

4 RISKY ATTITUDES THAT MUST BE CHALLENGED

Some organisational attitudes help in the journey toward social license, while others are flashing red warning signs demanding attention. Let's unpack four risky attitudes that can come up when organisations engage with their communities.

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Social power refers to how influential an organisation is in a community.

First, what give rise to risky attitudes? Let's consider social power.

social power

strong

If an organisation has a lot of clout or the community depends heavily on them for jobs, business opportunities or funding, their social power is likely to be strong.

weak

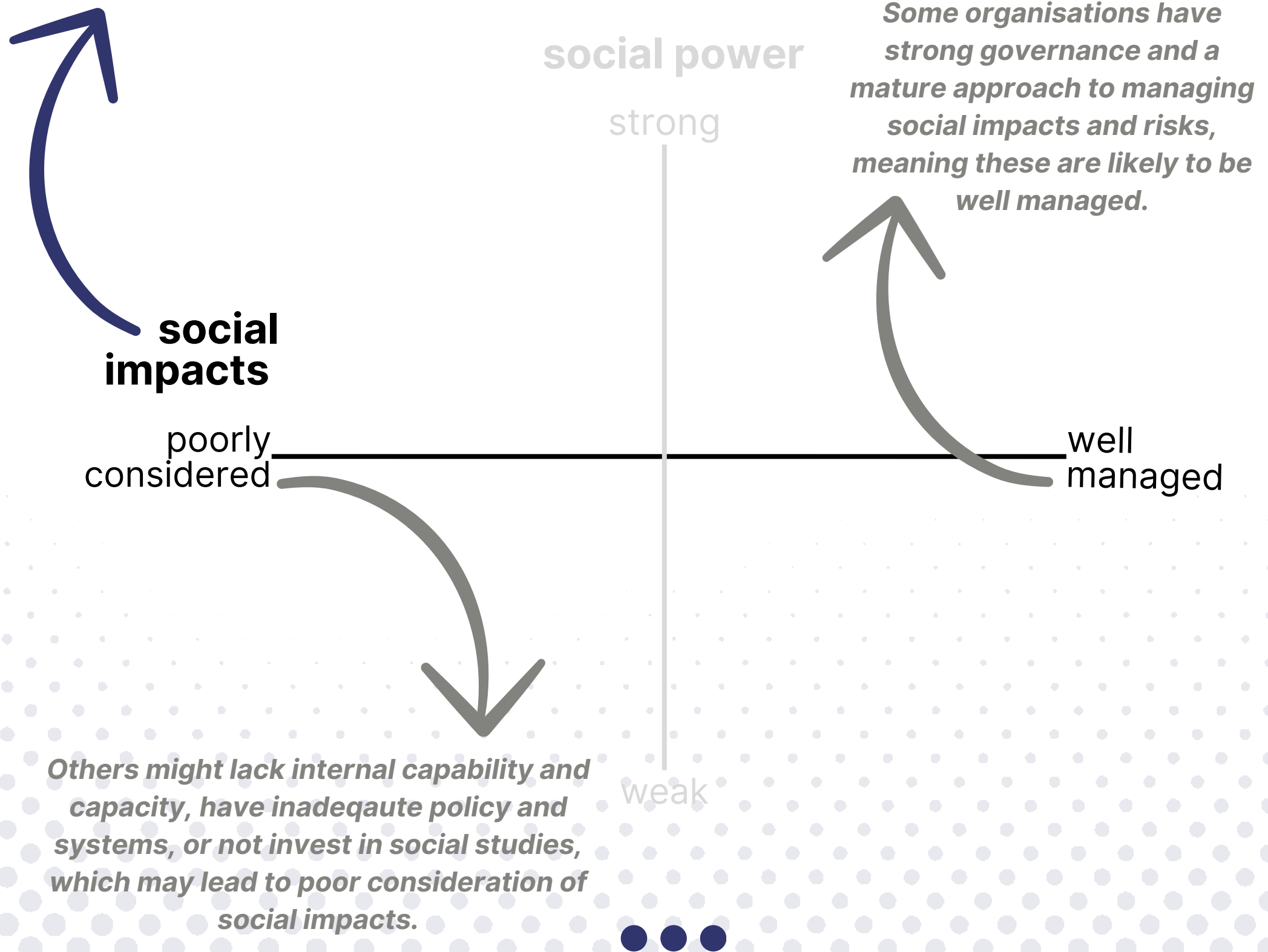
If an organisation has little influence or is new in town, their social power may be weak.

