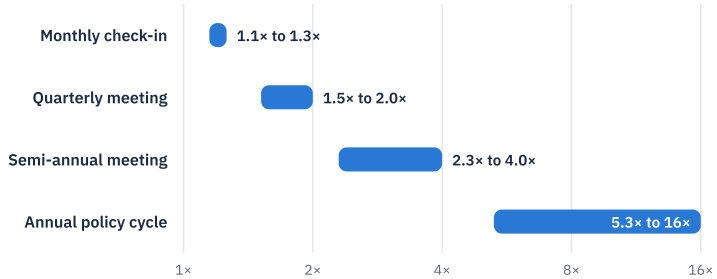
Is Your Board Keeping Up With AI?

Chris B. Kennedy · A call to action for boards of large enterprises, public companies and regulated industries

AI changes more between two board meetings than governance was built to absorb, and published guidance has not caught up. Boards need questions and checklists they can use at the next meeting.

1 How much AI changes between your meetings



Capability growth between meetings (log scale), at a doubling every 3 to 5 months

AI capability is doubling roughly every 3 to 5 months. A board that meets quarterly governs a picture that is already half out of date; an annual policy can be sixteen times behind.

The binding constraint is no longer the technology. It is how fast the organization, and its board, can absorb change safely.

The governance gap, and what agile oversight looks like: “AI Moves Faster Than Your Board Meets.”

2 The guidance has not caught up

Of 34 director bodies, consultancies, standards setters and regulators benchmarked, how many ask:

Does our oversight cadence keep pace with AI?	4
What can agents do alone, and can we stop them?	5
What P&L impact has AI actually delivered?	5
Who is accountable for AI-produced work?	2
Does AI doing a person's job get their controls?	1
Are our people keeping real expertise?	1
What are we deliberately not funding?	0

For comparison, 16 of 34 ask about identifying and managing AI risk. The FSB's October 2026 sound practices never mention return on investment and call agent practices "nascent."

3 Top AI risks to put on the agenda

RISK	ORGS
Vendor and model concentration. A few providers change terms or price, or fail.	18
Data, privacy and IP leakage. Client or proprietary data goes into AI tools.	13
Errors that reach customers. Wrong or biased output no one catches.	13
Regulatory exposure. New AI rules and existing law applied to AI.	10
AI-enabled fraud. Cloned voices, fake documents, automated phishing.	6
Agents acting beyond authority. AI that moves money or changes systems unchecked.	5

Orgs: outside organizations, of 34, raising the risk. Agent risk is growing quickly and is still rarely asked.

4 Any framework, plus what AI changes

Anchor AI in the enterprise risk framework you already run and the NIST AI Risk Management Framework (for financial institutions, the FSB's twelve sound practices), then add three things:

- **Human ownership of every control.** Every AI control, human or technical, has a named owner.
- **Velocity oversight.** Oversight, talent and spend, cyber and data controls that move at AI speed.
- **Exponential complexity oversight.** Purpose-built agents, limited to what can still be modeled and stopped.

5 Before your next meeting

1. **Ask the ten questions.** Find where answers are thin.
2. **See all the AI.** An inventory including vendor-embedded and employee tools, each with an owner.
3. **Set escalation triggers.** Agents that move money, new sensitive data, a vendor change or an incident reach the board at once.
4. **Get one page every meeting.** What changed and what is new on the risk list.
5. **Judge the answers.** Mark each one clear, partial or missing; close the gaps within two meetings.

The full Board AI Toolkit

→ Board AI Checklist (15 items) and framework → Independent review and scorecard → Board and leadership training
→ AI advisory and monitoring → Sample policies, evaluations and evidence guides → Talent assessment and AI hiring

Available through an engagement. See What's Next.

CHRISBKENNEDY.COM · VERSION 1.1 · OCTOBER 28, 2026

Ten AI Questions for the Board

Chris B. Kennedy · Managing Director, Strategic Technology and AI, Regions Bank

How this list was compiled. I started from my own set of board questions on AI and benchmarked them against 764 board AI questions published by 34 organizations: director bodies, consultancies, standards setters and financial regulators. Those questions were merged into 98 distinct board questions and tagged by domain. The ten below are where my questions and the external research converge. Each was then rank-ordered and challenged for board-level materiality.

