: 100 points for a 4-hour meeting

Agenda Item		Allocated Time	
Attention Points			
Agenda Item		Allocated Time	
Attention Points			
Agenda Item		Allocated Time	
Attention Points			

Repeat

3. Optimal Timing Guidelines

Peak Attention Period (First 90 minutes):

Major strategic decisions
Complex problem-solving
Creative brainstorming
Difficult stakeholder trade-offs

Moderate Attention Period (Middle session):

Financial analysis and review
Risk assessment and mitigation
Operational oversight
Policy development

Lower Attention Period (End of session):

Routine approvals
Information updates
Administrative matters
Meeting logistics

Meeting Energy Tracking

Track collective attention quality every 30 minutes:

Time		Agenda Item	
Energy (1-10)		Focus (1-10)	
Time		Agenda Item	
Energy (1-10)		Focus (1-10)	
Time		Agenda Item	
Energy (1-10)		Focus (1-10)	

Repeat

Pattern Analysis Questions:

When does collective energy peak? _____

Which agenda items generate highest focus? _____

What causes attention to drift or fragment? _____

How long can the board sustain deep focus? _____

2-Minute Reset Practice Script

Between major agenda sections:

1. Chair: *"Let's take a brief reset before moving to our next topic."*

2. Pause *(30 seconds)*
"Please close laptops and set aside papers."

3. Breathe *(60 seconds)*
"Let's take three deep breaths together... Notice your current mental state."

4. Refocus *(30 seconds)*
"Our next topic is _____. The outcome we're seeking is _____."

5. Chair: *"With fresh attention, let's begin."*

."

Quantitative Metrics

Average attention quality ratings _____ /10

Time allocation accuracy vs. planned budget: _____ %

Number of decisions requiring follow-up due to insufficient focus: _____

Meeting duration vs. agenda completion ratio: _____ %

Qualitative Indicators (1-5 scale)

Director engagement and energy levels: _____

Quality of strategic dialogue and insights: _____

Collective problem-solving effectiveness: _____

Post-meeting satisfaction and clarity: _____

Collective Assessment Score:

65-80: Excellent attention management; maintain practices

50-64: Strong foundation; focus on specific improvements

35-49: Developing capability; implement structured practices

Below 35: Significant opportunity; begin with basics

Priority Action Steps Based on Lowest Scores:

1. *If Attention Awareness scores lowest*: Implement energy tracking

2. *If Focus Allocation scores lowest*: Adopt attention point budgeting

3. *If Cognitive Load Management:* scores lowest: Restructure meeting design

4. *If Collective Flow scores lowest*: Introduce mindful transition practices

Diagnostic Assessment

1. Information Volume Assessment

Rate your current board practices on a scale of 1-5 (1=Poor, 5=Excellent):

- Board papers consistently under 100 pages total: _____
- Executive summaries provided for all papers: _____
- Information is clearly linked to strategic priorities: _____
- Papers clearly state required decisions upfront: _____
- Time spent on "For Noting" items is strictly limited: _____

TOTAL SCORE _____ (out of 25)

<5: Critical attention needed | 6-15: Improvement required | 16-20: Good practices | 21-25: Excellent

The 3-Filter Funnel Checklist

Apply these filters to each board paper:

Filter 1: Strategic Relevance
□ Directly supports a current strategic pillar
□ Explicitly links to organizational purpose
□ Addresses a board-level strategic concern
□ Paper clearly states which strategic priority it serves

Filter 2: Risk Criticality
□ Involves potential solvency impact
□ Could affect regulatory/legal compliance
□ May impact organizational reputation
□ Represents a material financial consideration

Filter 3: Decision Readiness

☐ Clearly states the decision required from the board
☐ Provides sufficient information for informed decision
☐ Includes implementation timeline and accountability
☐ Offers clear alternatives with pros/cons analysis

Papers that fail any filter should be:

• Returned for revision
• Moved to committee level
• Summarized in dashboard format
• Deferred to a future meeting

1. Establish the 100/150 Rule

1. Set 100-page maximum for total board pack
2. Require 150-word executive brief for each paper addressing:

- Decision sought
- Strategic pillar supported
- Risk of deferral

2. Implement the Discernment Bell

1. Chair signals 30-second pause before each agenda block
2. Directors close devices and take three conscious breaths
3. Chair states: "Let's clarify our intention for this discussion"

3. Tag All Agenda Items

☐ DECIDE: Board decision required today
☐ DISCUSS: Input needed, decision at future meeting
☐ NOTE: Information only, limited discussion time

4. Conduct Quarterly Attention Audit

Record actual minutes spent on:

☐ Strategy: _____minutes
☐ Risk: _____minutes
☐ Talent: _____minutes
☐ Operations: _____minutes
☐ Compliance: _____minutes

Target: ≥60% on forward-looking topics (Strategy, Talent)

Board Paper Executive Brief Template (150 words max)

Decision required:

_____

Strategic pillar supported:

_____

Risk if deferred:

_____

Recommended action:

_____

Chair's Meeting Opening Script

Before we begin, I'd like to remind us that our attention is our scarcest resource. Today's pack has been filtered for strategic relevance, risk criticality, and decision readiness. We'll use the Discernment Bell before each agenda block to reset our collective focus. Our goal is to spend at least 60% of our time on forward-looking items. Let's begin with a moment to set our intention for today's meeting."

Monthly Meeting Metrics

Meeting date: _____

· Total pages in board pack: _____

· Time spent on strategic items: _____ minutes (%)

· Number of decisions made: _____

· Number of items deferred: _____

· Director energy level (1-10): _____

Six-Month Targets

· Reduce board pack by 30%

· Increase strategic discussion time to 60%

· Reduce clarification questions by 50%

· Improve director energy ratings by 25%

If your diagnostic score was under 15:

Focus first on implementing the 100/150 rule and agenda tagging. These structural changes create immediate capacity for more strategic discussion.

If your score was 16-20:

Implement the Discernment Bell and Quarterly Attention Audit to refine your existing good practices.

If your score was 21-25:

Focus on fine-tuning your approach through regular meta-reflection on board attention patterns.

Based on research from King & Badham (2019) Leadership in Uncertainty; King, Norbury & Rooney (2020) Coaching for Leadership Wisdom; Board Intelligence (2025); Miller (2023) Journal of Cognitive Science.

Download additional resources at: www.drlizking.com

Pre-Decision Emotional Check-in
Before analysing complex stakeholder decisions:

□What am I feeling about this situation?
□ What concerns are arising for me?
□ How might my emotional state influence my judgment?
□ What do I need to remain both caring and clear?

Stakeholder Impact Mapping Template

Decision Under Consideration: _____

Primary Stakeholders Affected:

  Shareholders: Impact _____ Time horizon _____
  Employees: Impact _____ Time horizon _____
  Customers: Impact _____ Time horizon _____
  Communities: Impact _____ Time horizon _____
  Suppliers: Impact _____ Time horizon _____
  Environment: Impact _____ Time horizon _____

Secondary Stakeholders:

  Future generations: _____
  Industry peers: _____
  Regulatory bodies: _____
  Society at large: _____

Level 1: Acknowledge Impact

□ All aHected parties identified and considered
□Emotional weight of impacts acknowledged
□ Space created for enuine concern expression

Level 2: Separate Feeling from Analysis Emotional Recognition: *"This situation involves..."*

Strategic Assessment: "The options that best serve long-term interests are..."

Level 3: Expand Time Horizons Short-term compassionate choice: _____ Long-term compassionate choice: _____ Potential conflicts between short and long-term: _____

Level 4: Integrate Multiple Perspectives

Whose interests are prioritized in Option A? _____
Whose interests are prioritized in Option B? _____
Which groups' voices might be missing?_____
How do we balance competing legitimate needs?_____

L**evel 5: Choose with Wisdom**

Decision rationale that integrates both caring and strategy:
How we would explain this to those most affected:

Wisdom Council Protocol Questions

Before finalizing diHicult decisions:

1. Are we solving the right problem or just the urgent one?

2. How does this choice align with our deepest organizational values?

3. What would we want to be remembered for in this situation?

4. Which path serves both immediate needs and long-term flourishing?

5. How would we explain our reasoning to our harshest critics?

6. What would our wisest advisors counsel us to do?

Long-term Compassion Assessment

    1-year impact considered for all stakeholder groups
    3-year consequences evaluated
    5-year stakeholder flourishing potential assessed
    Unintended consequences anticipated and mitigated

Post-Decision Learning

After implementing compassionate discernment decisions:

    • What worked well in our process?
    • What would we do diHerently next time?
    • How did stakeholders respond to our reasoning?
    • What did we learn about balancing care and clarity?