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Let's also consider how well **social impacts** are managed.

Let's define social impacts as the affect an organisation's action or inaction has on people.



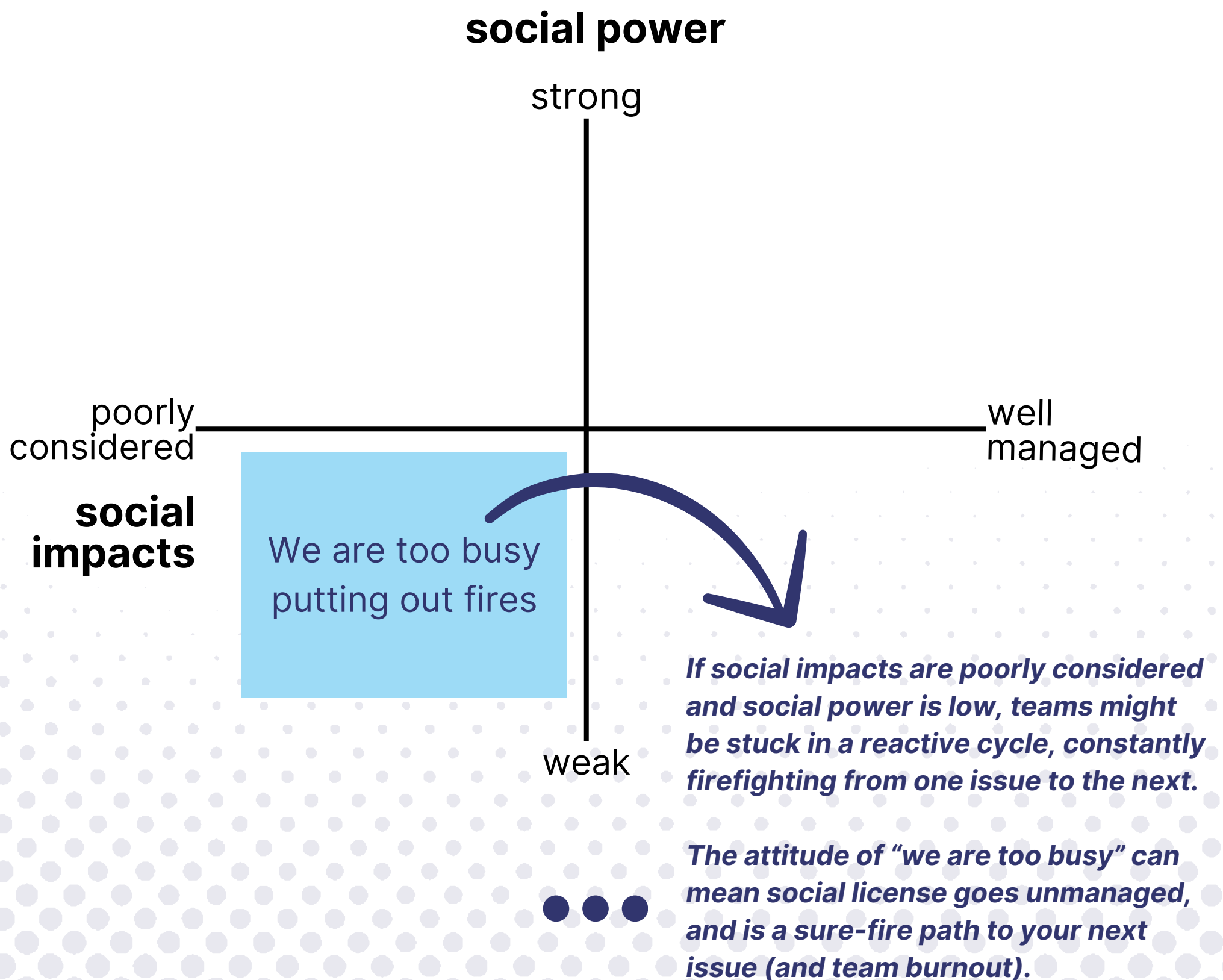
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Now, here is where risky attitudes can emerge...

