



Seven Formula 1 performance lessons for risk leaders.

A practical checklist for improving decision-making, reducing complexity, and building a higher-performing risk function.

Inspired by insights from Formula 1 performance expert Mark Gallagher and Protecht co-founder David Tattam.

What risk leaders can learn from Formula 1.

Formula 1 is one of the highest-pressure operating environments in the world. Decisions are made quickly, risks are monitored constantly, and teams must balance performance, safety, reliability and compliance in real time.

Most organizations do not operate at 200 mph, but many face the same underlying challenge: how to make better decisions, reduce complexity and improve performance under pressure.

This checklist distills practical lessons from Formula 1 expert Mark Gallagher and Protecht's co-founder David Tattam into actions risk leaders can apply inside their own organizations.

It is designed to help you assess whether your risk and compliance practices are helping your organization move with confidence, or creating friction, blind spots and delay.

How to use this checklist.

For each statement, select the response that best reflects your organization today.

Response	Meaning	Score
Yes	This is consistently in place and working well	2
Partly	This exists, but is inconsistent, informal or not fully embedded	1
No	This is not currently in place	0
Not Sure	You do not have enough visibility to answer confidently	0

Answer honestly based on current practice, not intended future state.

Where possible, complete the checklist with colleagues from risk, compliance, audit, operations, technology and the frontline to compare perspectives.

At the end of each section, capture one improvement opportunity. At the end of the checklist, add up your score and identify your top three actions.

Lesson 1: Make fast decisions by planning ahead.

Formula 1 lesson

Fast decisions are rarely improvised. They are enabled by clear roles, scenario planning, reliable data and delegated authority.

Why it matters

When decision rights are unclear, teams hesitate. When thresholds are undefined, issues escalate too slowly. Better planning helps teams act quickly without acting recklessly.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
Decision rights are clearly defined for key risk and compliance activities.				
Teams know which decisions they can make without escalation.				
Likely risk scenarios are assessed before they occur.				
Risk thresholds are defined for when action or escalation is required.				
Decision-makers have access to the right information when time-sensitive risk decisions need to be made.				

Reflection prompt

Where do decisions currently slow down?

Notes:

Action prompt

Identify one decision that could be delegated, clarified or supported with better thresholds.

Action:

Lesson 2: Reduce complexity that slows performance.

Formula 1 lesson

High-performance teams depend on clarity. Complex systems, unclear ownership and duplicated effort slow execution.

Why it matters

Risk and compliance processes often become more complex over time. When processes are hard to follow, adoption weakens, reporting becomes harder and accountability becomes blurred.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
Risk and compliance processes are simple enough for frontline teams to follow.				
Duplicate risk, control or compliance activities are regularly identified and removed.				
Teams can easily see how risks, controls, obligations, incidents and actions connect.				
Reporting structures provide clarity rather than adding extra layers of interpretation.				
Teams spend more time managing risk than managing spreadsheets, templates or manual updates.				

Reflection prompt

Which process creates the most friction today?

Notes:

Action prompt

Remove or redesign one step that adds effort without improving risk outcomes.

Action:

Lesson 3: Use data to see forward, not just backward.

Formula 1 lesson

Formula 1 teams use data to anticipate what may happen next, not only to explain what has already happened.

Why it matters

Risk reporting is most valuable when it supports action. Lagging indicators may explain past issues, but leading indicators help teams intervene before risks escalate.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
Key risk indicators include leading indicators, not only lagging measures.				
Dashboards are designed to support decisions, not just reporting.				
Risk data is current enough for teams to act before issues escalate.				
Risk indicators are linked to owners, thresholds and actions.				
Teams trust the quality and completeness of the risk data they use.				

Reflection prompt

Which metrics tell you what might happen next?

Notes:

Action prompt

Review one dashboard and mark each metric as leading, lagging or unclear.

Action:

Lesson 4: Build a culture where people can speak up.

Formula 1 lesson

High-performing teams need people to contribute fully. A blame culture makes people keep their heads down. Psychological safety helps teams learn faster.

