

Can your risk model keep pace with the business?

Benchmark how effectively your organization turns connected-risk insight into faster decisions, accountable action, and measurable business value.



Risk management is not just a compliance exercise. It's a business performance discipline.

The pace and interconnectedness of change is outstripping many organizations' ability to respond. AI adoption, supplier change, market expansion, geopolitical instability, and transformation are creating dependencies across data, technology, people, operations, and external value chains that can compound exposure across the enterprise. Yet risk management often remains divided between functions, systems and periodic reporting cycles.

The challenge is not always identifying risk. Many organizations already know where individual risks sit. The harder task is deciding what matters most, securing commitment, and executing long-term action across a complex enterprise.

When evidence, ownership and priorities remain fragmented, decision speed suffers and leaders struggle to act at a pace the business requires. Strategic initiatives slow, investment is harder to justify, and opportunities pass to competitors that can make informed decisions sooner.

Connected risk turns insight into action. It is a strategic capability and competitive differentiator. It helps leaders prioritise investment, accelerate innovation, protect performance, and demonstrate why a decision will create measurable value.

The organizations that outperform will not necessarily identify more risks. They will act on the right risks faster.

What this framework reveals

- ▶ Where disconnected risk activity is slowing decisions and strategic execution
- ▶ Whether insight is translated into funded, accountable action
- ▶ Whether risk investment is producing measurable business outcomes

Explore the forces reshaping enterprise risk in the BSI Connected Risk Outlook Report 2026.

[Read here](#)

How to use this framework

- ▶ **Score:** Complete the 12 capability questions individually using the 1–5 maturity scale.
- ▶ **Compare:** Average the scores in each section to create six capability results; record the leadership score ranges to expose disagreement.
- ▶ **Discuss:** Use the prompts to explore what sits behind low scores or disagreement.
- ▶ **Prioritise:** Select the gaps with the greatest impact on performance, growth or strategic execution.
- ▶ **Act:** Use the roadmap to turn those priorities into owned, measurable action.

Do not agree answers in advance. Differences may reveal disconnected evidence, competing priorities or unclear ownership that an average score would conceal.

This is an indicative diagnostic to support discussion and priority-setting, not a formal audit or certification.

The three foundations of connected risk

People turn insight into action. Evidence reveals what could affect performance. Governance protects and accelerates the outcome.



People

Can leaders align, challenge and execute?

Skills, ownership, cross-functional collaboration, decision authority and capacity to act.



Evidence

Can leaders connect what matters in time to act?

Operational evidence, third-party information, trusted data, traceable decisions and emerging external signals.



Governance

Does it protect and accelerate outcomes?

Decision rights, boundaries, and escalation routes that reduce ambiguity, support faster action, and provide evidence leaders can stand behind.



The six capabilities that determine whether risk enables or restricts the business

1 Can leaders align people around action?

People closest to material risks must know what to look for, when to escalate, and who can make the final decision. Leaders must reconcile competing priorities and mobilise action across functions.

- ▶ **Readiness indicator:** When risk crosses functions, one leader owns the outcome and can show how different perspectives were resolved.

2 Can leaders trace where the impact and value will appear next?

Leaders must trace how a change in one area could affect delivery, cost, compliance, technology, and growth – and where legal, regulatory, customer or reputational consequences could surface next.

- ▶ **Readiness indicator:** You can identify the second- and third-order consequences before they affect performance or close off opportunity.

3 Can decision-makers connect reliable evidence in time to act?

Leaders must be able to access, connect, and translate risk data into timely decisions, to protect the business without allowing fragmented evidence to delay opportunity.

- ▶ **Readiness indicator:** You can access the evidence needed for a major risk decision without several days of manual information gathering or reconciliation.

4 Does technology improve outcomes, not simply process more information?

AI can accelerate insight, productivity and decisions. Leaders need reliable cross-functional data, clear accountability, and traceable human judgement where it materially affects the outcome.

- ▶ **Readiness indicator:** You can demonstrate how AI improves a measurable outcome, trace the evidence behind its decisions and identify where human intervention is required.

5 Does governance protect and accelerate strategic action?

Governance must shape important decisions while choices are still open. Effective governance removes ambiguity, not ambition, by defining the evidence, boundaries, and authority required to act.

► **Readiness indicator:** Your governance keeps pace with business change and helps teams act sooner rather than repeat reviews.

6 Do risk insights translate into execution and measurable value?

Insight could change priorities, investment, sourcing and transformation, and result in funded, owned action across the organization.