An attitude of “we are too busy putting out fires” can mean social license goes largely unmanaged.

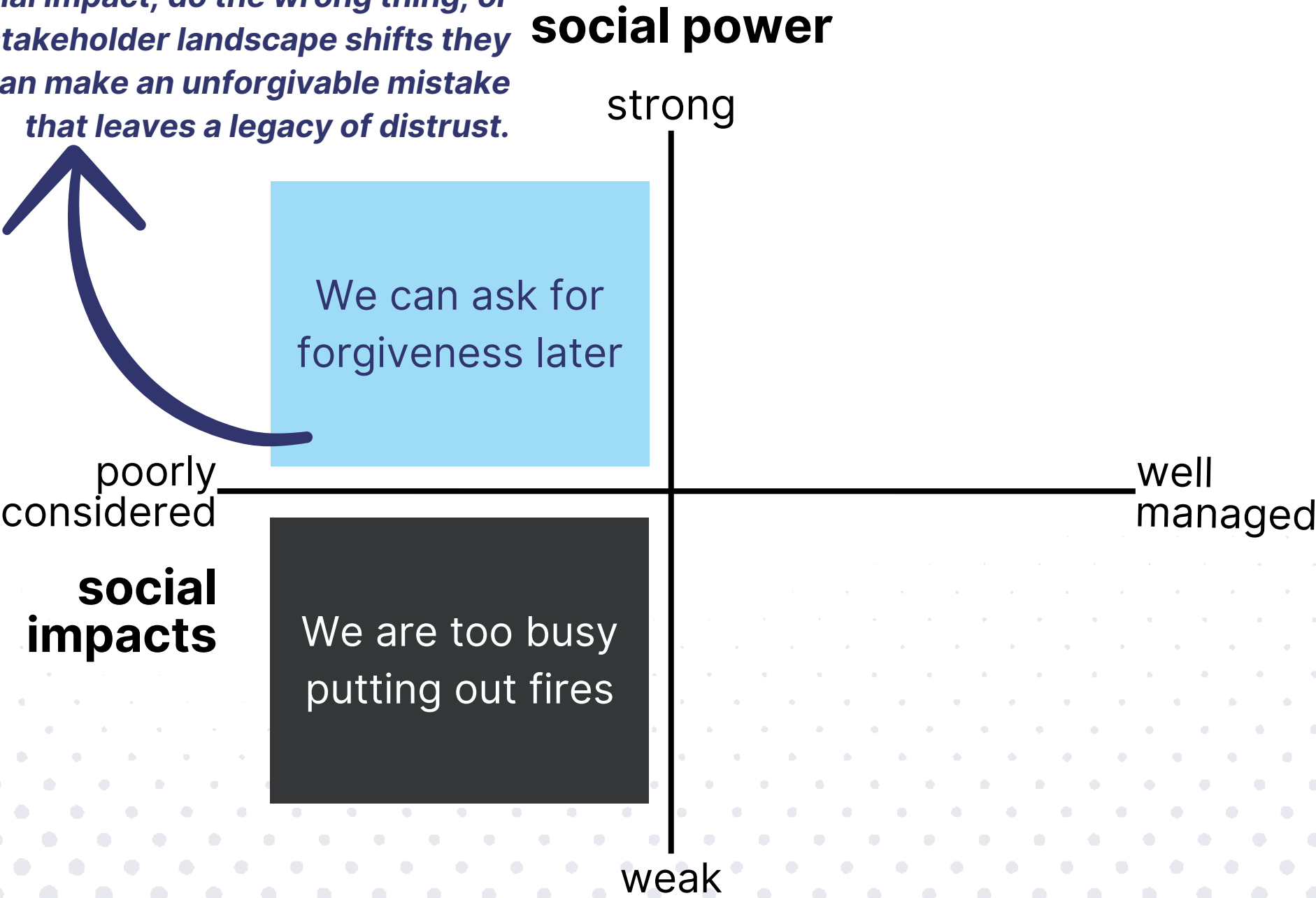


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If an organisation has strong social power, they might believe they can rely on community goodwill to offset their social risks. But when they are responsible for an unacceptable social impact, do the wrong thing, or stakeholder landscape shifts they can make an unforgivable mistake that leaves a legacy of distrust.

