

Designing and Implementing an Effective Operational Risk Framework Elena Pykhova



Just LOSS no longer works

"the risk of *direct or indirect* loss *[or the risk of not achieving firm's objectives]* resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems or from external events"





RCSA – Industry Benchmark

RCSAs remain a core tool of the Operational Risk Framework

'most banks have established a risk and control selfassessment'

- Many banks are looking to improve the tool RCSAs 'currently undergoing some form of change or enhancement'
- Application varies 'fewer than half the banks indicated that the RCSA was implemented on an enterprise-wide basis'





RCSA – The Questions

- Key Risks in what? Process? Department?
- > Top Down or Bottom up?
- > Workshop: with Risk or Control owners, or both?
- Inherent or Residual?
- Controls: Assess or Test?
- > Assess: What grading scale?
- > Tester: Independent?
- > Result: how to present?

To achieve the best cultural and organizational fit, derive maximum benefit and demonstrate the 'use test'



- 'Usefulness / Actionability' measure: the number and monetary value of investments emanating as a result of the RCSA(s);
- 'Risk Awareness / Risk Management' measure: % of significant issues raised by Internal (External) Audit that are already known / self-identified via RCSAs.



RCSA - Process Based

- A bottom-up internal control self-assessment program which focuses on business processes that impact the Company's most significant General Ledger accounts.
- Identifies significant risks related to those processes and key controls in place to mitigate those risks.
- Driver : Sarbanes-Oxley

High-level Overview:





RCSA – Strategy Based

- ✤ A Top-down self-assessment program which focuses on strategic objectives of the firm.
- Identifies risks that can prevent the firm from achieving its objectives and key controls in place to mitigate those risks.

High-level Overview:





Change – Industry Benchmark

- One of the lower average ratings 'many aspects of change management not fully implemented'
- Principle 7 'approval process that fully assesses operational risk for all new products, activities, processes and systems'
- Noteworthy practice 'product risk framework and life-cycle'





Highlighted Challenges

- > Absence of a holistic definition of "change" leading to the governance framework not covering all types of change;
- Decentralised management of change with processes not completely aligned;
- Operational risk taxonomy not consistently applied to various changes;
- Second Line of Defence' roles inadequately structured;
- Lack of monitoring of risks following approval and absence of formal post-implementation reviews.



And a Final Thought

Are Operational Risk tools fit for fintech space?

Basel Committee analysis and recommendations on the application of Principles for the Sound Management of Operational Risk to fintech (p.25-26)





Thank You!

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