



A learning, facilitation, and reflective-practice resource for better judgment

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ABOUT THIS DECK

The **Reasoning Repertoire Deck** is a practical learning, facilitation, and reflective-practice resource for nonprofit leaders, boards, committees, and governance educators.

It helps users recognise the full repertoire of reasoning styles needed for different issues, diagnose distorted reasoning and judgment pressures, and strengthen the enabling capacities that support better deliberation.

The deck can be used for personal development, board and committee training, agenda and board-paper review, live facilitation, reasoning spreads, and post-decision learning.

Its purpose is to help groups reason more deliberately, correctively, and accountably.

REASONING STYLE REPERTOIRES

This deck features 21 valid reasoning styles divided into two main sets:

Minimum working repertoire

Linear · Recursive · Inductive · Abductive · Probabilistic · Proportional · Systems · Ethical · Strategic

Extended / context-specific repertoire

Deductive · Analogical · Counterfactual · Cyclical · Nonlinear · Dialectical · Narrative · Categorical · Ecological · Topological · Morphological · Fuzzy

This version of the deck also contains the Lucid Empathy card, for use in combination with any of the valid reasoning styles whenever human consequences are involved, and a set of seven enabling capacities, to help boards use reasoning styles well under pressure.

REASONING-STYLE CLUSTERS

The 21 valid reasoning styles are grouped within five main clusters:



Sequence, Process, and Feedback Cluster



Evidence, Explanation, and Uncertainty Cluster



Rules, Categories, and Boundaries Cluster



Systems, Context, Tension, and Relationship Cluster



Purpose, Meaning, Strategy, Design, and Transformation Cluster

THE FULL REPERTOIRE OF 21 VALID REASONING STYLES



Valid Reasoning Style Primary Functions

Sequence, Process, and Feedback Cluster	
Linear reasoning*	Thinks through ordered steps, procedural pathways, implementation sequences, and cause-and-effect progressions.
Recursive reasoning*	Revisits earlier judgments, feeding outcomes, feedback, or learning back into further reasoning.
Cyclical reasoning	Recognises recurrent patterns, rhythms, cycles, renewal, repetition, and periodic review.
Evidence, Explanation, and Uncertainty Cluster	
Inductive reasoning*	Draws patterns, generalisations, or lessons from evidence.
Abductive reasoning*	Identifies the most plausible explanation from available evidence.
Probabilistic reasoning*	Estimates likelihood, risk, confidence, and uncertainty under incomplete knowledge.
Counterfactual reasoning	Explores what might have happened, or could happen, under different conditions.
Nonlinear reasoning	Notices thresholds, tipping points, escalation, emergence, and disproportionate effects.
Rules, Categories, and Boundaries Cluster	
Proportional reasoning*	Notices thresholds, tipping points, escalation, emergence, and disproportionate effects.
Deductive reasoning	Applies general rules, principles, or premises to reach conclusions about particular cases.
Categorical reasoning	Identifies what kind of thing is under consideration and what category applies.
Fuzzy reasoning	Works with degrees, blurred boundaries, partial membership, and non-binary cases.
Systems, Context, Tension, and Relationship Cluster	
Systems reasoning*	Examines interdependence, feedback, interaction, and behaviour of the whole.
Analogical reasoning	Compares cases or patterns, testing relevant similarities and differences.
Dialectical reasoning	Works through tension, opposition, contradiction, and competing claims or values.
Ecological reasoning	Attends to fit within context, environment, relationships, and lived conditions.
Topological reasoning	Examines position, boundary, proximity, access, enclosure, and centre-periphery relations.
Purpose, Meaning, Strategy, Design, and Transformation Cluster	
Strategic reasoning*	Clarifies direction, positioning, priorities, choices, trade-offs, and future action.
Ethical reasoning*	Judges duties, responsibilities, consequences, dignity, fairness, legitimacy, and trust.
Narrative reasoning	Interprets meaning, identity, lived experience, turning points, and storylines over time.
Morphological reasoning	Explores alternative forms, configurations, designs, and possible combinations.

