



## Boardroom Briefing: From Traditional to Regenerative Governance

**Purpose of this Briefing:** To provide an overview of key concepts, qualities, and tools of a regenerative approach to governance. The brief covers how to integrate this approach into typical functions, and suggests specific frameworks to address the blind spots of conventional governance and move forward.

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### Foundations of Regenerative Governance

- Does not, and cannot, replace organizational fiduciary duty at this time. Its complementary perspective sets fiduciary duty in a broader and longer context.
  - Promotes good governance as prioritizing the stewardship of living systems, and reframes and integrates this broader intent into matters of direction, control, and compliance.
  - **Six Core Qualities of Boards:**
    - **Situated:** Grounded in context, recognizing place, conditions, and systemic interdependencies.
    - **Real:** Engaged with reality as it is, not as we wish it to be—naming constraints and possibilities honestly.
    - **Developmental:** Focused on continuous learning, capability building, and evolving governance practices.
    - **Relational:** Centered on trust, reciprocity, and quality of relationships within and beyond the organization.
    - **Circular:** Embraces cycles of growth, adaptation, feedback, and renewal.
    - **Coherent:** Aligns intention, action, and values—creating clarity without collapsing complexity.
  - Shifts from predictive control to generative emergence.
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### Board Responsibilities Through a Regenerative Lens

- **Strategy:** Move beyond financial viability to life-centered resilience.
- **Risk Oversight:** Expand beyond compliance risks to systemic and intergenerational risks.
- **Culture & People:** Foster relational intelligence, adaptability, and inclusivity.
- **Contribution:** From narrow performance and rigid targets to systemic usefulness—creating value that strengthens the health, resilience, and regeneration of the broader systems in which the organization is embedded.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Build right relationships with human and non-human stakeholders.

- **Disclosure:** Include multi-capital reporting and narrative transparency, telling the full contextual story within living systems, communities, and time horizons.

## Frameworks & Tools

- **Language Shift:** From mechanistic metaphors to living systems language—emphasizing relationship, evolution, flow, circulation, energy, and cycles.
  - **Flourishing Business Canvas:** Guides value creation with integrated social, environmental, and financial strategies recognizing external dependencies and stakeholders.
  - **Six Thinking Frameworks:** Helps boards expand their sensemaking across complexity:
    1. **Zooming Out, Zooming In** – Expands perspective between the big picture and immediate context, including how boards identify systemic interdependencies (not just stakeholders) and sense the relational landscape.
    2. **Three Horizons Thinking** – Makes different views of the future in the present discussable, explicitly inviting dialogue across multiple time horizons within board deliberations.
    3. **Vital MultiCapitals** – Considers and integrates natural, human, social, financial, and intellectual capitals for decision-making.
    4. **The Adaptive Cycle** – Helps boards anticipate and navigate disruption cycles, not just understand them, interpreting dynamics through phases of growth, conservation, release, and renewal.
    5. **Conditions, Conditions** – Surfaces enabling and limiting conditions, including leadership, culture, and support for the health and learning of people and relationships.
    6. **New Story** – Finds meaning in, and narrates, the co-creation of new responses and recombined capabilities toward what truly matters.
  - **Relational Agreements:** Emphasize mutual trust and adaptive commitments over rigid contracts.
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## Next Steps

- Start by understanding the current state and identifying what needs to change.
- Commit to leading and governing in ways that recognize and work with the organization's energy, culture, and vitality.
- Fulfill essential oversight responsibilities, while guiding the board's focus toward stewardship, adaptability, and the organization's contribution to the wider system.