Governance

A foundational primer / review

Governance

Governance is the multifaceted framework of normative and procedural mechanisms, informed by diverse stakeholder imperatives and organizational mandates, through which decision-making authority is structured, operationalized, and continuously refined to align strategic objectives with regulatory compliance, stakeholder expectations, and sustainability goals—thus ensuring transparency, accountability, and equitable resource allocation across institutional strata.

Governance

Governance is

the people, processes, and technologies

controlling

resources

Mark Christman

christman965@outlook.com

/in/markchristman

Professional
22 Years Service Delivery & Design
Xerox, Conduent, Corning

4 Years consulting and teaching
Microsoft

US Army Veteran
Gulf War / Sergeant / Reservist

Personality
Neurodivergent
INTJ

Family
26 Years married to Mary Ann
Father to Mike and Katy
With a doggo – Spencer

Favorite Quote
To enjoy the flavour of life, take big bites! Moderation is for monks!
-Robert Heinlein

Free time
D&D Player for 40+ Years
Video Game Player
Sci-fi and fantasy

Agenda

- Introduction to Governance

- Governance Structures and Frameworks

- Build a Charter

- Documentation

- Document Control

- Parting thoughts

Governance is essential

Organizational resources **MUST** be controlled

Context

Service delivery: consumption and lifecycle.

Compliance: classification and retention.
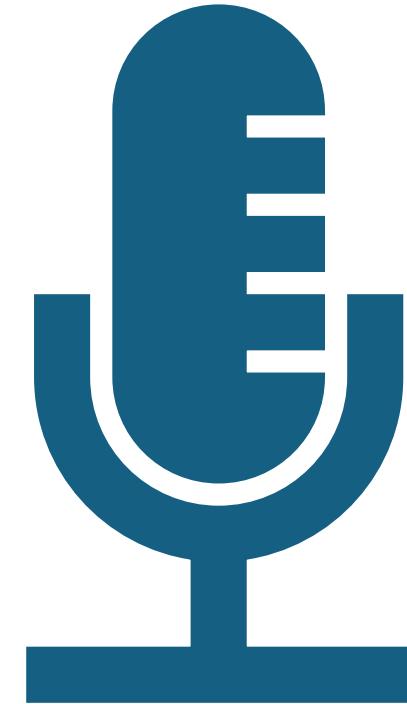
Security: Identity and access.

Finance: Budget and cash flow.
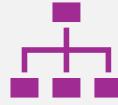
Project Management: Time, money, and quality

One size does not fit all

- Active v passive voice

- Governance content "sounds" prescriptive. It is recommendation.

- Take what helps your organization and situation. *Discard what does not help*.

- Take what fits, discard what doesn't. Alter where you can. *Use what helps.*

Complexity drivers

- Organizational size
- Organizational structure
- Customization
- Integrating heterogenous systems (Best of Breed)

Formality

- Level of detail in documentation

- Size and/or composition of governance team

- Meetings with agendas and approved minutes

- Use of parliamentary procedure – e.g. Robert's Rules

KEY MESSAGE: *Formality in governance is a mitigation for complexity and complication.*

Informal governance is valid too

Formality is a mitigation tool

Use formality as needed – It is NOT required

Use what works

- For your situation
- For your organization

Governance structures

Monolithic (one or two people)

Simple team

Multi-Tiered teams

Hybrid Multi-Tiered

Members are not always as described in published sources

e.g. Chief Financial Officer vs Department Controller?

Monolithic / hierarchical and ad hoc

Common on-premises

Just part of service delivery or other functions

One or two people making decisions about controls

Team based and structured

Small team (2 pizza rule)

Key stakeholders

Complexity mitigator

Multi-tiered

Strategic / Executive*

Tactical / Technical

Operational

Documentation success

- Clear (understandable)

- Complete (addresses the full scope identified)

- Current (is up to date with technology and policy)

- Correct

- Consistent (as applied, etc)

Documentation tips

Use a template (*SANS Policy Templates*)

Use a style guide (or combination)

Non-practitioners are your audience

Pay special attention to the "WHY" or "Objective"

https://www.sans.org/information-security-policy

Document types

Policy
- Why

Standard
- What

Procedure
- How

Guideline
- Recommended patterns and practices

Build a charter

Delegation of Authority

Purpose
(Mission/Vision/Principles)

Responsibility /
Accountability

Structure

Decision making

Document control

- Control the document lifecycle

- Include periodic and peer reviews

- Use automation to help

Creation

Approval

Storage

Distribution

Retrieval

Change Control

Obsolescence

Closing thoughts

Governance is simple (not easy) and about control

Use what works – one size does not fit all

Formality mitigates against complexity

Manage your document lifecycle

Thank you

Works cited

- United States Airforce (2015, May 27). The Tongue and Quill. Accessed from https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/saf_ds/publication/afh33-337/afh33-337.pdf

- The University of Chicago (Accessed 2025, August 14). The Chicago Manual of Style Online. https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html

- FRSECURE (Accessed 2025, August 17). Security Policies, Standards, Procedures, and Guidelines. https://frsecure.com/blog/differentiating-between-policies-standards-procedures-and-guidelines/

- Microsoft (2025, January 08). Microsoft Writing Style Guide. https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/style-guide/welcome/

- Opentrim. (2020, April 12). Governance model - OpenTRIM. *OpenTRIM*. https://www.opentrim.org/governance-model/

- Robert, Henry M. (2020, September 1). Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th edition

- SANS (Accessed 2025, August 14). Cyber Security Policies and Standards. https://www.sans.org/information-security-policy

- TECHNICAL WRITER HQ (Accessed 2025, August 14). What is Document Control? https://technicalwriterhq.com/documentation/document-control/