FUTURE SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS
Rate your board's current capability (1-5 scale: 1=Significant Gap, 5=Strong Capability)

Digital Transformation Oversight
    □ Understanding of AI and machine learning implications ＿＿＿
    □ Cybersecurity risk assessment and governance ＿＿＿
    □ Digital business model evaluation ＿＿＿
    □ Data governance and privacy oversight ＿＿＿

Climate and Sustainability
    □ Climate risk identification and mitigation ＿＿＿
    □ ESG strategy development and oversight ＿＿＿
    □ Sustainability reporting and metrics ＿＿＿
    □ Transition planning and implementation ＿＿＿

Stakeholder Capitalism
    □ Multi-stakeholder value creation assessment ＿＿＿
    □ Stakeholder engagement strategy oversight ＿＿＿
    □ Purpose-driven decision making ＿＿＿
    □ Social impact measurement and reporting ＿＿＿

Emerging Technologies
    □ Quantum computing strategic implications ＿＿＿
    □ Biotechnology and healthcare innovation ＿＿＿
    □ Blockchain and cryptocurrency governance ＿＿＿
    □ Robotics and automation workforce impact ＿＿＿

Geopolitical and Regulatory
    □ Global trade and supply chain risk ＿＿＿
    □ Regulatory change anticipation and response ＿＿＿
    □ Political risk assessment and mitigation ＿＿＿
    □ Cross-border compliance and governance ＿＿＿

Current Skills Score ＿＿＿ /100

COMPETENCY EVOLUTION PLANNING

Step 1: Identify Priority Learning Areas
Based on your organization's strategic challenges, rank these competency areas by priority:

_____ Digital transformation and technology governance
_____ Climate risk and sustainability oversight
_____ Stakeholder engagement and social impact
_____ Emerging technology implications
_____ Geopolitical and regulatory navigation
_____ Cybersecurity and data governance
_____ Innovation and disruption management
_____ Workforce transformation and future of work

Step 2: Map Current Board Strengths

For each director, identify their top 3 expertise areas and emerging competency interests:

Director 1: _____
Current Strengths: _____
Learning Interests: _____
Director 2: _____
Current Strengths: _____
Learning Interests: _____

Director 3: _____
Current Strengths: _____
Learning Interests: _____
Director 4: _____
Current Strengths: _____
Learning Interests: _____
Director 5: _____
Current Strengths: _____
Learning Interests: _____

Step 3: Identify Collective Gaps

Priority competency areas lacking adequate board coverage:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

ACCELERATED LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Expert Immersion Sessions
Schedule quarterly deep-dive learning sessions on emerging domains

Session Planning Template

Quarter:
Focus Area:
Expert Facilitator:
Learning Objectives:

    1. _____

    2. _____

    3. _____

Pre-Session Preparation

☐ Background reading materials distributed
☐ Current organizational exposure to topic assessed
☐ Specific board questions and challenges identified
☐ Success metrics for learning session defined

Session Structure (3 hours)

• Context Setting (30 minutes): Why this matters for our organization
• Expert Briefing (60 minutes): Deep dive into domain fundamentals
• Interactive Exploration (60 minutes): Q&A and scenario discussion
• Application Planning (30 minutes): How to integrate into governance

Post-Session Actions

☐ Key insights documented and shared
☐ Governance implications identified
☐ Follow-up learning needs assessed
☐ Next session topic selected

Mentor-Mentee Pairing Template

Pairing 1
Director: _____
Mentor: _____
Focus Area: _____

Meeting Frequency: _____
Learning Goals: _____

Pairing 2
Director: _____
Mentor: _____
Focus Area: _____
Meeting Frequency:
Learning Goals: _____
_____

Pairing 3
Director: _____
Mentor: _____
Focus Area: _____
Meeting Frequency: _____
Learning Goals:_____

Mentoring Session Structure

- · Current developments and trends (20 minutes)
- · Governance implications discussion (20 minutes)
- · Practical application examples (15 minutes)

- · Questions and clarification (5 minutes)

Progress Tracking
Monthly check-ins to assess:

- □ Learning objectives achievement
- □ Governance application opportunities
- □ Additional learning needs identification
- □ Relationship effectiveness and satisfaction

Workshop Planning Guide

Objective: Connect new knowledge domains to existing governance frameworks
Frequency: Semi-annual (every 6 months)
Participants: All board directors plus key management
Workshop Agenda (4 hours)

Opening (30 minutes)
□ Review of new competencies developed over past 6 months
□ Assessment of integration challenges and opportunities

Integration Exercise 1 (60 minutes)
□ Case study: Applying new digital skills to strategic oversight
□ Small group work connecting technology insights to risk management
□ Plenary discussion of governance implications

