

In granting the HBR paper on Cynefin & Leadership an award as the “Best Practitioner Paper” the Academy of Management citation reads:

“This paper introduces an important new perspective that has enormous future value, and does so in a clear way that shows it can be used. [The article] makes several significant contributions. First, and most importantly, it introduces complexity science to guide managers' thoughts and actions. Second, it applies this perspective to advance a typology of contexts to help leaders to sort out the wide variety of situations in which they must lead decisions. Third, it advises leaders concerning what actions they should take in response”

Since that publication, Cynefin has been scratched on the back of a wall to allow a police team to assess a hostage situation, used to explain the role of religion in the Bush White House and has been extensively used in software development and organisational strategy.

One of the reasons for the popularity of the framework is that it does not say (in the manner of most management movements) that all that has gone before should be abandoned. Instead it says that most of the methods used in the past had utility, until they were shifted into an inappropriate context. So methods developed for the manufacturing process have high utility in that context, but fail when applied to customer relationship management or human motivation. Critically it also focuses on ecological approaches to change by shifting constraints to allow a problem to shift between complex and non-complex systems; balancing exploitation with exploration.

Cynefin training offers a range of options. For those wanting a brief overview of complexity theory then the morning of Day One provides a good understanding. All other days can be taken together or apart, at the same time or spread over events. Those who take up the residential options will have a chance to spend time in the evenings with the tutors.

In-house options are also available and can be customised using elements from the full programme

Previous comments

“I had some big paradigm shifts and wondered why I didn't think these things out for myself. I have been active in the complex and chaotic domain for lots of years now. Field research and participative observations have been my core task. This framework and these methods have delivered me a lot of extra tools as an applied psychologist to do my work.”

“this course was a great example of how Cognitive Edge 'walks the talk' of equipping people with management tools to address the complex space. The tutors weren't rigidly stuck to sharing 'best practices' of the CE toolkit - rather we had a space to engage in co-creative learning with them and together as participants. This allowed me to take the most out of the days we had together and form connections with the participants that I have already tapped into after the class”

“The Cynefin model has subtleties and nuances which are not easily accessible to the casual reader. This course is all about developing insights that challenge the deeply rooted thinking patterns that have been ingrained by years of conventional thinking from both education and business and management literature.”

“it has exceeded my expectations, re-kindled a lot of ideas, opened me up to possibilities”

“I loved every single minute of the Cynefin training. The subject is more than interesting, important for me”

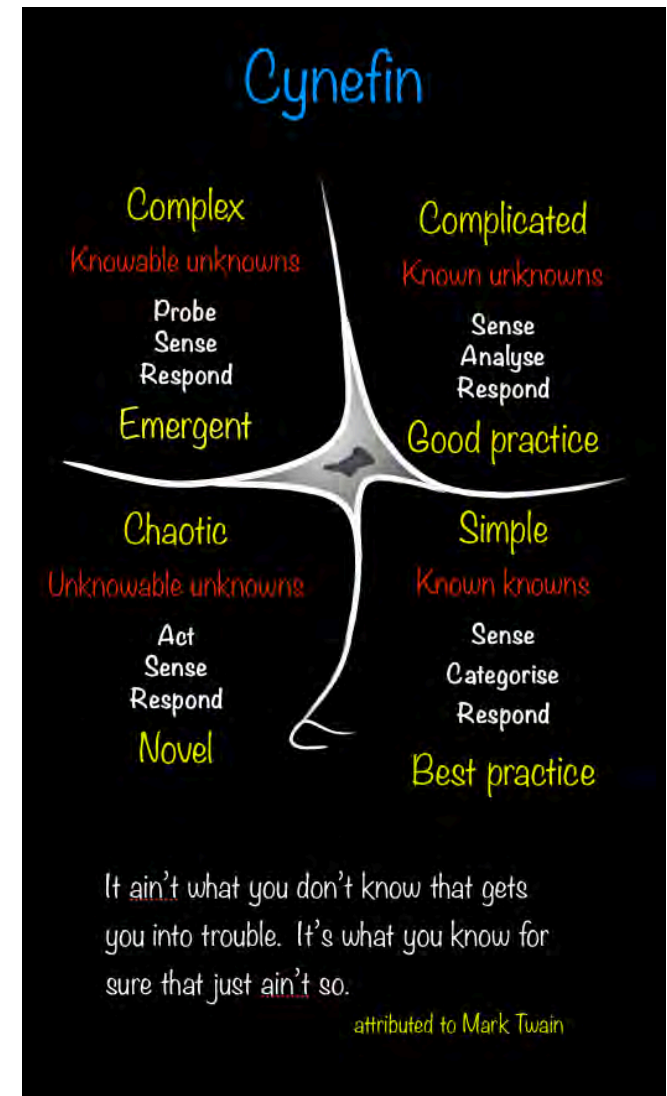
“I just wanted to say a very big thank you for a fascinating few days, that were stimulating on so many levels that I find it hard to describe