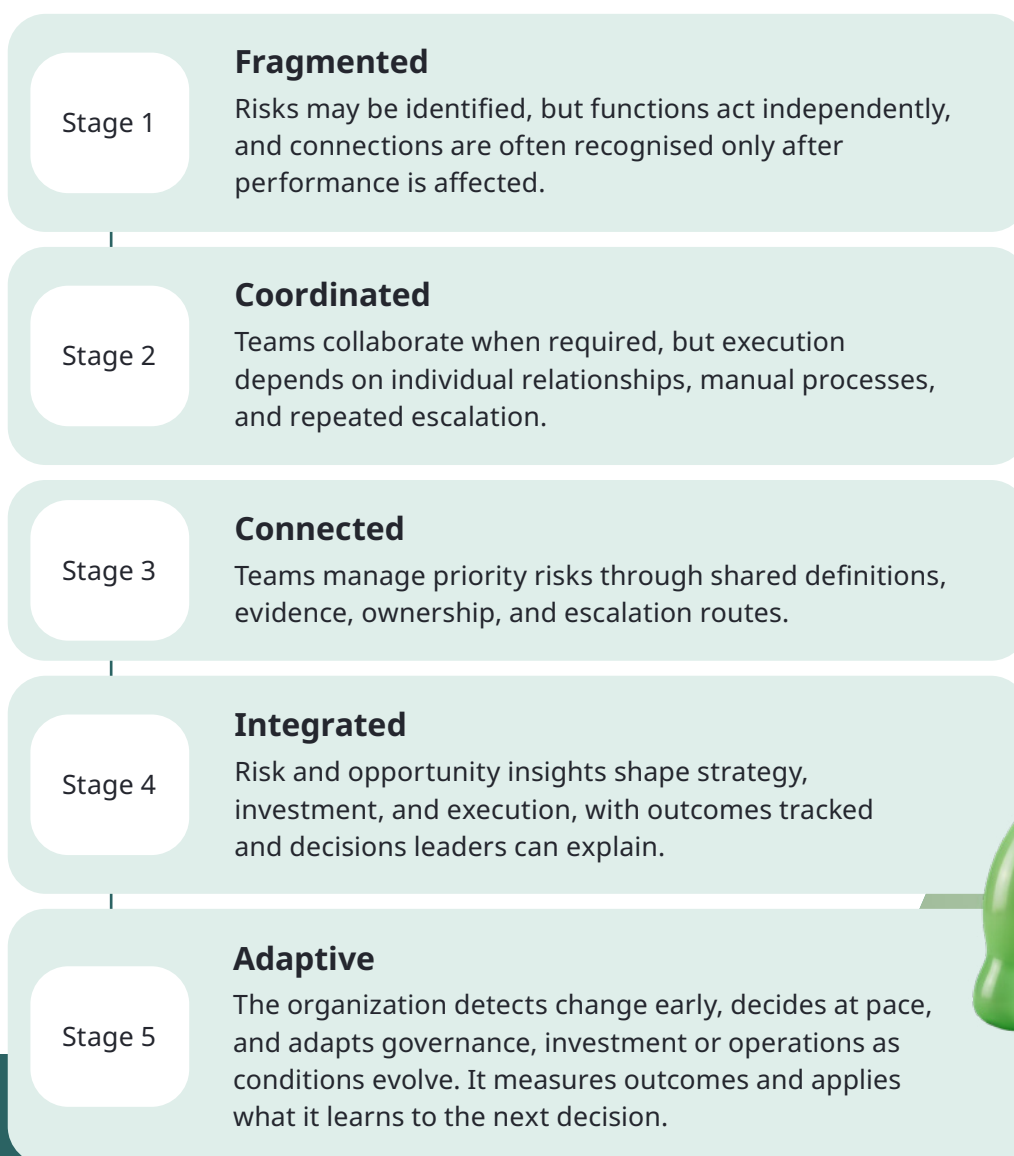
► **Readiness indicator:** You can show where connected-risk insight changed a decision and improved a measurable business outcome.

The greatest opportunities to accelerate decisions – and the greatest leadership exposure – often emerge where functions intersect.



Shifting from fragmented risk activity to adaptive performance

The model describes five ways connected-risk capability may operate, from fragmented functional approaches towards more adaptive decision-making. Maturity can vary by capability, and the objective is not necessarily to reach Stage 5 everywhere. The appropriate level should reflect the organization's business model, exposure and ambitions.



A capability that is sufficient for today's business may not be sufficient for tomorrow's growth plan.



Benchmarking assessment

Score current practice and observable outcomes, not indented policy.
Rate each question from 1–5 and average each pair for an indicative capability score. Record the range of leadership responses alongside it.