* One of nine valid reasoning styles in the Minimum Working Set. Note that each cluster is represented.

LINEAR REASONING



Definition

Organises action through sequence, steps, order, responsibility, timing, and progression.

Core governance question

What needs to happen, in what order, and by whom?

Use when

The issue involves implementation, process, escalation, planning, procedure, or review pathways.

Helps notice

Sequence · steps · timing · dependencies · responsibility · milestones

Board prompt

What must happen first, next, later, and under whose authority?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when change is nonlinear, emergent, recursive, or ambiguous.

Watch for drift

Proceduralism · illusion of linearity · false simplicity

Pair with

Systems · Recursive · Probabilistic · Ethical · Proportional

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Roadmap · Sequence chain · Critical path

Practice cue

Create a sequence map, then add dependencies, risks, and review points.

RECURSIVE REASONING



Definition

Uses feedback from action, consequence, review, or learning to revise future judgment.

Core governance question

How should what we learn change what we do next?

Use when

The issue involves review, adaptation, implementation feedback, policy revision, or organisational learning.

Helps notice

Feedback · learning loops · revision · iteration · consequences · adaptation

Board prompt

How should what we learned from the last cycle change this decision?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when reflection delays testing, decision, or necessary action.

Watch for drift

Circular self-confirmation · learning theatre · endless review · no changed practice

Pair with

Inductive · Counterfactual · Linear · Ethical · Systems

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Learning loop · Iteration cycle · Review trigger

Practice cue

Name one lesson, one assumption to revise, and one practice to change.

CYCLICAL REASONING



Definition

Understands issues through recurrence, rhythm, phase, seasonality, and repeated patterns.

Core governance question

What recurring pattern or phase is shaping this issue?

Use when

The issue involves annual cycles, recurring pressures, board renewal, fundraising, reporting, or repeated problems.

Helps notice

Recurrence · rhythm · phase · seasonality · repetition · preparation

Board prompt

Have we seen this before, and what should change this cycle?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when disruption, intervention, or irreversible change is required.

Watch for drift

Fatalism · ritualism · complacency · normalised repetition

Pair with

Recursive · Systems · Strategic · Ethical · Inductive

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Cycle wheel · Seasonal rhythm · Recurrence loop

Practice cue

Map the cycle, then identify one pressure point and one earlier intervention.

INDUCTIVE REASONING



Definition

Moves from observations, examples, cases, or data toward broader patterns and generalisations.

Core governance question

What pattern is emerging, and how strong is the evidence?

Use when

The issue involves trends, complaints, dashboard data, evaluation findings, incidents, or repeated signals.

Helps notice

Patterns · trends · samples · evidence · repetition · contrary cases

Board prompt

Is this an isolated case, emerging pattern, or established trend?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when weak, narrow, or anecdotal evidence becomes pattern.

Watch for drift

Hasty generalisation · anecdotal reasoning · cherry-picking

Pair with

Abductive · Probabilistic · Counterfactual · Systems · Ethical

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Evidence ladder · Pattern map · Sample-to-trend

Practice cue

Classify evidence as anecdote, case, pattern, trend, or causal claim.

ABDUCTIVE REASONING



Definition

Generates, compares, and tests plausible explanations for what may be happening.

Core governance question

What best explains this, and what else could explain it?

Use when

The issue involves diagnosis, anomalies, complaints, unexplained change, risk signals, or implementation failure.

Helps notice

Hypotheses · explanations · diagnosis · fit · alternatives · inquiry

Board prompt

Are we testing explanations, or protecting the first plausible one?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when plausible explanations are accepted without testing alternatives.

Watch for drift

Premature diagnosis · explaining away · blame reasoning

Pair with

Inductive · Probabilistic · Counterfactual · Systems · Ethical

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Diagnostic tree · Hypothesis set · Best-fit explanation

Practice cue

Generate three explanations, then test evidence for and against each.