For more information book on the Cognitive Edge web site or feel free to email us for more information.

info@cognitive-edge.com
cognitive-edge.com

Making sense of the world so we can act in it

Cognitive Edge accreditation and training, ranging from a half day overview to four day residential options with evening access to tutors



Curriculum

“The Class was a good mix of theory and practice. The venue Cognitive Edge selected was a great environment. There's not many classes where I come away feeling that I've developed my capabilities further. I did on this class”



DAY ONE



Understanding complexity

0900-1030

Understanding the nature of risk under conditions of uncertainty.

The three systems: ordered, complex and chaotic, defined and illustrated.

Understanding the role of modulation in complex adaptive systems

1100-1230

Overview of micro-narrative research and its role in anticipatory awareness.

New approaches to innovation and evidence-based decision making.

Sidecasting as a strategic compliment to forecasting and backcasting.

1330-1500

Discovering & managing the evolutionary potential of the present.

Characteristics of complexity, what can be managed and how.

Understanding the management of attractors and boundaries.

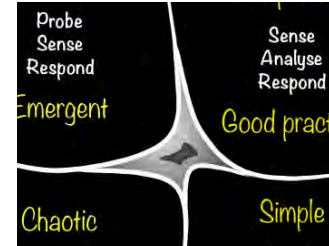
1530-1700

Decision mapping to understand the natural contours of an organisation.

Principles of managing uncertainty and the limitations of measurement.

The life cycle of management ideas, theory and practice.

DAY TWO



The Cynefin framework

0900-1030

The relation of complexity theory to other approaches to management.

How to *direct* a complex system, providing purpose & focus.

Cynefin as a sense-making framework in contrast with categorisation models.

1100-1230

Creating Cynefin using micro-narrative approaches to definition.

Other approaches to the creation of Cynefin & fractal management.

Balancing evidence against consensus, the complex domain.

1330-1500

The use of chaos for innovation & 'wisdom of crowds' based evidence.

Balancing strategic direction with engagement, the role of complication.

It may be simple, but its useful if not taken to excess: role of bureaucracy.

1530-1700

Operational roll out and use of Cynefin in different environments.

Differences between complexity thinking and systems thinking.

Understanding Cynefin in the wider context of complexity and systems.

DAY THREE



The organisation & knowledge

0900-1030

The pattern base of human decision making, its not about information.

Understanding cognitive bias and working with it using sensor networks.

Interact within organisations? Natural limits on team size and capability.

1100-1230

What do we know and how do we know it? Mapping knowledge.

The 'culture' word, understanding and mapping from different perspectives.

Distributed decision making & whole of workforce engagement.

1330-1500

Creating and maintaining social networks within the organisation.

Methods to incentivise innovative team and cross silo behaviour.

New forms of organisation to increase resilience in the face of uncertainty.

1530-1700

Large group facilitation contrasted with open space techniques.

The role of human mediated games and simulated learning through failing.

Complex facilitation techniques, enabling emergence for sustainability.

DAY FOUR



The use of narrative

0900-1030

Homo narrans, the criticality of narrative to human decision making.

The use of narrative in knowledge management & learning.

Balancing research, with knowledge disclosure & communication.

1100-1230

The use of story templates to create effective communication.

How to convey complex ideas using naturally occurring anecdotes.

The use and abuse of narrative in consultancy practice.

1330-1500

Archetypes as a means of enabling self-awareness of culture.

Situational archetypes as an approach to conflict resolution.

The use of archetypes to share failure and learning without blame.

1530-1700

Principles underlying SenseMaker® and its use in research and M&E.

Designing and implementing micro-narrative projects using SenseMaker®

New approaches to advocacy & targeting using micro-narratives.