Integration Exercise 2 (60 minutes)
□ Scenario planning using climate and sustainability knowledge
□ Board decision simulation incorporating stakeholder perspectives
□ Reflection on enhanced decision-making capability

Framework Development (90 minutes)
□ Update board charter and committee structures
□ Revise information requirements and reporting formats
□ Adjust meeting agendas to reflect new competencies
□ Plan ongoing learning priorities

Action Planning (30 minutes)
□ Specific governance improvements to implement
□ Individual director development commitments
□ Next workshop focus areas selection

Quarterly Skills Assessment

Review board's evolving capability against strategic requirements

Assessment Questions

1. How has our collective competency improved over the past quarter?
2. Which emerging challenges do we now feel better equipped to address?
3. What new governance blind spots have we identified?
4. How are we applying new knowledge in our oversight responsibilities?
5. What additional learning should we prioritize?

Skills Application Tracking

☐ New competencies applied in recent board decisions
☐ Enhanced strategic conversations due to expanded knowledge
☐ Improved risk identification from broader perspective
☐ Better stakeholder considerations through diverse insights

Annual Competency Review

☐ Comprehensive skills gap analysis against future challenges
☐ Individual director development achievement assessment
☐ Collective board learning effectiveness evaluation
☐ Next year's learning priorities and resource planning

Learning Indicators

- Expert sessions completed per quarter: _____
- Directors participating in reverse mentoring _____ %
- Skills integration workshops conducted: _____
- New competencies successfully applied: _____

Governance Impact Measures

- Strategic foresight capability improvement _____ %
- Decision quality enhancement _____ %
- Risk identification effectiveness _____ %
- Stakeholder consideration breadth _____ %

Director Engagement

- Learning satisfaction scores: _____ /5.0
- Confidence in emerging domain oversight: _____/5.0
- Commitment to continued development _____ %
- Board service meaning and impact: _____ /5.0

Based on research from King & Badham (2019), King, Norbury & Rooney (2020), and adaptive learning studies.

Download additional resources at:
www.drlizking.com

Board Learning Readiness Assessment

Rate your board's current learning capability (1-5 scale)

Reflection Orientation

Board regularly examines its own decision-making processes
Directors are comfortable discussing governance effectiveness
Past decisions are reviewed for learning opportunities
Process improvement is valued alongside outcome achievement

Pattern Recognition

Board identifies recurring themes in its discussions and decisions
Effective practices are recognized and reinforced
Problematic patterns are acknowledged and addressed
Learning insights are documented and shared

Experimental Mindset

Board is willing to try new governance approaches
Failures are treated as learning opportunities rather than blame occasions
Innovation in governance processes is encouraged
Success metrics are defined for governance experiments

Adaptive Capability

Board adjusts its practices based on learning insights
Governance processes evolve to match changing strategic needs
Directors demonstrate growth in their governance capabilities
Collective wisdom increases over time

Preparation Questions (Individual Reflection):

What were our most effective decisions this quarter?
What decisions do we wish we had approached differently?
What patterns do I notice in our collective thinking?
Where did our governance processes serve us well or poorly?

Retrospective Session Structure (45 minutes)

Opening (5 minutes):

Set intention for learning-focused conversation
Establish psychological safety for honest reflection

What Worked Well (15 minutes):

Identify effective decisions and processes
Recognize positive patterns and capabilities
Celebrate governance successes

What Could Be Improved (15 minutes):

Examine challenging decisions or outcomes
Identify process weaknesses or blind spots
Discuss recurring problematic patterns

Learning Integration (10 minutes):

Synthesize key insights from discussion
Identify specific improvement opportunities
Commit to experimentation or changes

For Significant Decisions, Examine:

Information Gathering:
What information was considered?
What sources were consulted?
What information might have been missing?
How was information quality assessed?

Discussion Dynamics:
Who contributed most to the discussion?
Whose voices might have been underrepresented?
How was dissent or disagreement handled?
What assumptions went unquestioned?

Decision Process:
How was the decision ultimately made?
What criteria were used to evaluate options?
How were trade-offs and stakeholder impacts considered?
What role did intuition vs. analysis play?

Outcome Assessment:
How well did the decision achieve intended outcomes?
What unintended consequences emerged?
What would we do differently with hindsight?
What can we learn for future similar decisions?