PROBABILISTIC REASONING



Definition

Assesses likelihood, uncertainty, confidence, risk, and possible variation across scenarios.

Core governance question

How likely is this, and how confident should we be?

Use when

The issue involves risk, forecasts, incomplete evidence, assumptions, or uncertain outcomes.

Helps notice

Likelihood · uncertainty · confidence · assumptions · scenarios · review triggers

Board prompt

Are we confusing severity, likelihood, and confidence?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when uncertainty is quantified without evidence, or moral judgment

Watch for drift

False precision · certainty inflation · risk theatre · unjustified reassurance

Pair with

Systems · Counterfactual · Ethical · Proportional · Strategic

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Confidence range · Scenario tree · Risk matrix

Practice cue

Name the key assumptions, rate confidence, and set one review trigger.

COUNTERFACTUAL REASONING



Definition

Tests judgment by asking what might have happened under different conditions or choices.

Core governance question

What might have happened if conditions or choices had differed?

Use when

The issue involves evaluation, after-action review, causal learning, missed options, or alternative pathways.

Helps notice

Alternatives · causality · missed options · assumptions · hindsight · learning

Board prompt

What would we expect to see if a different explanation were true?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when alternatives become speculative hindsight, blame, or fantasy.

Watch for drift

Speculative hindsight · blame revisionism · impossible certainty

Pair with

Inductive · Abductive · Probabilistic · Systems · Ethical

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Branching path · Alternative timeline · Difference-maker test

Practice cue

Compare what happened with one plausible alternative pathway and its evidence.

NONLINEAR REASONING



Definition

Recognises thresholds, acceleration, cascades, delays, and disproportionate effects.

Core governance question

Where might change become sudden, delayed, or disproportionate?

Use when

The issue involves crisis, reputation, demand surge, financial fragility, burnout, trust, or tipping points.

Helps notice

Thresholds · cascades · acceleration · delays · compounding · disproportion

Board prompt

What small factor may become disproportionately important?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when tipping-point claims obscure sequence or implementation.

Watch for drift

Catastrophising · crisis inflation · tipping-point exaggeration · speculative escalation

Pair with

Probabilistic · Proportional · Systems · Inductive · Ethical

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Tipping point · Cascade · Threshold curve

Practice cue

Identify the warning signal, threshold, evidence, and proportionate response.

PROPORTIONAL REASONING



Definition

Calibrates response to significance, risk, harm, burden, benefit, evidence, and consequence.

Core governance question

Is our response proportionate to the seriousness of the matter?

Use when

The issue involves risk, harm, sanctions, resource allocation, evidence thresholds, or agenda time.

Helps notice

Scale · burden · seriousness · benefit · harm · evidence · response

Board prompt

Are we overreacting, underreacting, or matching response to significance?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when balance language obscures duties, rights, or thresholds.

Watch for drift

False equivalence · minimisation · overreaction · performative balance

Pair with

Ethical · Probabilistic · Systems · Narrative · Strategic

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Balance scale · Ratio · Threshold of seriousness

Practice cue

Compare seriousness, evidence, burden, benefit, and response before deciding.

DEDUCTIVE REASONING



Definition

Applies rules, principles, duties, policies, or premises to reach conclusions that follow.

Core governance question

What follows if this rule, duty, or premise applies?

Use when

The issue involves policy, compliance, eligibility, delegation, duties, procedure, or constitutional requirements.

Helps notice

Rules · duties · premises · implications · applicability · discretion

Board prompt

What must be true for this rule or duty to apply?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when rules are applied despite ambiguous facts or context.

Watch for drift

Rigid rule application · formalism · compliance reductionism

Pair with

Categorical · Ethical · Proportional · Fuzzy · Linear

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Rule tree · Syllogism · If-then chain

Practice cue

Check the rule, definition, applicability, implication, and remaining discretion.

