

FLOW SYSTEM

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Complexity Thinking

Workbook: Cynefin Framework



getflowtrained.com/playbook/Cynefin/

The Cynefin Framework

Cynefin

Reflecting on the point that different methods, techniques, and tools are used for each of the domains in the Cynefin framework. Definitions for each domain is provided in Figure 2.3.2.

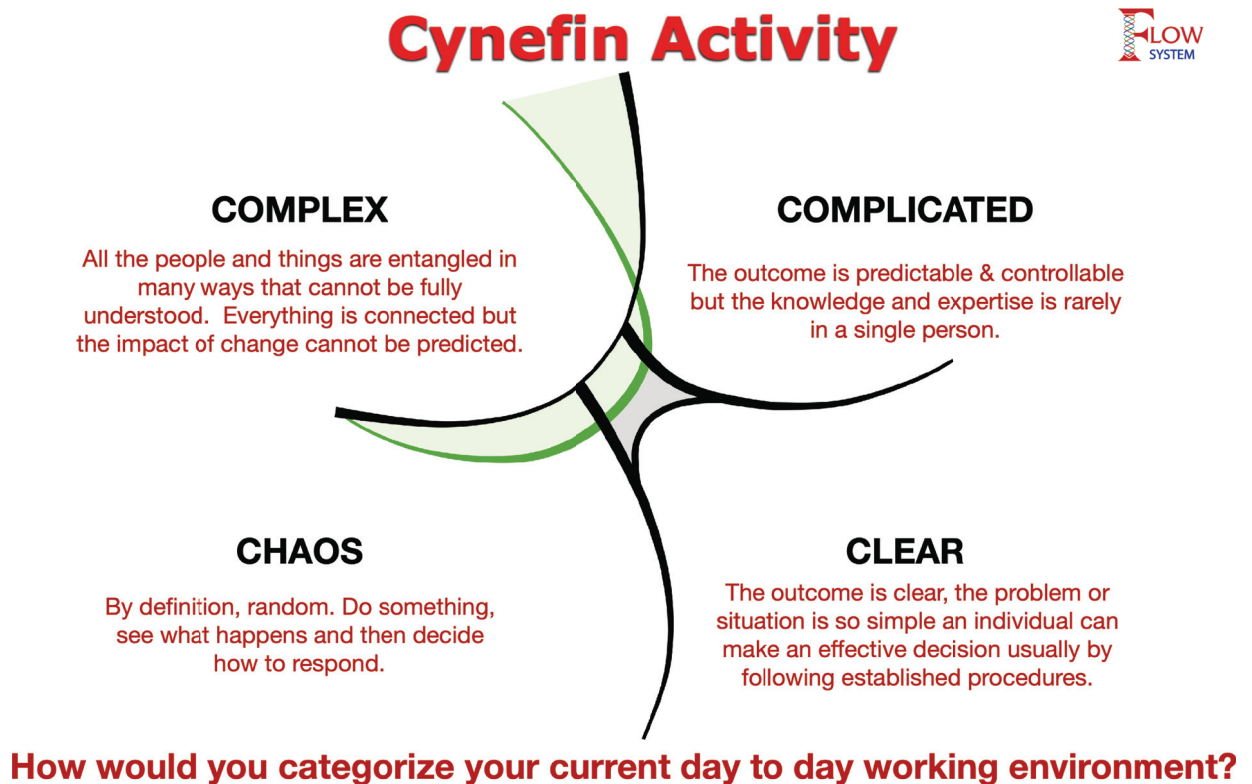


FIGURE 2.3.2: Cynefin Activity

Given the definitions provided in Figure 2.3.2, consider your current environment or workplace in terms of the Cynefin framework. Where do the various problems you are working on belong in the Cynefin framework (clear, complicated, complex, chaos)? Where do the methods, techniques, and tools you typically use to address these problems belong in the Cynefin framework?

While most methods, techniques, and tools were designed to resolve a specific problem or issue, there are limitations. Not all methods, techniques, or tools function well in every domain; some are specifically designed for one type of problem or domain. Identify the different methods, techniques, and tools in Table 2.3.1 and plot them in the appropriate domain of the Cynefin framework shown in Figure 2.3.3.

Sensemaking	Complex Facilitation	Narratives
Agile	Scrum	Operational Excellence
Project Management	Six Sigma	Toyota Production System
Storytelling	5-Why Root Cause	Lean Thinking
Novel Practices	Current Best Practices	Hope
Wishful Thinking	Established Procedures	Safe to Fail Experiments