An attitude of let's move ahead and “ask for forgiveness later” signals ethical concerns around abuse of power when social impacts are not well managed.

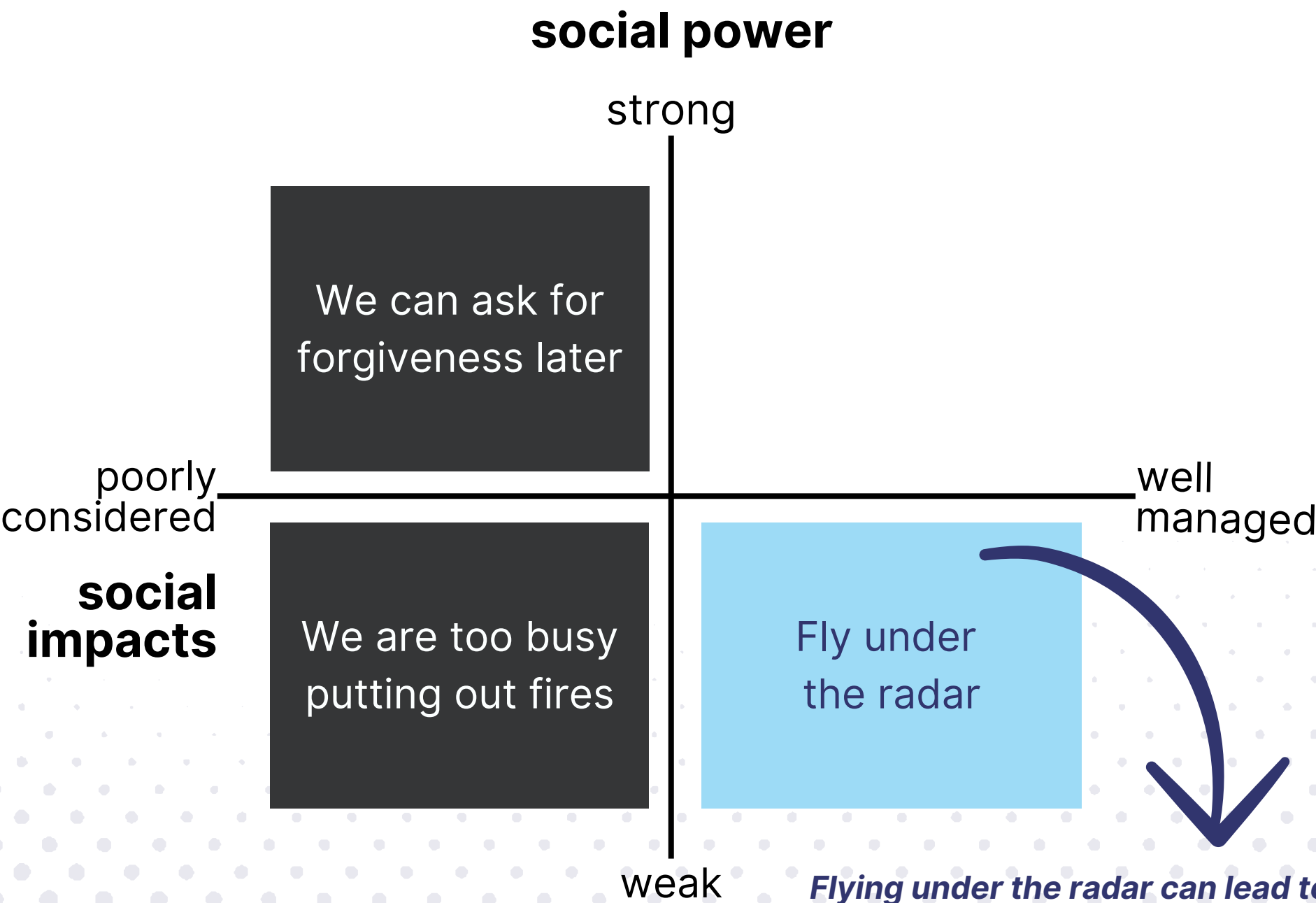


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Organisations managing social impacts well but with little social power might try to “fly under the radar.”



Flying under the radar can lead to less effort being put in to building local relationships and having the tough conversations, which will come back to bite.