Experiment Design

Hypothesis:

What we're testing:

Success metrics:

Timeline:

Resources needed:

Implementation Plan

Week 1:

Week 2:

Week 3:

Week 4:

Data Collection

Quantitative measures:

Qualitative observations:

Feedback sources:

Evaluation Criteria

Success indicators:

Failure indicators:

Learning objectives:

Results and Learning

What worked:

What didn't work:

Unexpected insights:

Recommendations for future:

Semi-Annual Deep Reflection Questions:

Purpose Alignment:

How well do our governance practices serve our deepest organizational purpose
What tensions exist between our espoused values and actual practices?
Where might we be optimizing for efficiency at the expense of effectiveness?

Assumption Examination:

What beliefs about effective governance might we need to question?
How have our mental models of board effectiveness evolved?
What "best practices" might not be best for our specific context?

Capability Evolution:

How have our collective governance capabilities developed over time?
What new competencies do we need to cultivate?
How can we better leverage the diverse wisdom around our table?

Future Orientation:

What governance challenges are we not yet prepared for?
How can our learning processes become more systematic and effective?
What legacy do we want to leave through our

Monthly Learning Check-ins:

Review progress on current governance experiments
Share insights from recent external learning experiences
Identify emerging learning needs or opportunities
Adjust learning priorities based on strategic developments

Quarterly Learning Synthesis:

Integrate insights from retrospectives and audits
Identify patterns across multiple learning experiences
Develop hypotheses for next quarter's experiments
Update governance development priorities

Annual Learning Strategy Review:

Assess overall governance learning effectiveness
Evaluate development in collective wisdom and capability
Set learning objectives for the coming year
Adjust learning architecture and processes

Learning Effectiveness Indicators

Process Measures

Frequency and quality of reflection sessions
Number of governance experiments conducted
Participation in external learning opportunities
Documentation and sharing of insights

Outcome Measures

Decision quality improvement over time
Governance process efficiency gains
Director satisfaction with board effectiveness
Stakeholder feedback on governance quality

Capability Measures

Collective wisdom demonstration in complex decisions
Adaptive response to changing strategic challenges
Integration of diverse perspectives and expertise
Innovation in governance approaches

Based on research from King & Badham (2019) "Mindfulness at work: A critical re-view"; King, Norbury & Rooney (2020) "Coaching for Leadership Wisdom"; and King & Murdoch (2021) "Mindful Board Assessment Survey."
Download additional resources at: www.drlizking.com

Collective Attention Assessment
Rate your board's current capability (1-5 scale):

Shared Scanning
□ We explicitly coordinate attention across different domains   _____
□ Directors focus on different environmental sectors systematically   _____
□ We avoid all focusing on the same information sources   _____

Pattern Integration
□ We regularly connect dots between seemingly unrelated observations   _____
□ Quarterly sessions dedicated to thematic analysis   _____
□ Cross-functional insights are synthesized at board level   _____

Weak Signal Amplification
□ Minority perspectives are actively sought and heard   _____
□ Uncomfortable data receives adequate consideration   _____
□ Contrarian views are welcomed and explored   _____

Collective Reflection
□ We examine our own attention patterns regularly   _____
□ Gaps between intended and actual focus are identified   _____
□ Board attention allocation is consciously adjusted   _____

Adaptive Response
□ We modify attention allocation based on emerging patterns   _____
□ Real-time adjustments are made during meetings   _____
□ Learning from attention patterns informs future agendas   _____

Attention Mapping Exercise

Instructions: Each director plots their primary attention areas on the strategic landscape below

Strategic Domains

Financial Performance: _____%
Market/Competitive: _____%
Operational Excellence: _____%
Technology/Innovation: _____%
Regulatory/Compliance: _____%
Stakeholder Relations: _____%
1Risk Management: _____%
Culture/Talent: _____%
Sustainability/ESG: _____%

Collective Attention Gaps

What domains are under-attended? _____
What domains are over-attended? _____
What emerging areas need more focus? _____

Weak Signal Protocol Template

Meeting Date: _____
Assigned Director: _____

Contrarian Perspective to Explore: _____
Data/Observations that Challenge Assumptions: _____

Questions Raised: _____
Board Response: _____

Pattern Integration Session Guide

Quarterly Review Questions:

What themes emerge across different information sources?
Which stakeholder signals are converging or diverging?
What story do our various data points tell together?
What possibilities become visible through systems thinking?
Which patterns require board attention vs management action?

Meta-Meeting Review Checklist

Actual attention allocation vs intended priorities reviewed
Quality of collective focus during key discussions assessed
Attention drift patterns identified and addressed
Collective sensing capability gaps noted
Adjustments planned for next meeting cycle

Based on research from King & Badham (2019) "Mindfulness at work: A critical re-view"; King, Norbury & Rooney (2020) "Coaching for Leadership Wisdom"; and King & Murdoch (2021) "Mindful Board Assessment Survey."