TABLE 2.3.1: Methods, Techniques, Tools

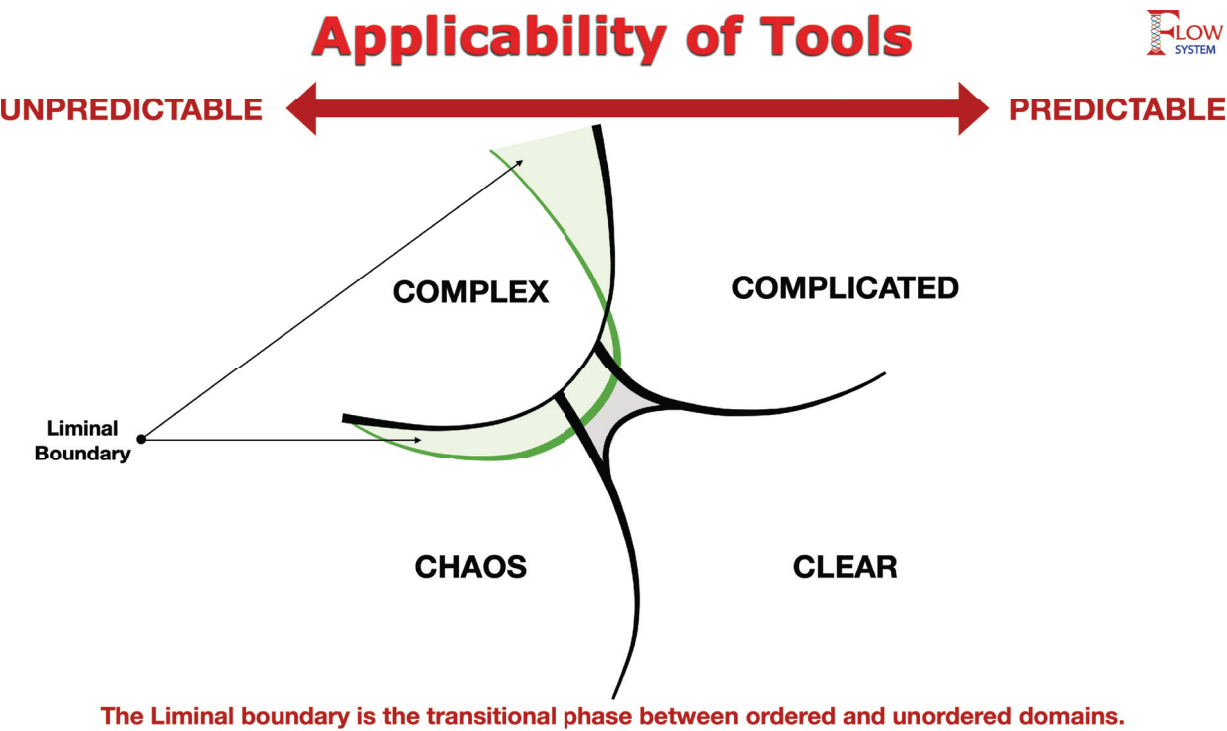


FIGURE 2.3.3: Activity – Applicability of Tools

Bounded Applicability



The basic concept of bounded applicability simply states that any method or tool has limits and they are context specific. You know you are reaching those limits as the cost/benefit ratio of handling new issues becomes negative.

At this point you should not carry on doing the established approach more furiously or energetically, but instead realize that you are approaching a boundary.

You may not understand the work, or you may be using the wrong tools?

FIGURE 2.3.4: Bounded Applicability

This concept that methods, techniques, and tools have limitations is highlighted by the concept of bounded applicability. Not all methods work well in every domain for every type of problem. Methods, techniques, and tools are contextually derived and functional for specific domains and problem types. It is essential to assure that the method, technique, or tool that you intend to use is appropriate for the context and type of problem.

Complete the following items in the worksheet table to become more familiar with the Cynefin framework.

CYNEFIN FRAMEWORK	
What are the main differences between the clear, complicated, complex, and chaotic domains?	
What is your definition of aporia and provide an example from experience?	

CYNEFIN FRAMEWORK (CONT.)

Describe a problem that you might experience in the clear domain and identify what techniques/tools/methods could be used to manage the problem.

Describe a problem that you might experience in the complicated domain and identify what techniques/tools/methods could be used to manage the problem.

Describe a problem that you experienced in the complex domain and identify what techniques/tools/methods were used to manage the problem.

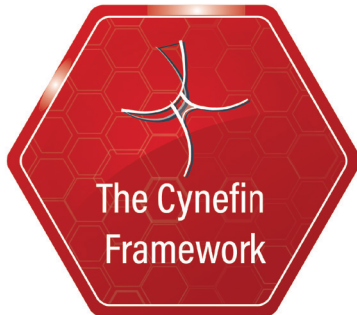
Describe a problem that you might experience in the chaotic domain and identify what techniques/tools/methods could be used to manage the problem.

Describe the liminal boundaries and how you might move from one domain to the next.

Connect the Three Helixes:

Flow can only be achieved when the three helixes are interconnected. To identify how this could occur, the next exercise requires the reader to identify examples of different methods from each of the other two helixes (distributed leadership, team science) that might work well with, or support, the Cynefin framework. Knowledge of all three helixes will be required to make these connections.

COMPLEXITY THINKING



DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP



TEAM SCIENCE



CONNECT THE HELIXES

Identify a scenario or problem that would benefit from using the Cynefin framework.

Identify three methods from distributed leadership that could work with the Cynefin framework and give a brief description about how they complement one another.

DL Method 1:

CONNECT THE HELIXES	
DL Method 2:	
DL Method 3:	
Identify three methods from the team science helix that could work with the Cynefin framework and give a brief description about how they complement one another.	
TS Method 1:	
TS Method 2:	
TS Method 3:	
Provide a description explaining which methods from each of the three helixes (with the Cynefin framework being the CT method) work best for the scenario/problem identified.	