Kennedy + N organizations: each question comes from my set and is asked, in some form, by N outside organizations.

Domains: the governance areas each question covers.

1	Where can AI create the most material value for us, how does that fit our strategy, and how are competitors using it?	**Kennedy + 19 organizations** Strategy & competition · Value & ROI
2	What P&L impact has AI actually delivered, how much of the reported value is only freed capacity still to be redeployed, and what is stopping us from capturing more?	**Kennedy + 5 organizations** Value & ROI · Capital allocation · Strategy & competition
3	How is AI investment split between near-term gains, cost-structure change and longer growth bets, and what are we deliberately not funding?	**Kennedy + 5 organizations** Capital allocation · Value & ROI · Strategy & competition
4	Do we know all the AI in use, including vendor-embedded and employee tools, and does each material use have an accountable owner and clear decision rights?	**Kennedy + 20 organizations** AI inventory & ownership · Oversight cadence & reporting · Risk & controls
5	What are our most material AI risks, how much of each are we willing to accept, and how do we know our controls work?	**Kennedy + 24 organizations** Risk & controls · Oversight cadence & reporting
6	Which AI systems can act on their own, such as moving money or changing systems, what limits apply, and can we trace their actions and stop them quickly?	**Kennedy + 11 organizations** Agents & autonomy · Risk & controls · AI inventory & ownership
7	How do we protect client data and our IP when using AI, and where are we dependent on a few AI vendors or models if their terms, prices or access change?	**Kennedy + 21 organizations** Data, privacy & IP · Third parties & concentration · Regulation & compliance
8	How will AI change our roles and skills, and how do we make sure people keep real expertise and judgment as AI drafts more of their work?	**Kennedy + 16 organizations** Talent & workforce · Risk & controls
9	Does the board have enough AI knowledge to challenge management, and how are directors and senior leaders keeping that knowledge current?	**Kennedy + 16 organizations** Board & leadership AI knowledge · Talent & workforce
10	What should be different in 12 months if our AI strategy works, what will the board see to know, and is our oversight cadence keeping pace with how fast AI is changing?	**Kennedy + 18 organizations** Oversight cadence & reporting · Value & ROI · Risk & controls

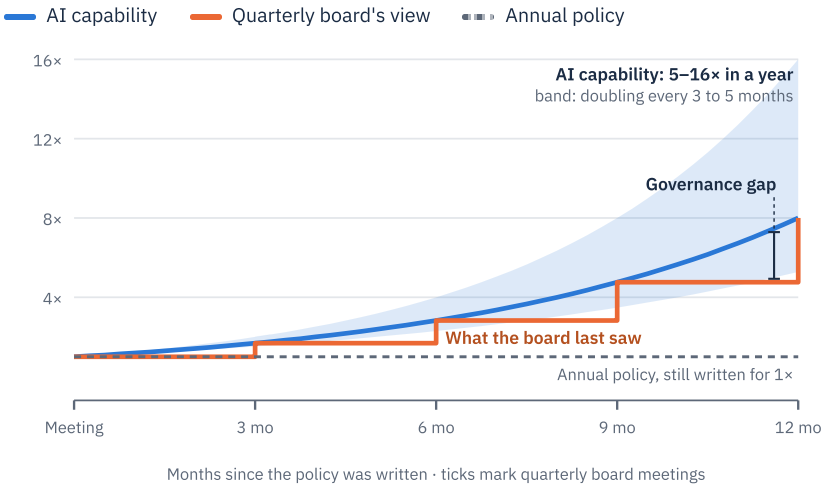
Key references: Financial Stability Board, *Sound Practices for Financial Institutions' Responsible AI Adoption* (Oct 2026) · NACD, *Boardroom Tool: Questions for Directors to Ask About AI* (2025) · NIST, *AI Risk Management Framework* and *Generative AI Profile* (2023, 2024) · World Economic Forum, *Empowering AI Leadership: Board Toolkit* · McKinsey, *The AI Reckoning: How Boards Can Evolve* (2025) · BCG, *Five Things Boards Need to Get Right with AI* (2026) · Grant Thornton, *Seven AI Questions Used by Leading Boards* (2026).