1

Reactive or not
established

2

Emerging or
inconsistent

3

Established in
priority areas

4

Embedded across
the organization

5

Adaptive, measured
and continuously
improved

People and leadership accountability

- ▶ How consistently do leaders agree who owns the outcome when risk crosses functions?
- ▶ How effectively can the accountable leader reconcile competing views, explain the trade-offs, and mobilise action?

Connected consequences

- ▶ How consistently does leadership trace second- and third-order consequences across and beyond the enterprise before committing to action?
- ▶ How effectively are critical dependencies tested against potential customer, regulatory, reputational, and commercial outcomes?

Decision-ready evidence

- ▶ How quickly can leaders access and connect the evidence needed for a time-critical decision?
- ▶ How consistently do functions make decisions from shared evidence rather than separate versions of the truth?

Technology and accountability

- ▶ How effectively does technology improve decision speed, productivity or measurable business outcomes?
- ▶ How consistently can a named leader trace and explain the evidence, assumptions, and human oversight behind an automated decision – and its commercial impact?

Governance and action

- ▶ How consistently do governance and risk assumptions keep pace with changes in the business, markets, technology, and value chain?
- ▶ How effectively does governance support timely decisions while strategic choices remain open?

Execution and business value

- ▶ How consistently are risk insights translated into funded, owned action across the organization?
- ▶ How effectively can leaders demonstrate that resulting action improved performance, protected value or delivered measurable return?

Interpreting the results

Look at three things:

Capability gap:

Which low-scoring capability has the greatest effect on performance or growth?

Perception gap:

Where do leaders score the same capability differently, and why?

Execution gap:

Where is the risk understood but not converted into investment, ownership or measurable action?

Where leaders disagree may matter more than the average

An average can conceal different evidence, priorities or expectations. Do not average away disagreement; identify what each leader sees differently and what performance consequence that gap creates.

Don't only ask:
"What did we score?"
Ask: **"What is this gap preventing us from achieving?"**



How to turn results into a roadmap

Use three steps to expose decision gaps, remove friction, and keep governance aligned with the business.

Are you managing today's business with yesterday's risk model?

If your organization has experienced a major disruption, acquired businesses, entered new markets, introduced AI, changed critical suppliers, or changed its operating model, test whether your assumptions, evidence and ownership still reflect reality.

Start

Prioritise the outcomes and execution gaps

- ✓ Identify the decisions or initiatives with the greatest value at stake
- ✓ Use the readiness profile to locate capability and perception gaps
- ✓ Define the business outcome, investment case and measures of success
- ✓ Name the executive accountable for mobilising action

Connect

Remove cross-functional decision friction

- ✓ Bring the relevant functions, evidence, and human judgement into one traceable decision process
- ✓ Agree ownership, decision rights and escalation routes
- ✓ Translate risk insight into investment and operational priorities
- ✓ Remove duplicated reviews that slow delivery without improving the decision

Adapt

Measure, learn and accelerate

- ✓ Track decision speed, delivery, value created, and material loss avoided
- ✓ Test whether assumptions still reflect markets, technology, and external conditions
- ✓ Adapt governance or operations when evidence changes
- ✓ Apply what worked – and what did not – to the next strategic decision

Turn connected-risk insight into executive action



Accountability follows the consequences, not the organizational chart. Use these questions as a leadership group to challenge priorities, expose competing assumptions and connect risk investment to business performance.

- 1 Which strategic initiative could move faster if leaders connected risk insight earlier?
- 2 Where is fragmented evidence or ownership preventing effective execution?
- 3 Where do leaders hold materially different views of readiness, value or acceptable trade-offs?
- 4 Where could a competitor act faster or perform better because its risk capability supports stronger decisions?
- 5 Can leaders trace the evidence, assumptions, and human oversight behind AI-enabled decisions – and demonstrate that those decisions improve measurable outcomes?
- 6 If a major decision failed, could we demonstrate what was known, how conflicting views were resolved, and why we acted?

The future belongs to organizations that can connect risk information, connect decision-makers, and connect action.



Turn connected risk into business performance

Connected risk should do more than demonstrate that governance is working. It should help organizations innovate faster, improve productivity, protect brand value, and make stronger strategic decisions.

This is where BSI brings a different perspective. By working across standards, assurance, management systems, and business improvement, BSI connects what organizations expect to happen with what happens in practice.

We help leaders turn fragmented risk activity into coordinated execution: strengthening confidence to scale AI, enter markets, transform supply chains, and act on opportunity. This gives organizations a clearer basis for investment, faster decisions, and measurable outcomes – supported by evidence that boards, investors, customers and regulators can trust.

Continue exploring: read the BSI Connected Risk Outlook 2026 or apply this framework with BSI to turn insight into action.

Start the conversation with BSI



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