CATEGORICAL REASONING



Definition

Clarifies types, definitions, distinctions, thresholds, standards, and issue categories.

Core governance question

What kind of issue is this, and what follows from that classification?

Use when

The issue involves thresholds, policy categories, governance boundaries, complaints, risks, or mixed cases.

Helps notice

Types · definitions · thresholds · distinctions · standards · boundaries

Board prompt

Are we classifying this issue in a way that clarifies responsibility?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when boundaries are fuzzy, overlapping, transitional, or contested.

Watch for drift

Category error · rigid classification · premature closure

Pair with

Deductive · Fuzzy · Ethical · Systems · Topological

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Classification tree · Threshold test · Boundary box

Practice cue

Name the category, threshold, consequence, and what the classification may hide.

FUZZY REASONING



Definition

Handles degrees, gradations, partial fit, mixed cases, and ambiguous thresholds.

Core governance question

To what extent is this the case, and where should we set the threshold?

Use when

The issue involves eligibility, safeguarding, risk escalation, quality, complaints, discretion, or borderline cases.

Helps notice

Degrees · gradations · partial fit · ambiguity · thresholds · action bands

Board prompt

Are we treating this as binary when it is a matter of degree?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when ambiguity obscures necessary categories, duties, or decisions.

Watch for drift

Binary reasoning · evasive ambiguity · overqualification · threshold avoidance

Pair with

Categorical · Ethical · Proportional · Probabilistic · Deductive

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Spectrum · Gradient · Action bands

Practice cue

Define the concern level, action threshold, proportional response, and review trigger.

SYSTEMS REASONING



Definition

Understands issues through interdependence, feedback, delay, and interaction among parts.

Core governance question

How do the parts interact within the wider system?

Use when

The issue involves dependencies, recurring patterns, indirect effects, or unintended consequences.

Helps notice

Relationships · feedback loops · delays · dependencies · flow-on effects · leverage points

Board prompt

What flow-on effects and risks might arise from this decision?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when complexity obscures agency, concrete action, or responsibility.

Watch for drift

Overcomplexification · responsibility diffusion · vague connection-talk

Pair with

Linear · Proportional · Probabilistic · Ethical · Strategic

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Feedback loop · Ecosystem · Leverage point

Practice cue

Map the system, then identify one leverage point, likely risk, and review trigger.

ANALOGICAL REASONING



Definition

Uses structured comparison with similar cases to support insight, caution, or transfer.

Core governance question

What comparable case helps us understand this, and where does it fail?

Use when

The issue involves precedent, benchmarking, cross-sector learning, innovation, policy transfer, or comparison.

Helps notice

Similarity · difference · precedent · transfer · limits · context

Board prompt

What is genuinely comparable, and what is different enough to matter?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when comparison ignores context, scale, purpose, or consequence.

Watch for drift

False analogy · copycat reasoning · precedent capture

Pair with

Categorical · Ecological · Systems · Counterfactual · Ethical

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Comparison map · Source-target bridge · Precedent lens

Practice cue

Name the comparison, then test similarities, differences, context, and limits.

DIALECTICAL REASONING



Definition

Works through tension, contradiction, polarity, opposition, and possible synthesis.

Core governance question

What tension is present, and what does each side protect?

Use when

The issue involves competing values, persistent tension, conflict, trade-offs, or false binaries.

Helps notice

Tension · polarity · contradiction · competing values · non-negotiables · synthesis

Board prompt

Is this a tension to manage, or a decision to make?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when tension displaces resolution, decision, or accountability.

Watch for drift

False dichotomy · conflict inflation · vague both/and language · deferral

Pair with

Ethical · Proportional · Systems · Strategic · Narrative

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Polarity map · Tension field · Synthesis triangle

Practice cue

Name both sides, what each protects, and what must not be compromised.

ECOLOGICAL REASONING



Definition

Assesses fit between mission, capability, stakeholders, context, dependencies, and environment.

