

Executive Governance Diagnostic

An Operational Governance Self-Assessment for CEOs, CIOs and Executive Leadership

Every organisation believes it has sound governance. Most have governance processes. Many are investing heavily in Artificial Intelligence.

The question is no longer whether AI is being used.

Can you demonstrate where AI is materially influencing operational and strategic decisions throughout your organisation?

For many executive teams, the honest answer is uncertain.

Today's AI is no longer confined to a single application or technology platform. It is embedded within business software, customer interactions, procurement, software development, finance, risk management, forecasting, human resources and executive reporting. In many organisations, AI has become an invisible participant in decision-making.

This diagnostic has been developed to assess executive awareness, not technical capability. It asks a simple governance question:

Do you understand the extent to which AI is contributing to, influencing or shaping the decisions for which you remain accountable?

This Executive Diagnostic assesses your organisation's ability to govern:

- AI's operational decision footprint
- Human authority and executive accountability
- Approved and unapproved ('shadow') AI use
- Data, model and prompt provenance
- Transparency and reasoning traceability
- Bias, error detection and model performance drift
- Incident escalation and executive oversight
- Board reporting and governance assurance

The question every Board will eventually ask

Demonstrate where AI influenced this decision, how it influenced the outcome, who challenged its recommendations, and who ensured accountability?

If that question cannot be answered confidently today, then your organisation has an AI governance gap—not necessarily because AI is uncontrolled, but because its influence has not yet been made sufficiently visible to those responsible for governing it.

Executive AI Governance Checklist

0 = No visibility | 1 = Partial visibility | 2 = Clear and evidenced

Visibility	Score
• We know every material decision process influenced by AI.	—
• We know which AI products and models are in operational use.	—
• We know where shadow AI exists.	—
• We know which business units use AI.	—
Governance	
• Human accountability is defined.	—
• AI outputs can be challenged.	—
• Governance ownership is explicit.	—
• Executive oversight exists.	—
Transparency	
• AI-generated information is identifiable.	—
• Source data is understood.	—
• Reasoning can be reconstructed.	—
• Confidence and limitations are visible.	—
Risk	
• Bias is monitored.	—
• Model drift is monitored.	—
• Incident escalation exists.	—
• Vendors are governed.	—
Executive Assurance	
• The CEO could confidentially explain AI influence to the Board.	—
• The Board understands AI exposure.	—
• AI aligns with risk appetite.	—
• AI governance is reviewed regularly.	—

The critical question is not: Do we use AI?

It is: Do we know where AI is influencing decisions before those decisions become ours?