

A COMPLIMENTARY RESOURCE

You Named the Risk. Now What Do You Do About It?

A practical starting point for building a real counterweight to your organization's dominant strength

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Anchor It. Do Not Abandon It.

If you have already identified your organization's dominant pattern, the natural next question is always the same one: what do you actually do about it.

Here is the most important thing to understand before you do anything else. The goal is never to get rid of your organization's dominant strength. That strength is very likely the reason you succeeded in the first place. The goal is to build something real enough to hold that strength in check before it runs unchecked into the exact failure it tends to create.

Anchoring is not about slowing down what makes you strong. It is about making sure something else in your organization has the standing to say no, and be heard, when that strength starts to become a liability.

If You're Founder-Centered

You need just enough structure to survive your own absence, without losing the speed that made you successful.

- Write down, explicitly, who has real authority to make each major category of decision when you are not available.
- Give at least one other person real authority to act without your sign-off on a defined set of decisions, then actually let them use it.
- Test it for real. Step away for an extended stretch and see what breaks.

Do not build heavy bureaucracy across the whole organization. That kills the exact responsiveness that made this pattern work in the first place.

If You're Standardized

You need real, working channels between the people making decisions and the people doing the actual work, without losing the consistency that lets you operate at scale.

- Build recurring working sessions where frontline input is expected to actually change decisions, not just be heard politely.
- Create small, temporary teams with real authority to bypass normal approval chains for specific, time-bound problems.
- Track morale and frontline concerns with the same seriousness you give your performance numbers.

If frontline input never actually changes a decision, you have built a channel, not an anchor.

If You're Expertise-Driven

You need your experts genuinely connected to the bigger mission, without undermining the autonomy their expertise requires.

- Involve your experts directly in strategic decisions, as genuine co-authors, not as a courtesy consultation.
- Build real collaboration across specialties, since experts in this pattern tend to default to working only within their own lane.
- Create a shared institutional story your experts can genuinely connect to, separate from their individual professional identity.

Do not try to administratively direct expert work in detail. That triggers exactly the resistance this pattern is known for.

If You're Team-Driven

You need just enough structure to protect institutional memory, without collapsing the adaptability that makes this pattern valuable. This is the most delicate one to get right.

- Write down who owns which decisions within each active project, simply and lightly, not as a rigid hierarchy.
- Build a lightweight habit of capturing lessons and notes, so knowledge does not walk out the door when a key person leaves.
- Identify your true informal connectors, the people whose departure would fragment coordination, and build redundancy around them now.

Do not over-document. Excessive process here recreates the very rigidity this pattern was built to avoid.

What If You're a Blend of Two Patterns?

Sometimes the right answer is not choosing one pattern, but deliberately designing a blend, because different parts of your organization genuinely need different strengths.

The key word is deliberately. An accidental blend, where you simply drifted into two patterns without ever deciding to, is very different from an intentional one, where you have named which parts of the organization operate under which pattern and assigned clear ownership for managing the friction where they meet.

A blend that was never actually designed is not a strategy. It is simply two patterns colliding, and colliding patterns nearly always produce the exact political conflict this work is meant to prevent.

Where This Leads

Naming your risk is the diagnosis. Building the actual counterweight is the harder, more valuable work, and it rarely goes as planned the first time without outside perspective.

If you are ready to move from naming the risk to actually building the fix, that is exactly the conversation I have with CEOs and boards every week.

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