Core governance question

Does this fit our context, or are we drifting from mission?

Use when

The issue involves adaptation, context, stakeholders, partnerships, sustainability, or environmental change.

Helps notice

Context · fit · niche · dependencies · adaptation · sustainability · mission drift

Board prompt

Are we adapting responsibly, or drifting because of pressure?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when interdependence obscures priorities, boundaries, or responsibility.

Watch for drift

Contextual fatalism · over-adaptation · passive adjustment · mission drift

Pair with

Systems · Strategic · Ethical · Narrative · Probabilistic

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Ecosystem · Fit map · Niche/context lens

Practice cue

Map mission fit, dependencies, stakeholder context, and one drift risk.

TOPOLOGICAL REASONING



Definition

Examines boundaries, access, interfaces, centres, margins, proximity, and connection.

Core governance question

Who is inside, outside, central, marginal, connected, or blocked?

Use when

The issue involves governance structure, delegation, access, inclusion, service boundaries, or accountability gaps.

Helps notice

Boundaries · access · interfaces · margins · centres · responsibility paths

Board prompt

Who is inside, who is outside, and what does that boundary do?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when elegant mapping lacks evidence, causality, or implication.

Watch for drift

Boundary fixation · centre bias · exclusion through structure · responsibility displacement

Pair with

Ethical · Systems · Fuzzy · Morphological · Ecological

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Boundary map · Interface · Centre-periphery

Practice cue

Map the boundary, access point, interface, margin, and responsibility pathway.

STRATEGIC REASONING



Definition

Considers action in relation to purpose, actors, incentives, timing, constraints, and response.

Core governance question

How should we act, given purpose, position, constraints, and likely responses?

Use when

The issue involves direction, positioning, partnership, advocacy, growth, contraction, or sustainability.

Helps notice

Actors · incentives · trade-offs · timing · positioning · responses · constraints

Board prompt

What is the strategic choice, and what are we saying no to?

Mismatch risk: misleads when advantage overrides purpose, ethics, legitimacy, or dignity.

Watch for drift

Gamesmanship · opportunism · reputation management · heroic overreach

Pair with

Probabilistic · Systems · Ethical · Narrative · Ecological

Mental models

Actor map · Scenario pathway · Game board

Practice cue

Map actors, assumptions, likely responses, trade-offs, and early-warning indicators.

ETHICAL REASONING



Definition

Evaluates decisions through duties, harms, fairness, dignity, care, legitimacy, and responsibility.

Core governance question

What ought we to do, given our duties and consequences?

Use when

The decision affects people, rights, fairness, trust, harm, legitimacy, or mission integrity.

Helps notice

Duties · harms · fairness · dignity · care · legitimacy · responsibility

Board prompt

What ought we to do, not only what can we do?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when moral conviction displaces evidence, feasibility, or consequence.

Watch for drift

Moralised reasoning · purity language · values rhetoric · moral closure

Pair with

Proportional · Probabilistic · Systems · Narrative · Strategic

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Harm-benefit balance · Duties map · Responsibility lens

Practice cue

Name affected parties, duties, harms, mitigations, and review commitments.

NARRATIVE REASONING



Definition

Understands events, organisations, and decisions through sequence, meaning, identity, and interpretation.

Core governance question

What story is shaping how this matter is understood?

Use when

The issue involves identity, trust, reputation, stakeholder experience, memory, or public meaning.

Helps notice

Meaning · identity · sequence · memory · motive · stakeholder voice

Board prompt

What story are we telling, and what evidence supports or complicates it?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when story substitutes for evidence, complexity, or alternatives.

Watch for drift

Narrative capture · mythology · anecdotal substitution · public-relations framing

Pair with

Inductive · Ethical · Counterfactual · Systems · Strategic

Mental models

Story arc · Turning point · Competing accounts

Practice cue

State the dominant story, then test it against evidence and alternative accounts.

