

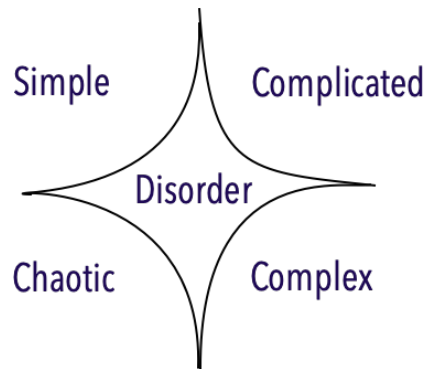
3. Cynefin helps makes sense of Project Management

Cynefin helps make sense of the world

Cynefin is a model based on complexity theory, developed in 1999 at IBM by Dave Snowden. It helps make sense of the world.

Faced with a new or challenging situation, the Cynefin gives managers a “sense of place” to make decisions. It has four decision-making **domains**, and a centre of **disorder**. Cynefin is Welsh **world** meaning “habitat” (and pronounced “k-NEV-in”).

Cynefin is interesting for Project Management, as they are frequently faced with a new or challenging situation. For a new Project, the Project Manager has to decide which Cynefin domain is appropriate (is this a complex problem requiring an Agile approach? Is this a complicated engineering challenge?)



The 4 domains of Cynefin ... plus disorder

Domain	Characteristics	Examples
Simple	procedural or rule-based	Standard Operating Procedures, IT maintenance
Complicated	requires skills and expertise	Putting the first man on the moon; creating the Airbus 380
Complex	can't be analysed or specified using traditional techniques	Bees in a beehive; innovation; software application