Download additional resources at: www.drlizking.com

INDIVIDUAL DIRECTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT
Rate your comfort level (1-5 scale: 1=Very Uncomfortable,
5=Very Comfortable)

Expressing Uncertainty
□ I feel comfortable saying "I don't know" in board meetings   _____
□ I can admit when I've made a mistake without fear of judgment   _____
□ I feel safe asking questions that might seem obvious to others   _____
□ I can express uncertainty about complex issues without losing   _____
credibility

Challenging Ideas
□ I feel comfortable disagreeing with the chair or CEO   _____
□ I can question prevailing assumptions without social consequences   _____
□ I feel safe raising concerns about popular initiatives   _____
□ I can express minority viewpoints without feeling excluded   _____

Sharing Concerns
□ I feel comfortable raising sensitive issues   _____
□ I can discuss potential failures or risks openly   _____
□ I feel safe reporting information that contradicts optimistic projections   _____
□ I can express concerns about fellow directors' behaviour if needed   _____

Learning Orientation
□ I feel comfortable admitting when I've changed my mind   _____
□ I can acknowledge gaps in my knowledge or expertise   _____
□ I feel safe experimenting with new approaches   _____
□ I can learn from failures without shame or blame   _____

Individual Score _____ /60

COLLECTIVE BOARD ASSESSMENT

Rate your board's culture (1-5 scale: 1=Never, 5=Always)

Leader Modeling
□ Chair/CEO acknowledge their own uncertainties and limitations _____
□ Leaders actively seek perspectives that challenge their views _____
□ Authority figures demonstrate vulnerability appropriately _____
□ Leadership responds constructively to dissent and challenge _____

Inquiry Culture
□ Questions are welcomed and explored thoroughly _____
□ Curiosity is valued over quick consensus _____
□ Minority perspectives are actively sought and heard _____
□ Debate and discussion are encouraged, not avoided _____

Failure Learning
□ Near-misses and small failures are examined constructively _____
□ Learning from mistakes is prioritised over blame assignment _____
□ Past decisions are reviewed for improvement opportunities _____
□ Failures are treated as data rather than judgement occasions _____

Dissent Protocols
□ Systematic processes exist for surfacing disagreement _____
□ Devil's advocate roles are formally assigned when needed _____
□ Structured debate formats are used for complex decisions _____
□ Minority reports or dissenting views are documented _____

Truth-Telling Rewards
□ Directors who raise difficult issues are thanked and supported _____
□ Uncomfortable realities are addressed rather than avoided _____
□ Messengers of bad news are protected, not punished _____
□ Honesty is explicitly valued over harmony _____

Board Culture Score _____ /100

Vulnerability Round Template
(Use at quarterly meetings)

Opening Script:

"I'd like each director to briefly share one area where you feel uncertain or would value board input on your thinking about our current challenges."

Director Prompts:

"I'm struggling to understand..."
"I'm uncertain about..."
"I'd value your perspectives on..."
"I'm concerned about... but not sure if..."

Pre-Mortem Protocol
Use before major decisions

"Imagine it's 18 months from now and our decision has failed spectacularly"

"What are the most likely reasons it failed?"

"What warning signs should we watch for?"

"How can we mitigate these risks?"

"What would we wish we had considered today?"

Anonymous Concern Channel Setup

Implementation Checklist:
- Confidential reporting mechanism established
- Clear process for handling sensitive issues
- Protection protocols for concern raisers
- Regular review and response procedures
- Communication about how concerns are addressed

Dissent Appreciation Scripts

Use when directors raise challenging questions:

"Thank you for raising that important concern"
"I appreciate you bringing a different perspective"
"That's exactly the kind of question we need to explore"
"Your willingness to challenge our thinking is valuable"

SAFETY INDICATOR TRACKING

Monthly Observations
☐ Number of questions asked during meetings
☐ Frequency of minority viewpoints expressed
☐ Instances of directors changing their mind
☐ Quality of debate on controversial topics
☐ Time spent exploring dissenting views

Red Flags for Psychological Unsafety
☐ Meetings consistently end in unanimous agreement
☐ Directors rarely ask questions or express uncertainty
☐ Challenging topics are avoided or quickly dismissed
☐ Same voices dominate discussions repeatedly
☐ Bad news or concerns are not surfaced until crises emerge

