THE ILLUSION OF SPEED

How rushing decisions without mature processes increases organisational fragility

SPEED WITHOUT STRUCTURE DOESN’T ACCELERATE PROGRESS — IT ACCELERATES COLLAPSE

SPEED AS A COMPETITIVE MYTH
WE'VE CONFUSED URGENCY WITH STRATEGY

~40%	**$250M**	**61%**	**>50%**
of executive time spent on decisions	lost annually by a typical Fortune 500 in wasted decision time	of managers say half their decision time is ineffective	of strategic initiatives fail at implementation
McKinsey Global Survey 1,200+ business leaders	*McKinsey, equivalent to 530,000 manager days*	*McKinsey Survey 1,200+ global managers*	*McKinsey / multiple academic studies*

ORGANISATIONAL FRAGILITY: THE HIDDEN COST

THE STORM

Market Crisis | AI | ESG | Pandemic | Regulation

Company A

💥 FRAGILE

- Processes fail
- People panic
- Blame starts

Company B

🛡️ ROBUST

- Processes hold
- People respond
- Recovery begins

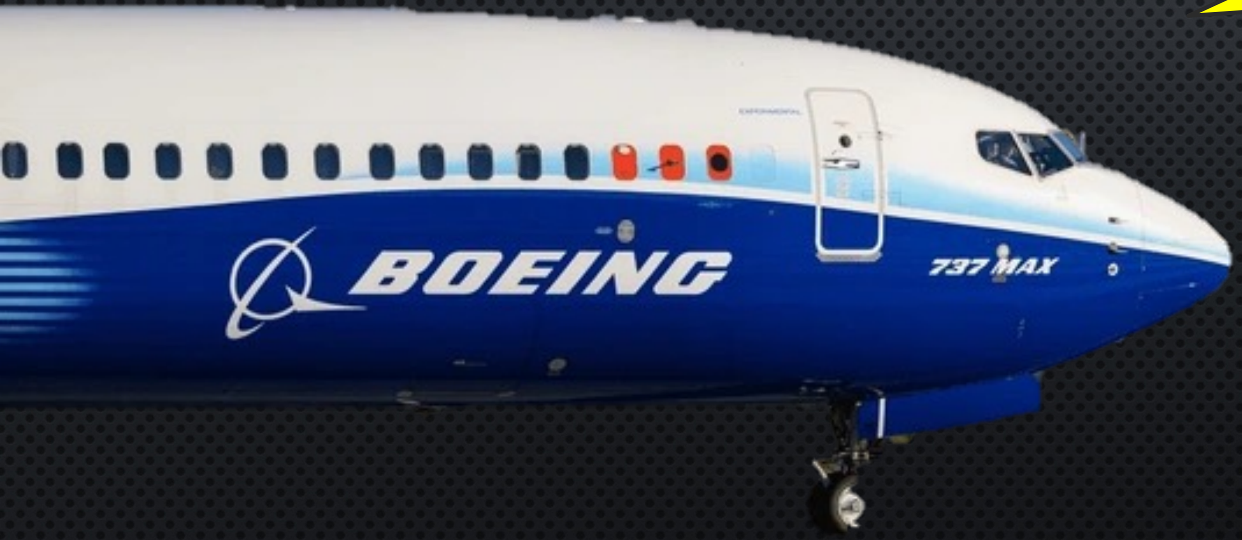
Company C

🚀 ANTIFRAGILE

- Processes improve
- People learn
- Competitive advantage grows

CASE STUDY: BOEING 737 MAX

IMPACT:
2 CRASHES
346 DEATHS
US$ 20 BILLION



THE FRAGILITY WAS ALWAYS THERE – HIDDEN BENEATH STRONG FINANCIAL RESULTS UNTIL IT WASN'T

5 Key Points Distilled from Case Study

- **Governance weaknesses create fragility**
  Repeated scope changes, weak oversight, poor reporting visibility, and accumulating risks are governance failures—not engineering failures
- **Fragility accumulates quietly**
  As Taleb argues, crises rarely emerge suddenly. They are the result of unchecked assumptions, delayed escalation, and decisions that proceed without sufficient challenge
- **Speed without governance creates invisible risk**
  Whether it is Boeing or the LCS project, different industries can exhibit the same pattern: when governance cannot slow decisions down enough to ask difficult questions, risk compounds
- **Risk professionals must connect the dots**
  Organisations rarely fail because of one catastrophic decision. They fail through hundreds of seemingly reasonable decisions where warning signals become normalised and non-financial risks remain invisible
- **Process maturity is the competitive advantage**
  The goal isn't to eliminate mistakes, but to detect them while they are still small. Mature organisations don't depend on perfect people—they depend on **repeatable, robust processes.** This is increasingly critical with **ESG and IFRS S1/S2**, where companies may produce disclosures without having the mature data and governance processes needed to make them truly defensible.

FRAGILITY IS NOT DRAMATIC. IT IS THE QUIET ACCUMULATION OF EVERY SHORTCUT TAKEN IN THE NAME OF SPEED

PROCESS MATURITY AS THE REAL COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

SLOW IS SMOOTH. SMOOTH IS FAST.

2.9×	6.8×	55–83%	50%
more likely to be a decision-making winner if focused on enterprise value	more likely to be a winner if stakeholders are committed to decision execution	decrease in serious safety events in HROs within 2 years	more likely to exceed budget if approval stages were rushed
McKinsey Age of Urgency Survey	*McKinsey, 2019*	*Joint Commission HRO Research*	*PwC Project Approval Analysis*

WHAT IS PROCESS MATURITY?

REPEATABILITY

AUDITABILITY

RESILIENCE TO PRESSURE

Mature processes are not a brake on speed. They are the road that makes speed possible and defensible

BUILDING THE CONDITIONS WHERE FAST IS ALSO SAFE

Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3	Pillar 4
• Decision rights clarity	• Pre-mortem practice	• Psychological Safety as a Risk Tool	• Non-financial Risk on Board Agenda

FIRST THING TO DO TOMORROW MORNING,….

RUN A DECISION AUDIT

MAP YOUR DECISION RIGHTS

ADD A PRE-MORTEM TO BOARD OR EXCO AGENDA

BUILD ESG DATA INFRA

SPEED WITH WISDOM IS AGILITY
SPEED WITHOUT WISDOM IS JUST EXPOSURE

THANK YOU