

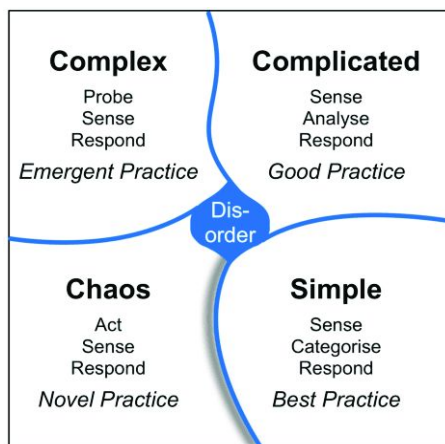
A brief about Cynefin Framework

Cynefin Framework was created by Dave Snowden in 1999 as a conceptual framework to aid decision making.

Cynefin is a Welsh word meaning 'habitat'.

Dave Snowden describes it as a sense-making framework and makes it clear that it is not a model. He explains that a model seeks to represent reality and a framework is where we look at the reality.

What is Cynefin Framework?



www.google.com/imghp Image

There are five decision-making contexts in the Cynefin Framework.

- **Disorder:** The central space of the framework is disorder i.e. a state of not knowing what type of system you are in - ordered, complex or chaotic. It is basically an unhappy place.
- **Simple:** It is simple since the relationship between cause and effect is clear. Here we apply the best practices based on Sense-Categorise-Respond having rigid constraints. This domain represents **known knowns**.
- **Complicated:** This domain represents **known unknowns** and recommends sense-analyse-respond. Since this domain assesses the facts, it applies the good practices and has governing constraints.

- **Complex:** This domain represents **unknown unknowns** since there is no linear relationship between cause and effect. It can only be deduced in retrospect. It recommends probe-sense-respond and applies emergent/exaptive practices. It has got enabling constraints.
- **Chaotic/Chaos:** This domain represents **unknowable unknowns**, in this domain, cause and effect relationship is unclear. There are no constraints and recommends act-sense-respond and applies novel practices.

Every domain has been recommended with a specific decision-making approach. It helps in assessing the situation better and picking the most appropriate path to move forward.

Moving through Domains

With the passage of time knowledge is gained and clockwise drift happens in a clockwise direction from chaotic to complex, complicated and simple. There can be counter clockwise movement in case people die and knowledge is forgotten.

Boundary between Simple and Chaotic

If you believe things are simple, you start to believe it is ordered and you are invulnerable to failure. In such a situation you fall over the edge and recovery is very expensive.

Applicability of Cynefin Framework

The Cynefin Framework has been applied to various industries and domains to aid decisions over the years such as product development, supply chain management, policy making, customer relation, healthcare, web services, career development etc.

It can be incorporated with the Agile software development frameworks as well. There are strategic uses of the Cynefin framework not only for technological space but also for organisational/cultural change and policy adoption. Also, it explains how to build organisational resilience, engage employees assessing the opportunities and identifying the threats.

Concluding Thoughts

- Cynefin is a conceptual and analytical decision-making framework
- Cynefin framework helps to recognise differences between system types
- Cynefin framework also recommends new approaches to make decisions in complex and social environments
- Cynefin framework is suitable for leadership across contexts by understanding the relationship between cause and effect

- The Cynefin framework improves decision making, team-work across different environments having various degrees of uncertainty.

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References

- *Cynefin Framework by Dave Snowden at www.cognitive-edge.com*
- *Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynefin_framework*
- *<https://cognitive-edge.com/resources/case-studies/>*