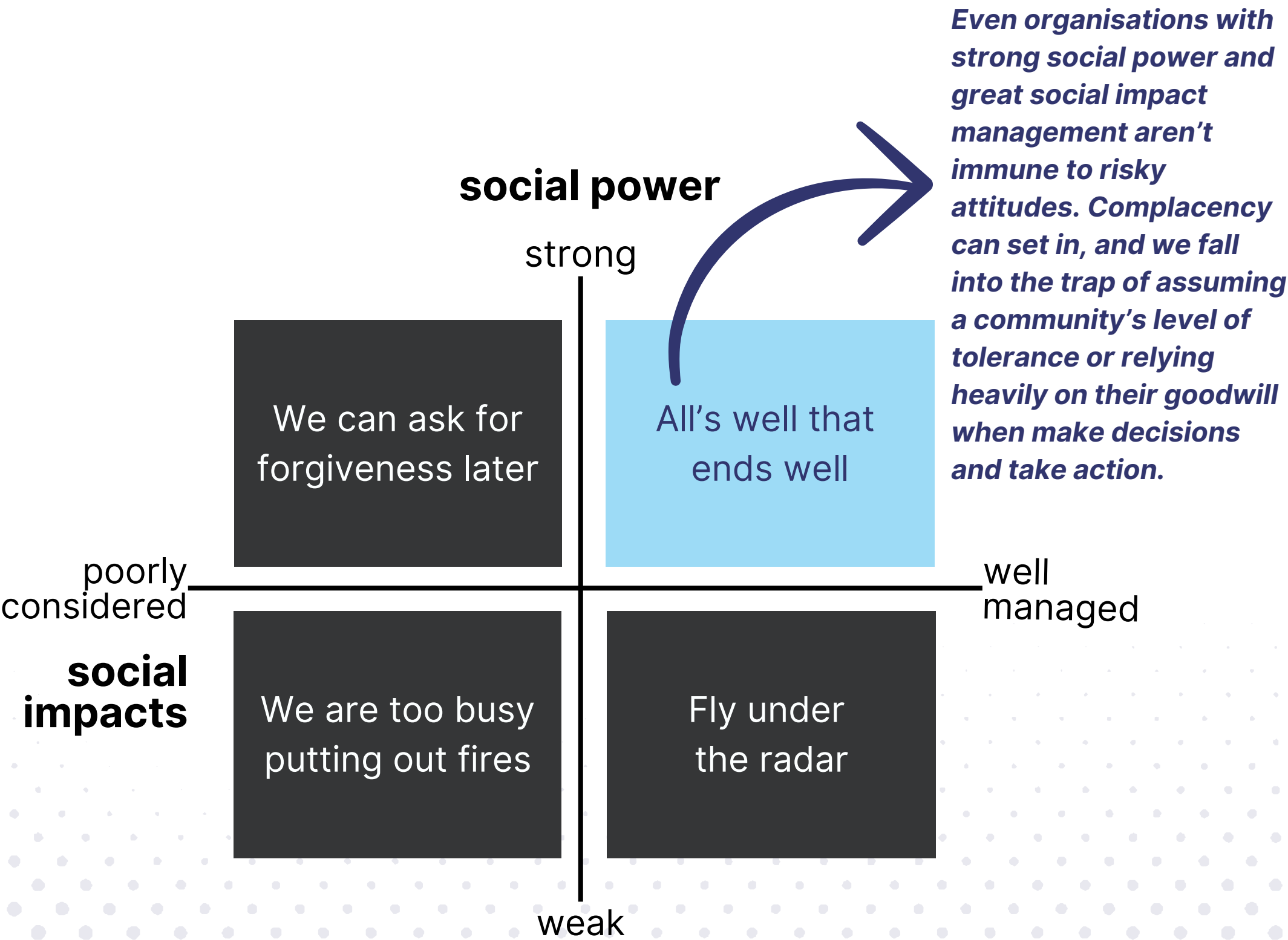
When the spotlight inevitably finds you, you won't have built up the social capital needed to navigate rough seas.

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The attitude of “all’s well that ends well” can result in a reputational crisis when we don’t keep pace with changing community expectations or if goodwill dissipates.