Why it matters

Risk culture affects what people report, when they report it and how openly teams discuss difficult issues. If people do not feel safe speaking up, risks stay hidden until they become harder to manage.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
People feel safe raising risks, incidents, near misses and control weaknesses.				
Mistakes are treated as opportunities to improve systems, not assign blame.				
Teams are encouraged to escalate issues early.				
Leaders respond constructively when uncomfortable risks are raised.				
Risk conversations are open, honest and focused on learning.				

Reflection prompt

Where might people hesitate to speak up?

Notes:

Action prompt

Ask one team what would make it easier to raise risks earlier.

Action:

Lesson 5: Treat risk management as an enabler of performance.

Formula 1 lesson

Risk management is not an impediment to performance. Done well, it gives teams the confidence to push for better outcomes without taking unmanaged risks.

Why it matters

When risk management is seen as administration, it becomes a blocker. When it is connected to objectives, appetite and decision-making, it helps organizations move faster with greater confidence.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
Business leaders see risk management as helping them achieve objectives.				
Risk appetite is used to guide real decisions, not just satisfy governance requirements.				
Risk processes help teams move with confidence rather than slowing them down unnecessarily.				
Risk conversations are connected to strategic priorities and performance outcomes.				
The value of risk management is clearly communicated to the wider business.				

Reflection prompt

Where is risk still seen as a blocker?

Notes:

Action prompt

Reframe one risk activity around the business outcome it protects or enables.

Action:

Lesson 6: Learn continuously from what goes wrong.

Formula 1 lesson

High-performing teams do not just review mistakes. They turn lessons into stronger systems, better controls and improved performance.

Why it matters

Issues, incidents and near misses are valuable only if the organization learns from them. The goal is not just to document what happened, but to reduce the chance it happens again.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
Incidents, issues and near misses are reviewed consistently.				
Lessons learned are translated into changes to controls, processes or training.				
Improvement actions have clear owners and due dates.				
Recurring issues are tracked and analyzed over time.				
The organization can demonstrate how learning has improved risk performance.				

Reflection prompt

What issue keeps coming back?

Notes:

Action prompt

Pick one recent incident and check whether the lesson has been embedded into day-to-day practice.

Action:

Lesson 7: Make everyone responsible for risk.

Formula 1 lesson

Risk is not managed by a department down the corridor. It is managed across the business by people who understand their role, responsibilities and decision rights.

Why it matters

Risk management works best when it is embedded into everyday activity. Frontline teams, managers and executives all need clarity on the part they play.

Statement	Yes	Partly	No	Not Sure
Frontline teams understand their role in managing risk.				
Risk responsibilities are embedded into day-to-day workflows.				
Managers own risk decisions within their areas of responsibility.				
Risk activities are connected to business objectives.				
Risk management is accessible to non-risk specialists.				

Reflection prompt

Where is risk ownership unclear?

Notes:

Action prompt

Identify one process, risk or control where ownership needs to be clarified.

Action:

Score your results.

What your score means

Add up your responses across all 35 statements.

Yes = 2 points | Partly = 1 point | No/not sure = 0 points

Score	Interpretation
0–20	Your risk processes may be creating friction, blind spots or delayed decisions.
21–40	You have foundations in place, but performance may be inconsistent across teams or processes.
41–55	Your organization has a maturing approach, with opportunities to improve speed, visibility and consistency.
56–70	High-performance risk practices are likely embedded. Continue looking for opportunities to simplify and optimize.

This score is not a formal maturity rating. It is a practical starting point to identify where better clarity, visibility and accountability could improve performance.

Identify your top three improvement opportunities

Review your responses and choose three areas where improvement could have the greatest impact.

Area	Why it matters	First action	Owner	Target date
1.				
2.				
3.				

From checklist to real-time risk performance

A checklist can help identify gaps, but sustained performance requires connected data, clear ownership and workflows that support timely action.

Protecht helps organizations connect risks, controls, obligations, incidents, actions and reporting in one platform, so teams can reduce manual effort, improve visibility and embed risk management into day-to-day operations.

Ready to improve risk performance?

[Request a demo](#)

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