Individual Scores (out of 60)

50-60: High psychological safety

40-49: Moderate safety with room for improvement

30-39: Low safety requiring attention

Below 30: Critical safety deficit

Board Culture Scores (out of 100)

80-100: Excellent psychological safety culture

60-79: Good culture with enhancement opportunities

40-59: Developing culture requiring systematic improvement

Below 40: Poor culture requiring immediate intervention

NEXT STEPS

- If scores are high: Maintain current practices and model for other boards
- If scores are moderate: Implement 2-3 building practices consistently

  for 6 months
- If scores are low: Engage external facilitation and commit to systematic

  culture change

Based on research from King & Badham (2019), Edmondson (2019), and the Mindful Board Assessment Survey. Download additional resources at: www.drlizking.com

PURPOSE ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT

Rate your board's current alignment (1-5 scale: 1=Poor Alignment, 5=Excellent Alignment)

Mission Connection

☐ Every agenda item clearly connects to organizational purpose   _____
☐ Board discussions regularly reference mission and values   _____
☐ Strategic priorities guide agenda allocation   _____
☐ Purpose-driven conversations receive adequate time   _____

Time Allocation Analysis

☐ 60% or more of board time focuses on future value creation   _____
☐ Strategic discussions receive priority scheduling   _____
☐ Operational reporting is streamlined and focused   _____
☐ Compliance matters are handled efficiently   _____

Decision Framework

☐ Major decisions explicitly reference the organizational mission   _____
☐ Trade-offs are evaluated against stated values   _____
☐ Stakeholder impact is considered through purpose lens   _____
☐ Long-term mission achievement guides choices   _____

Board Engagement

☐ Directors understand how their role advances organizational purpose   _____
☐ Meeting discussions energize rather than drain participants   _____
☐ Board service feels meaningful and impactful   _____
☐ Strategic conversations generate excitement and commitment   _____

Purpose Alignment Score ___ /80

Pre-Meeting Preparation

Every board paper must include a 100-word "Purpose Connection" statement answering:

1. How does this topic advance our organizational mission?

2. Which strategic pillar does this support?

3. What is the stakeholder value creation potential?

4. What happens to our mission if we ignore this issue?

Purpose Connection Template

Topic: _____

Mission Link: _____

Strategic Pillar: _____

Stakeholder Value: _____

Mission Risk if Ignored: _____

Step 1: Define Your Strategic Priorities

List your organization's top 5 strategic priorities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 2: Allocate Ideal Time Percentages

Based on strategic importance, what percentage of board time should each receive?

Strategic Priority 1:	_____%
Strategic Priority 2:	_____%
Strategic Priority 3:	_____%
Strategic Priority 4:	_____%
Strategic Priority 5:	_____%
Risk Management:	_____%
Operational Review:	_____%
Governance/Compliance:	_____%

Total: 100%

Step 3: Track Actual Time Allocation

For the last three board meetings, calculate actual time spent:

Meeting 1 Date:
Strategic Priority 1:   _____%
Strategic Priority 2:   _____%
Strategic Priority 3:   _____%
Strategic Priority 4:   _____%
Strategic Priority 5:   _____%
Risk Management: _____%
Operational Review: _____%
Governance/Compliance: _____%

Meeting 2 Date:
Strategic Priority 1:   _____%
Strategic Priority 2:   _____%
Strategic Priority 3:   _____%
Strategic Priority 4:   _____%
Strategic Priority 5:   _____%
Risk Management: _____%
Operational Review: _____%
Governance/Compliance: _____%

Meeting 3 Date:
Strategic Priority 1:   _____%
Strategic Priority 2:   _____%
Strategic Priority 3:   _____%
Strategic Priority 4:   _____%
Strategic Priority 5:   _____%
Risk Management: _____%
Operational Review: _____%
Governance/Compliance: _____%

Step 4: Identify Gaps

Priority areas receiving insufficient time:
_____

Areas consuming excessive time:
_____

Biggest misalignment:
_____

Meeting Opening (2 minutes)

Chair asks: "Before we begin, let's take a moment to reflect on how today's agenda serves our organizational mission and stakeholder value creation."

Mid-Meeting Pulse Check

"Are we focusing our attention on what matters most for achieving our purpose?"

Meeting Closing

"How did today's discussions advance our mission? What should we prioritize differently next time?"