MORPHOLOGICAL REASONING



Definition

Explores possible forms, configurations, design variables, structural options, and alternatives.

Core governance question

What alternative forms are possible, and what criteria should guide choice?

Use when

The issue involves redesign, restructuring, merger, partnership architecture, innovation, or service configuration.

Helps notice

Forms · variables · configurations · constraints · design options · criteria

Board prompt

What viable forms could this organisation, structure, program, or decision take?

Mismatch risk: Misleads when options proliferate without criteria, testing, or decision discipline.

Watch for drift

Option proliferation · novelty bias · redesign without criteria · structuralism

Pair with

Systems · Strategic · Ecological · Ethical · Topological

Mental models / useful scaffolds

Option matrix · Configuration map · Design space

Practice cue

Generate three options, then test each against purpose, constraints, and capacity.

LUCID EMPATHY



Definition

Keeps human consequence visible while preserving evidence, fairness, role clarity, and accountability.

Core question

Who is affected, what do they experience, and how do we remain disciplined?

Use when

Human consequence may be ignored, sentimentalised, politicised, over-absorbed, or abstracted away.

Helps notice

Dignity · vulnerability · lived experience · harm · trust · repair · relational consequence

Avoids three failures:

- **Absence:** people disappear
- **Capture:** one experience overwhelms judgment
- **Overreach:** care becomes paternalism or manipulation

Pair with

Use across the full repertoire wherever human consequence is involved.

Corrective prompt

How do we keep people visible without abandoning evidence, fairness, agency, and responsibility?

Practice cue

Name the affected people, evidence, duties, limits, and responsibilities.

ENABLING CAPACITIES



Description

Human and collective capacities that help boards use reasoning styles well under pressure.

Seven capacities

1. Critical-thinking skills
2. Cognitive control
3. Attentional discipline
4. Evidential discipline
5. Emotional regulation
6. Empathic judgment
7. Moral imagination

Core question

What capacities do we need to reason well in this situation?

Use when

A discussion is complex, uncertain, pressured, emotionally charged, ethically serious, or consequential.

Helps support

Attention · evidence · challenge · pause · perspective · judgment · responsibility

Board prompt

What capacity is needed now to help this reasoning stay disciplined?

Use with

All Valid Style cards · Orchestration cards · Board prompts · Review activities

Watch for

Reactivity · overload · weak evidence · poor listening · premature closure · moral overreach

Practice cue

Select one reasoning style. Then ask which enabling capacity would help it work well, and which capacity is missing.

CRITICAL-THINKING SKILLS



Definition

Tests claims, assumptions, reasons, relevance, consistency, implications, and conclusions.

Core governance question

What is being claimed, and how well is it supported?

Use when

The board needs to examine arguments, assumptions, evidence, options, or recommendations.

Helps strengthen

Claim testing · assumption checking · relevance · logic · implications · challenge

Offsets

False Precision · Certainty Inflation · Explaining Away · Narrative Capture

Board prompt

What claim are we accepting, and what reasons support it?

Pair with

Deductive · Inductive · Probabilistic · Dialectical · Ethical

Useful scaffold

Toulmin model · Ladder of inference · Assumption check

Practice cue

Separate the claim, evidence, assumption, warrant, conclusion, and decision implication.

COGNITIVE CONTROL



Definition

Maintains deliberate thought by inhibiting impulse, habit, distraction, and premature closure.

Core governance question

Are we pausing long enough to think deliberately?

Use when

Discussion is reactive, rushed, distracted, repetitive, dominated, or closing too quickly.

Helps strengthen

Pause · inhibition · switching · working memory · self-monitoring · deliberation

Offsets

Premature Diagnosis · Hasty Generalisation · Moralised Reasoning · Catastrophising

Board prompt

What automatic response should we pause before accepting?

Pair with

Probabilistic · Abductive · Dialectical · Proportional · Recursive

Useful scaffold

Pause point · Mode switch · Decision gate

Practice cue

Pause before closure and ask which reasoning mode the issue now requires.