Counts are distinct organizations asking a version of each question, not a measure of importance. Source list and question-by-organization mapping: see the companion "Sources Behind the Ten AI Questions." chrisbkennedy.com · Version 1.1 · October 28, 2026

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AI Moves Faster Than Your Board Meets

Chris B. Kennedy · Organizational agility, and what it means for boards that meet quarterly or twice a year



Months since the policy was written · ticks mark quarterly board meetings

The pace

AI capability is doubling roughly every 3 to 5 months. Oversight that updates only at meetings falls further behind with every quarter.

BETWEEN…	CAPABILITY GROWS
Monthly check-in	1.1× to 1.3×
Quarterly board meeting	1.5× to 2.0×
Semi-annual board meeting	2.3× to 4.0×
Annual policy review	5.3× to 16×

What changes between meetings

- Vendors switch on new AI features and agents inside software you already run.
- Attack methods improve: cloned voices, fake documents, automated phishing.
- Rules and guidance change as regulators update their positions.
- New models change what is possible, and what it costs, for work already in flight.
- Competitors launch, and customers' expectations move with them.

The binding constraint is no longer the technology. It is how fast the organization, and its board, can absorb change safely.

What agile oversight looks like

Delegate with guardrails. The board sets principles, risk limits and tiers once; management decides within them between meetings.

Escalate on triggers, not the calendar. A new agent that can move money, a new category of sensitive data, a change to a critical vendor, or an incident comes to the board when it happens.

One page, every meeting. What changed since the last meeting, what management decided under delegation, and what is new on the risk list.

A monthly half hour. A board member or committee chair checks in with the AI owner between meetings.

Six-month policies. Review the AI policy twice a year and give fast-moving rules a sunset date.

Classify by attributes. Autonomy, access, data and consequence let new capabilities fit existing rules without a rewrite.

Pre-approve fast trials, and fast stops. A small trial budget, a time box, and kill criteria agreed in advance.

Keep the board current. A hands-on session each year and an adviser on call, so judgment keeps pace with the tools.

Questions for the board

1. What has changed in our AI use, vendors and risks since our last meeting, and what did management decide under delegated authority?
2. Which AI decisions must come to us between meetings, and what triggers them?
3. How quickly can we adopt a useful new capability safely, and how quickly can we stop one?
4. Is our policy review cycle faster than the rate of change in our AI portfolio?
5. What limits how fast we can absorb AI today: people, process, data, vendors or approvals?

A gap in published guidance. Only 4 of the 34 organizations benchmarked in this research ask whether oversight cadence keeps pace with AI (Financial Stability Board, ISO/IEC, NIST, World Economic Forum). The FSB treats adaptability as training, specialists and risk culture; necessary, but not a cadence. Applies to private companies too: for owner-led firms, the monthly half hour and the trigger list do most of the work. chrisbkennedy.com · Version 1.1 · October 28, 2026

What's Next

Chris B. Kennedy · From questions to action, and how I can help

1 Before your next meeting

STEP 1

Ask the ten questions

Put them to management at your next meeting and note where the answers are thin.

STEP 2

Judge the answers

Mark each answer clear, partial or missing, and ask to see the evidence behind it.

STEP 3

Review the gaps

Decide which gaps the board closes itself and where outside help is faster.

2 Start with a Board AI Readiness Review

Where every engagement starts: we go through your answers to the ten questions together, see where the board stands, and agree which gaps matter most.