QUARTERLY PURPOSE AUDIT

Review Questions

1. What percentage of our board time was spent on strategic value creation vs. operational review?
2. Which agenda items struggled to connect clearly to our mission?
3. What important purpose-driven topics received insufficient attention?
4. How did our attention allocation align with our stated strategic priorities?
5. What patterns of mission drift are we noticing?

PURPOSE CHECK-IN PROTOCOL

Purpose Audit Template

Quarter: _____
Total Board Meeting Hours: _____
Time Category Analysis: _____
Strategic Development _____ hours (%)
Risk Oversight _____ hours (%)
Operational Review _____ hours (%)
Compliance/Governance _____ hours (%)
Stakeholder Relations:_____hours (_____ %)

Mission Connection Assessment

Strong mission connection _____ agenda items
Moderate mission connection _____ agenda items
Weak/unclear mission connection _____ agenda items

Action Items for Next Quarter

1. Increase time allocation for: _____
2. Reduce time allocation for: _____
3. Eliminate or delegate: _____
4. New purpose-driven topics to add: _____

AGENDA ARCHITECTURE TEMPLATE

Purpose-Aligned Meeting Structure

Opening (10 minutes)

□ Purpose reflection and intention setting
□ Review of strategic priorities for context

Strategic Block 1 (60-90 minutes)

□ Most important strategic priority discussion
□ Future-focused value creation topics
□ Major decisions requiring board wisdom

Operational Block (30-45 minutes)

□ Streamlined performance updates
□ Risk monitoring and mitigation
□ Compliance and regulatory matters

Strategic Block 2 (45-60 minutes)

□ Second strategic priority
□ Stakeholder and culture topics
□ Innovation and opportunity exploration

Closing (15 minutes)

□ Purpose achievement reflection
□ Next meeting priority setting
□ Action item clarity and ownership

IMPLEMENTATION TRACKING (YES/NO)

Monthly Assessment
□ Mission filter applied to all agenda items   _____
□ Strategic time budget reviewed and adjusted   _____
□ Purpose check-ins conducted during meetings   _____
□ Director engagement and energy levels monitored   _____

Quarterly Review
□ Purpose audit completed   _____
□ Time allocation gaps identified and addressed   _____
□ Agenda architecture effectiveness evaluated   _____
□ Board purpose alignment score reassessed   _____

Annual Evaluation
□ Overall mission advancement assessed   _____
□ Board contribution to organizational purpose measured   _____
□ Strategic priority achievement reviewed   _____
□ Purpose-to-agenda alignment effectiveness evaluated   _____

SUCCESS INDICATORS

Quantitative Measures
• 60%+ of board time focused on strategic priorities   _____
• <20% of agenda items fail mission filter test   _____
• Director engagement scores >4.0/5.0   _____
• Strategic decision speed improved by 25%   _____

Qualitative Indicators
• Directors report high sense of purpose and meaning   _____
• Management receives clear strategic direction   _____
• Stakeholders observe consistent mission focus   _____
• Board discussions generate energy and commitmen   _____

Pre-Decision Preparation

Identify the core decision or challenge
Acknowledge current emotional state
Set intention for wise discernment

Level 1: Pause and Ground

Questions for Reflection:
What am I feeling right now about this situation?
How might my emotional state be influencing my perception?
What assumptions am I bringing to this discussion?

Practice: Take three conscious breaths before responding

Level 2: Expand Perspective

Questions for Reflection:
Whose voices are represented in this discussion?
Whose perspectives might be missing?
How would different stakeholder groups view this situation?

Practice: Explicitly name 3-5 stakeholder groups affected

Level 3: Question Assumptions

Questions for Reflection:
What would have to be true for our current approach to be inadequate?
What beliefs are we taking for granted?
Where might we be wrong?

Practice: Challenge one core assumption explicitly

Level 4: Generate Options

Questions for Reflection:
 What possibilities exist that we haven't yet considered?
 How can we move beyond either/or thinking?
 What would a completely different approach look like?

Practice: Generate at least three alternative approaches

Level 5: Choose with Wisdom Questions for Reflection

 Which path serves both immediate needs and long-term flourishing?
 How does this choice align with our deepest values?
 What would we want to be remembered for?

Practice: Articulate the wisdom principle guiding the decision

Monthly Assumption Audit Template

Month: _____

Assumption to examine: _____

Evience supporting: _____

Evidence challenging: _____

Alternative perspectives: _____

Revised understanding: _____

Implementation Tracking (Yes/No)

Discernment Ladder used in last major decision _____

Stakeholder perspectives explicitly considered _____

Assumptions questioned before finalizing choices _____

Wisdom principles articulated in decision rationale _____