

[case study] Diversity of Thought Scorecard™



The Diversity of Thought Scorecard solves the problem of making visible the invisible elements that underlie wide-ranging diversity of thought.

This case study describes how the Diversity of Thought (DOT) Scorecard has been used with an established governance board. To ensure anonymity of both individual participants and organisational users, elements of multiple organisational groups have been combined and all names have been changed.

Background

A small board of directors was overseeing and operating an established privately-owned business serving domestic and international markets. The founder-dominated board is comprised of executive directors with the exception of a single independent director. The newly appointed executive chair was concerned that the existing board is overwhelmingly dominated by individuals that share a similar mindset and worldview, perhaps further exacerbated by their long tenure on the board.

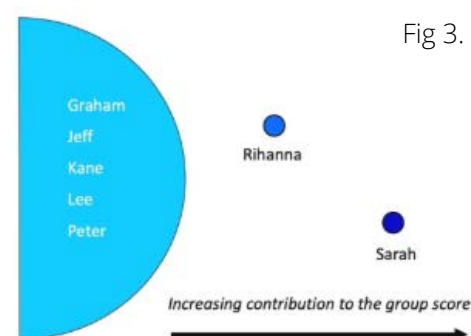
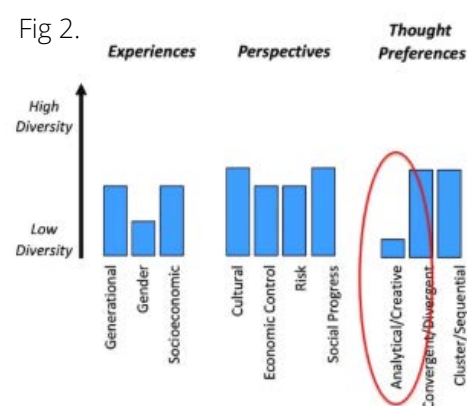
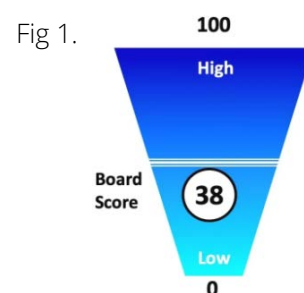
DOT Scorecard Findings

The overall group diversity of thought score for the board was low, well below the average score of 50/100 (refer Fig 1). This indicates that they had a lower level of wide-ranging diversity of thought and limited potential capability compared to other organisational groups to address complex problems. So the case for "staleness" appears to have some empirical merit.

An analysis of the component sub-scores (refer Fig 2) showed almost unanimous preference for analytical instead of creative problem solving. This may limit their capacity for developing out-of-the-box solutions to complex problems. Again another risk factor for some staleness.

The breakdown of the individual contribution to the group diversity of thought score (refer Fig 3) showed that the chair (Sarah), followed by the sole independent director (Rihanna) were the most likely diverse thinkers compared to the rest of the board. Sarah and Rihanna are both female, however their higher contribution to diversity of thought was not due to their gender but instead due to a combination of differences in their experiences, perspectives and thought preferences.

Also its important to note that Sarah and Rihanna might have greater potential for diverse thought on this particular board but they may not be inherently more diverse than anyone else. It all depends on context. In fact Sarah was part of another organization that used the DOT Scorecard where she was more similar to that board's members and therefore did not have special potential for diverse thinking. Context is key.



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Case Study Outcomes

1. The chair's perception of the board was confirmed with actual data:

The board is indeed 'stale' due to lower potential for diverse thinking and consequent risk of not performing (perform well) or creatively (no need for ageist assumptions based on external appearances).

2. One executive director was replaced with two independent directors. This increased the opportunity to bring different perspectives into the board's decision-making.

3. When new board members were considered, the DOT Scorecard was used at the shortlisting stage of the recruitment process to simulate the impact that new board members will have on the board's capacity for wide ranging diversity of thought.

4. The new board undertook a training session to learn procedures and techniques to maximize their realisation of their diversity of thought.

The reformulated board had a much higher group diversity of thought score (refer Fig 4). Therefore the board could evidence a far greater potential for addressing complex problems. You can only manage what you can measure.



Let's talk about how your business could benefit from the Diversity of Thought Scorecard™...

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