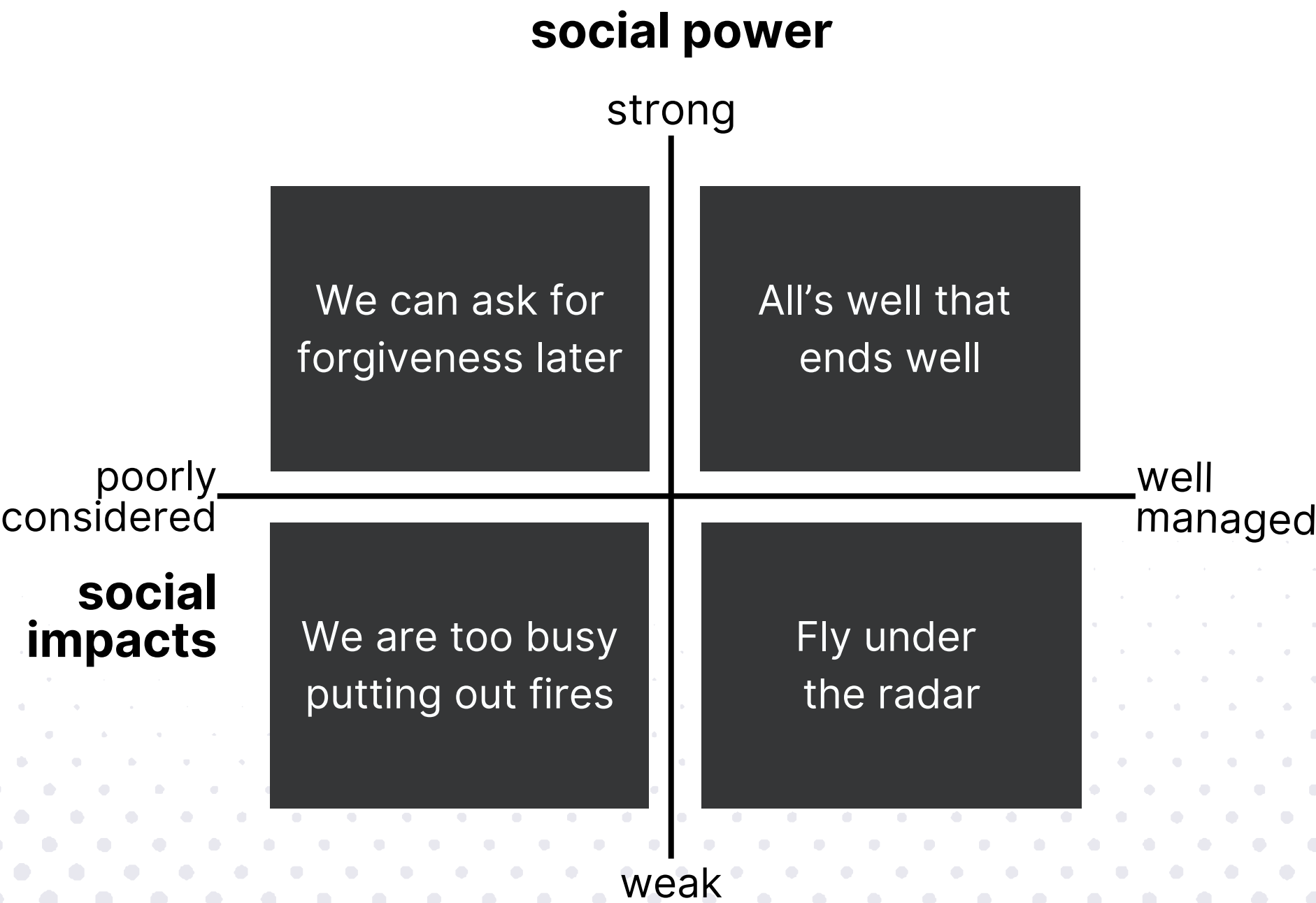


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How have you seen these risky attitudes play out?



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WHAT RISKY ATTITUDES CAN YOU CHALLENGE TODAY?

When we have the courage to call out risky attitudes, unpack the drivers and address the systemic issues inside our organisation, we can strengthen social license, better manage social risk and live up to our social responsibilities.

A people positive approach is good for business.

And, bonus - our jobs get easier too.



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