



If There's Time. Why risk always comes last

The Meeting

The numbers came first. They always do.

- Revenue.
- Cost.
- Variance.
- Forecast.

Doctour Karinne walked the room through each line. Carefully. Methodically. There were questions. Clarifications. Occasional challenges. Pore Amyas leaned forward.

“That doesn't look right,” she said, pointing to a figure. Doctour Karinne nodded.

“You're right,” she replied. “We've adjusted it here.”

They talked it through. In detail. Dame Anwen watched quietly. Then glanced at the clock.

The Agenda

The structure was familiar. Performance first. Then outlook. Then, towards the end risk.

If there's time.

The Shift

As the meeting moved on, something changed. The conversation softened. Fewer questions. More agreement. More glances at the clock. Doctour Karinne turned the page.

“Finally,” she said, “the key risks.”

There was a pause. Not of curiosity. But of awareness.

The Compression

The risks were summarised. Briefly. Each one reduced to a sentence. A score. A colour. Pore Amyas nodded.

“Anything new?” she asked.

“Nothing significant,” said Doctour Karinne.

Anwen looked up.

“Or nothing we've had time to explore?” she asked.

The Difference

There is a difference between performance and risk. Performance describes what has happened. Risk describes what might. One feels certain. The other does not.

One can be measured. The other needs to be understood.

And when time is limited, certainty usually wins.

The Wyrd Observation

Pore Amyas leaned back.

“We review performance in detail,” she said. “And uncertainty briefly.”

Doctour Karinne smiled.

“That’s because performance is easier,” she said.

Dame Anwen shook her head slightly.

“No,” she said. “It’s because we treat it as more important.”

What Attention Reveals

Attention is not neutral. It tells people what matters.

What we spend time on, we signal as important.

What we rush, we signal as secondary.

And over time, that signal becomes culture.

The Subtle Consequence

Risk doesn’t disappear because it is briefly discussed. It just becomes less understood. Less challenged. Less connected to decisions. Until something changes.

And when it does, it rarely feels like a surprise. Only something we didn’t spend enough time with.

The Real Question

Dame Anwen closed her notebook.

“If risk always comes last,” she said, “when exactly is it shaping the decision?”

No one answered.

Conclusion

If there’s time, isn’t driving the decision. Risk is not absent from organisations. It is there. Documented. Reported. Discussed.

But often at the edge. At the end. In whatever time remains.

Which means it is not shaping the conversation. It is following it. And if risk only enters the discussion once everything else is settled, it is no longer influencing the decision. Only describing it.

If risk is discussed at the end, it is already too late.