ATTENTIONAL DISCIPLINE



Definition

Directs and sustains attention on the matter, frame, evidence, and reasoning required.

Core governance question

Are we attending to the right issue in the right way?

Use when

The board is overloaded, distracted, fatigued, agenda-driven, or pulled off frame.

Helps strengthen

Focus · salience · framing · listening · continuity · reasoning agility

Offsets

Reductionist Reasoning · Illusion of Linearity · Option Proliferation · Groupthink

Board prompt

What needs our disciplined attention before we move on?

Pair with

Systems · Categorical · Strategic · Recursive · Topological

Useful scaffold

Focus frame · Salience filter · Reset cue

Practice cue

Restate the issue, reasoning task, evidence needed, and decision point.

EVIDENTIAL DISCIPLINE



Definition

Uses evidence carefully, proportionately, and transparently, with limits and confidence stated.

Core governance question

What evidence do we have, and how strong is it?

Use when

Claims depend on data, reports, stories, forecasts, expert advice, or evaluation findings.

Helps strengthen

Evidence quality · confidence · relevance · sufficiency · limits · contrary cases

Offsets

Anecdotal Reasoning · Hasty Generalisation · False Precision · Explaining Away

Board prompt

What evidence supports, weakens, or complicates this conclusion?

Pair with

Inductive · Probabilistic · Counterfactual · Abductive · Ethical

Useful scaffold

Evidence ladder · Confidence scale · Source check

Practice cue

Classify evidence as anecdote, case, pattern, trend, finding, or causal claim.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION



Definition

Keeps emotion present enough to signal value, but governed enough to avoid capture.

Core governance question

What emotion is shaping this discussion, and is it helping judgment?

Use when

Fear, anger, loyalty, grief, urgency, enthusiasm, or moral pressure may narrow reasoning.

Helps strengthen

Pause · proportion · perspective · tone · ambiguity tolerance · recovery

Offsets

Catastrophising · Moralised Reasoning · Certainty Inflation · Narrative Capture

Board prompt

What is the emotional charge here, and what might it be narrowing?

Pair with

Proportional · Ethical · Narrative · Probabilistic · Dialectical

Useful scaffold

Pause-name-test · Heat map · Recovery cue

Practice cue

Name the emotion, then test whether it clarifies or captures judgment.

EMPATHIC JUDGMENT



Definition

Recognises lived experience, dignity, vulnerability, power, trust, and human consequence.

Core governance question

Whose experience and consequence must be understood before we decide?

Use when

People may be abstracted into metrics, roles, cases, risks, costs, or procedures.

Helps strengthen

Dignity · lived experience · trust · vulnerability · power · human consequence

Offsets

Reductionist Reasoning · Moralised Reasoning · Narrative Capture · Stakeholder Absence

Board prompt

Who is affected, and what might this decision mean in lived experience?

Pair with

Ethical · Narrative · Ecological · Systems · Proportional

Useful scaffold

Stakeholder map · Lived-experience lens · Power map

Practice cue

Name affected groups, likely experience, power asymmetries, harms, and safeguards.

MORAL IMAGINATION



Definition

Imagines responsible possibilities where duties, values, harms, relationships, and futures conflict.

Core governance question

What responsible option have we not yet imagined?

Use when

Existing options feel binary, inadequate, harmful, unfair, or morally incomplete.

Helps strengthen

Possibility · responsibility · values · alternatives · repair · future consequence

Offsets

False Dichotomy · Moralised Reasoning · Fatalistic Repetition · Boundary Fixation

Board prompt

What better option might honour more of what matters?

Pair with

Ethical · Dialectical · Morphological · Narrative · Ecological

Useful scaffold

Possibility field · Harm-repair lens · 6D moral imagination lens

Practice cue

Generate one option that better protects duty, dignity, feasibility, and consequence.