



The Decision Brief

A 15-minute framework for the decision that keeps moving.

01

DIRECTION

02

EVIDENCE

03

CONSTRAINTS

04

IMPLICATIONS

05

DECISION

06

EXECUTION



HOW TO USE THIS BRIEF

Use it before the room gets crowded.

This is not a strategy document. It is a working record for one consequential decision. Complete it alone first, then use the same page to test the choice with the people who must carry it.

PREPARED BY

ROLE / TEAM

DATE

The 15-minute working rhythm

03 MIN

Name it

Write the decision, owner and deadline.

04 MIN

Test it

Separate evidence, assumptions and constraints.

03 MIN

Trace it

Follow second-order effects and precedent.

03 MIN

State it

Record the choice and the trade-off.

02 MIN

Move it

Assign the first action and review date.

DECISION HYGIENE

Before moving on, check the room.

☐ The decision has one accountable owner.

☐ The deadline is real, not ceremonial.

☐ The team can name the trade-off.

☐ There is evidence that could change the view.



STAGES 01 - 02

STAGE 01

Direction

Separate the decision from the discussion.

THE DECISION

What are we actually deciding?

Use one sentence. Start with a verb.

ACCOUNTABLE OWNER

DECISION DEADLINE

BOUNDARY

What is explicitly outside the scope of this decision?

STAGE 02

Evidence

Distinguish what is known from what is being assumed.

KNOWN

What evidence is reliable today?

Facts, observed behaviour, confirmed numbers or commitments.

ASSUMED

What story are we treating as fact?

Interpretations, forecasts, untested beliefs or protected narratives.



STAGES 03 - 04

STAGE 03

Constraints

Make the cost of the choice visible.

MUST PROTECT

What are we unwilling to sacrifice?

Commercial, human, ethical or reputational non-negotiables.

CAN MOVE

What can change to make the decision work?

Timing, scope, sequence, ownership, investment or operating method.

STAGE 04

Implications

Follow the decision beyond the immediate outcome.

SECOND-ORDER EFFECTS

If we choose this, what else becomes true six months from now?

Consider behaviour, incentives, customer expectations, team capacity and future options.

PRECEDENT

What will this decision teach the organisation?

Name the behaviour this choice rewards or normalises.



DECISION WORK

STAGE 05

Decision

State the position so it can survive retelling.

DECISION STATEMENT

What have we decided?

Write the choice in plain language. Avoid context that only insiders understand.

RATIONALE

Why is this the right move now?

Use the strongest evidence and the accepted trade-off.

REVIEW CONDITION

What would cause us to revisit it?

Define the signal, not the anxiety.

RETELLING TEST

Can a leader repeat the choice without a private explanation?



EXECUTION WORK

STAGE 06

Execution

Design the first visible move.

FIRST ACTION

What happens in the next seven days?

Make the action observable, not aspirational.

OWNER

Who is accountable for that move?

One person, even when many people contribute.

REVIEW DATE

When will the decision be checked?

Choose a date that matches the speed of the risk.

EVIDENCE

What will show that it is working?

Name the earliest useful signal, not the final outcome.

COMMUNICATION

Who needs to hear what, from whom, and by when?



DECISION RECORD

Make the move legible.

Use this final page as the version that travels. Share it with the people responsible for carrying the decision, then return to it at the review date.

OWNER

DECIDED

REVIEW

THE DECISION

We have decided to...

BECAUSE

THE TRADE-OFF

FIRST VISIBLE MOVE

SUCCESS EVIDENCE

THE SENTENCE THE TEAM SHOULD BE ABLE TO REPEAT