

What is your risk appetite and that of your organisation? Assess your risk appetite here...

Circle one or more quotes from each column that mean something to you – don't think about it, just do it off the top of your head – then look overleaf.
Use one colour to indicate your personal choices, and a different colour to indicate how you think your organisation would score.

Stagnation and vegetation – extreme risk-aversion and the risk of doing nothing	Prudence and common sense – a sound appreciation of risk as a sensible business tool	Nothing ventured, nothing gained – risk perception as a creative business tool	Delusion and denial – the fool's heedless path to inevitable failure
<p>The only person who never makes mistakes is the person who never does anything. Denis Waitley</p> <p>A ship in port is safe, but that's not what ships are built for. Grace Hopper, inventor</p> <p>If we do what we always do, we'll get what we've always got. Graham Lowe</p> <p>You'll always miss 100% of the shots you don't take. Wayne Gretzky, professional ice hockey player and head coach</p> <p>Sometimes it's risky not to take a risk. Harvey Mackay</p> <p>Opportunities are not lost. They are just taken by others. Jane Bozarth</p> <p>Don't be the one who puts the "no" in innovation. Unknown</p> <p>Nothing will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. Samuel Johnson</p> <p>Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there. Will Rogers</p> <p>There's as much risk in doing nothing as in doing something. Trammell Crow, real estate developer</p>	<p>If we do it and it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter. If we don't do it and it matters, it matters. Rob Gell</p> <p>It is not the strongest of the species that survives, or the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change. Darwin</p> <p>When in doubt, add more "if". Seth Godin</p> <p>Smart people learn from experience; wise people learn from the experience of others. Dr Ichak Adizes</p> <p>Don't refuse to go on an occasional wild goose chase - that's what wild geese are for. Anon</p> <p>No action can be absolutely safe and nothing can be absolutely certain, least of all the future. L Murray Gillan</p> <p>It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that they are difficult. Seneca</p> <p>If you're getting chased by a lion, you don't need to run faster than the lion, just the people running with you. Anon</p> <p>Progress always involves risks. You can't steal second base and keep your foot on first. Frederick B. Wilcox</p> <p>Luck is preparation meeting opportunity. Oprah Winfrey</p>	<p>There is no security on this earth. Only opportunity. Douglas MacArthur</p> <p>Real boats rock. Frank Herbert</p> <p>Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties. Erich Fromm</p> <p>The difference between a successful person and a failure is not better abilities or ideas, but the courage to bet on one's ideas, to take a calculated risk – and to act. Andre Malraux</p> <p>When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills. Chinese proverb</p> <p>Only those who will risk going too far can find out how far one can go. T.S. Eliot</p> <p>It is better to have enough ideas for some of them to be wrong, than to have no ideas at all. Edward de Bono</p> <p>Why not go out on a limb? Isn't that where the fruit is? Frank Scully</p> <p>Yes, risk taking is inherently failure-prone. Otherwise, it would be called sure-thing-taking. Tim McMahon</p> <p>Take risks: if you win, you will be happy; if you lose, you will be wise. Anon</p>	<p>The single biggest reason companies fail is they overinvest in what is, as opposed to what might be. Gary Hamel</p> <p>Some people have built-in filters that screen out the boos and amplify the hurrahs. Those are the people who never know when they're in trouble. Tommy Davis, venture capitalist</p> <p>We are sitting on the launch pad atop hundreds of systems, each constructed by the lowest bidder. NASA astronaut</p> <p>An expert's over-confidence increases with ignorance or unfamiliarity. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky</p> <p>Proving to someone he is biased will not necessarily change his perception. Ibid</p> <p>Wisdom prepares for the worst, but folly leaves the worst for the day when it comes. Richard Cecil</p> <p>A gambler makes his living out of hope. William Bolitho</p> <p>Knowledge without sense is twofold folly. Spanish proverb</p> <p>We're lost, but we're making good time. Yogi Berra</p> <p>Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the only one you have. Émile Chartier, Philosopher</p>

What do the quotes mean for your attitudes to risk and how your company views environmental risks and opportunities?

How risk-averse / creative / risk-taking are you and your company? Where are your respective comfort zones?

Count how many quotes you circled in each colour in each column. Record the numbers in the row for yourself and/or your organisation.

← low RISK APPETITE high →				
1	25	50	75	100
Stagnation and vegetation – extreme risk-aversion and the risk of doing nothing	Prudence and common sense – a sound appreciation of risk as a sensible business tool	Nothing ventured, nothing gained – risk perception & management as a creative business tool	Delusion and denial – the fool's heedless path to inevitable failure	

Personal risk appetite: count the quotes you circled in each column. List the total in each column below. Refer to the key. Record your score here =- _____ %

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Organisational risk appetite: count the quotes you circled in each column. List the total in each column below. Refer to the key. Record your score here =- _____ %

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KEY: scan across the rows and re-read your quotes. Choose a percentage score you think accurately sums up your personal and organisational risk appetite:

1 – 24%	You may possibly be a little too risk-averse. This may reflect the realities and necessities of your situation – or it may indicate you could fail to adapt to external changes. Stretch your comfort zone a little: see where you can start taking small steps towards being more receptive to ideas, more flexible and experimental.
25 – 74%	You have a healthy respect for the threats posed by your identified risks and also a good eye for the opportunities they offer. In the range of 25-30, there may be some risk posed by fear, uncertainty or rigidity. In the range of 60-75, there may be a risk posed by a small excess of bravado. Counter this by seeking information from different fields about risks identified by environmental, economic, social, science and business commentators and as many other field as you can.
30 – 40%	You may have a rather too healthy appetite for risk that could see you and/or your organisation take some falls, with or without making some spectacular gains along the way! Just remember – the only bad mistake is the one you don't learn from!

Are you happy to stay where you are? Do you want to move in one or the other direction?

How does your personal risk appetite compare with your organisation's risk appetite?

Is there a big difference? Who is more risk-averse? What actions do you want or need to take?

“ Whether you think you can do a thing or not, you are probably right. Henry Ford

Notes:
