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**Conference or Workshop Item**

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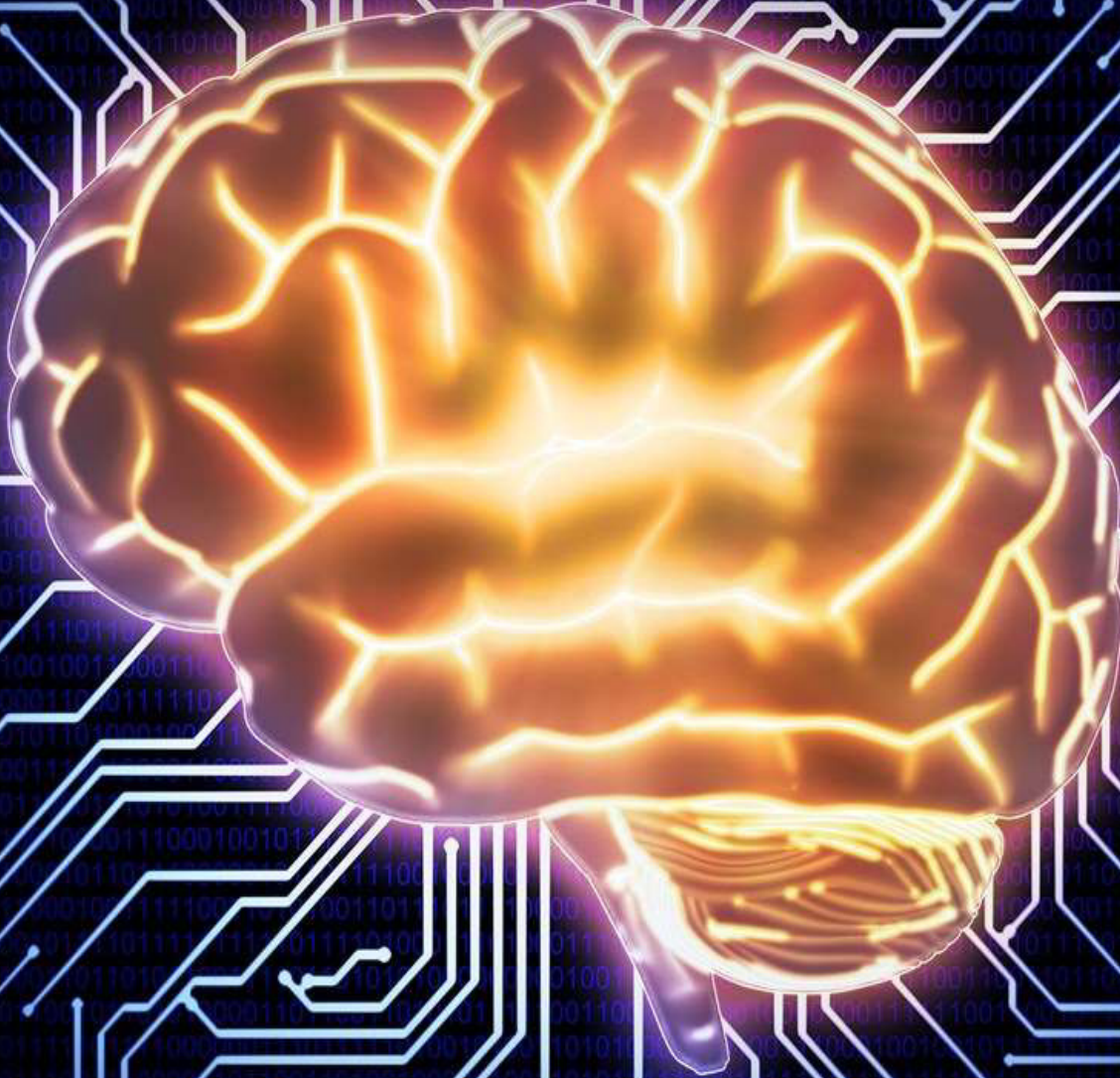
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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTHAMPTON**  
Northampton Business School

**Decision-making = competitive advantage**



**Dr Mils Hills**

# Agenda

- **Background | Key Observations**
  - Suggestions to enhance BC / other planning
- **Introducing the Cortex Group**
  - Informal network facilitated by Northampton Business School
  - World-class practitioners: unique insights, applied management of extreme risks
  - Guy Batchelor: Minerva Elite
  - Paul McFarlane & Raj Mahajan: Metropolitan Police

# **1<sup>st</sup> Anthropologist in UK govt.**

- **1998 | Defence Research**
  - Information Warfare: Protect/target decision-makers
  - Hd. Strategic National Capability
- **2001 Cabinet Office - 2010 Consultancy**
  - Strategic attack, business continuity, crisis mgt
  - Commissioned by boards: c-suite & operational
  - Unique tools & techniques to build resilience
  - Ruthless attention to strategic objectives & delivery
- **2010 | education, research, consultancy**

## Select Template for New Situation

Please choose a template for the situation.

Name	None	▼
None		
Airport Incident		
Bid Communications		
Client Communications		
Damaged Office		
Damaged Store		
Dirty Bomb		
Disease Emergency		
HAZCHEM Emergency		
Insider Trading		
IT Emergency		
Natural Disaster		
Office Emergency		
Other		
Power Outage		
Product Emergency		
Product Recall		
Public Relations Crisis		
Sales Engagement		
Terrorist Threat		
Update Business Continuity Plan		

***Focus on  
Consequences  
Not  
Causes***





# **Manage the Crisis *AND* the Business**

A dark, foggy night scene. In the center, two people are walking away from the viewer down a path, illuminated by a bright light source in the distance. The light creates a strong glow and lens flare effects. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and somber.

**Expect  
the Fog**



TRAIN

HARD,

FIGHT

EASY



**Can you (under stress) ...**

- ☐ Make sense of the situation?
- ☐ Deliver strategic objectives?
- ☐ Generate options?
- ☐ Execute & track decisions?

**... under imperfect conditions, with incomplete information**



**Sustain the  
Response  
[including the tail(s)]**

# Five Fundamental Processes Needed



- **Information-Gathering**  
Acquisition & processing of information
- **Assessment of the Situation**  
Development of a comprehensive analysis
- **Decision-Making**  
Timely, proportionate and sustainable decisions
- **Action & Monitoring**  
Execution & tracking of decisions and their effects
- **Communication**  
Key information to internal & external stakeholders



# In Summary

- **Plans need to be actionable resources**
  - Usually massive, contradictory & useless documents
- **Many crises caused by latent (knowable) risks**
  - Active discovery & resolution critical: culture key
- **Managing a crisis = decision-making**
  - Most organisations very poor under normal conditions
- **Crises characterised by**
  - Imperfect conditions (key folk on holiday ...)
  - Incomplete, inconsistent information
  - Shock & surprise, reality always different to rehearsal
  - Stress, emotion, confusion, overload
- **Reliable capability needs rehearsal: build reflexes**
- **Confidence & competence has wider benefits**
  - Creativity, awareness of consequences, agility
  - Leaner suite of plans + human capability

# **Towards Competitive Advantage**

- **Unique perspectives on the challenges**
- **Crisis, continuity & resilience planning and response**
  - The Special Forces mindset + BS 65000 => mitigating risk and performing under pressure
  - Metropolitan Police: uncovering key risks ahead of crisis