Start a conversation: chrisbkennedy.com/contact

3 Then choose where to go: assess, design, advise

	INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND SCORECARD **Assess**	OPERATING MODEL, REPORTING AND DECISION RIGHTS **Design**	ONGOING BOARD-LEVEL AI PERSPECTIVE **Advise**
Independent review of management's answers to the ten questions	●	–	–
Scorecard across 14 governance domains	●	–	●
Interviews with directors and executives	●	●	–
Blind spots and priorities, in one page for the board	●	–	●
Competitor and vendor assessment	●	–	–
Talent assessment: AI skills across leadership and key teams	●	–	–
Sample guidance: evidence requests, evaluations, policies and scoring	●	●	–
AI operating model and decision rights	–	●	–
Board reporting: dashboard or one-page update	–	●	–
Committee roles, charters and policies	–	●	–
Management response plan and AI incident response	–	●	–
Board and leadership training and workshops	–	●	●
Support hiring for AI roles	–	●	●
AI adviser to the board or owners, on call	–	–	●
Monitoring: briefings between meetings on what changed	–	–	●



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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- Founding head of AI risk management at a regulated regional bank
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Who Asks Each of the Ten AI Questions

Chris B. Kennedy · 34 outside organizations, mapped to the questions their published board guidance asks

A mark means the organization's published board guidance asks a version of that question. Organizations are ordered by how many of the ten they ask. Columns follow the numbering in "Ten AI Questions for the Board."

ORGANIZATION	TYPE	1 Value and strategy	2 Realized P&L	3 Investment mix	4 Inventory and owners	5 Risks and controls	6 Autonomous AI	7 Data, IP and vendors	8 Skills and expertise	9 Board AI knowledge	10 Outcomes and cadence	Of 10
Egon Zehnder	Consultancy	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	10
World Economic Forum	Director body	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	10
AICD	Director body	●	·	●	●	●	·	●	●	●	●	8
Institute of Directors (UK)	Director body	●	·	·	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8
Forbes	Media	●	●	·	·	●	·	●	●	●	●	7
KPMG	Consultancy	●	·	·	·	●	●	●	●	●	●	7
NACD	Director body	●	·	·	●	●	·	●	●	●	●	7
Sidley Austin	Law firm	●	·	·	●	●	·	●	●	●	●	7
BCG	Consultancy	●	●	●	●	·	·	●	·	·	●	6
Center for Audit Quality	Professional body	·	·	·	●	●	●	●	●	·	●	6
Deloitte	Consultancy	●	·	·	●	●	·	·	●	●	●	6
Financial Stability Board	Regulator	●	·	·	●	●	●	●	·	·	●	6
Institute of Directors New Zealand	Director body	●	·	·	●	●	·	●	●	●	·	6
NIST	Standard	·	·	·	●	●	●	●	●	·	●	6
FS-ISAC	Industry body	●	·	·	●	●	·	●	●	·	·	5
Grant Thornton	Consultancy	●	·	·	●	·	●	●	●	·	·	5
EY	Consultancy	●	·	·	·	·	·	·	●	●	●	4
FINRA	Regulator	·	·	·	·	●	●	●	·	·	●	4
ISO/IEC	Standard	●	·	·	●	●	·	·	·	·	●	4
McKinsey	Consultancy	●	·	·	●	●	·	·	·	●	·	4
US bank regulators (Fed/OCC/FDIC)	Regulator	·	·	·	●	●	●	●	·	·	·	4
European Union	Regulator	·	·	·	·	·	●	·	●	·	●	3
Gartner	Research and advisory	●	·	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	●	3
PwC	Consultancy	●	·	●	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	3
MIT Sloan Management Review	Media	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	●	·	2
OECD	Standard	·	·	·	●	●	·	·	·	·	·	2
Russell Reynolds Associates	Consultancy	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	·	●	·	2
SEC Investor Advisory Committee	Regulator	·	●	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	2
The Institute of Internal Auditors	Professional body	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	●	·	2
US Treasury	Regulator	·	·	·	●	·	·	●	·	·	·	2
BIS	Regulator	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	·	·	1
Diligent	Governance research	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	●	·	1
ISACA	Professional body	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	·	·	1
Private Directors Association	Director body	·	·	·	·	●	·	·	·	·	·	1
Organizations asking		**19**	**5**	**5**	**20**	**24**	**11**	**21**	**16**	**16**	**18**	