TOOL 6

The Decision Rights Grid

PLAN-SET-GO
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Put decisions at the right level before the work begins.

ORGANIZATION OR TEAM	PLAN OR VERSION	LAST UPDATED

START WITH THE LEVEL. Then name the owner, limits, required input, and escalation path.

1 KNOW THE FOUR LEVELS
Match the decision to the consequence it creates

DECISION LEVEL	WHAT IT CHANGES	TYPICAL DECISIONS	DEFAULT AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC	Mission, the Strategic Foundation, major Strategic Objectives, or the overall resource posture.	Enter a market; change the operating model; add or end a major objective; shift major funding.	Senior leadership and, where required, the board.
TACTICAL	Initiatives, timing, scope, or resource allocations inside the approved Strategic Plan.	Resequence work; adjust scope; reallocate approved budget or capacity.	The accountable owner closest to the commitment, within defined limits.
OPERATIONAL	Day-to-day execution inside established direction and boundaries.	Work methods; scheduling; routine problem-solving; reasonable local adjustments.	The people closest to the work.
EXCEPTION	Work outside the plan, significant new resources, material risk, or displacement of a priority.	An unfunded request; permanent headcount; a major risk; a new priority with no capacity.	The defined escalation authority.

2 SET THE BOUNDARIES
Name the authority, limits, required input, and escalation path

DEFINE LIMITS IN TERMS YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN USE: dollars, headcount, risk, timing, scope, or impact on another priority.

LEVEL	NAMED OWNER OR BODY	CAN DECIDE WITHOUT ESCALATION	MUST CONSULT	ESCALATES TO
STRATEGIC				
TACTICAL				
OPERATIONAL				
EXCEPTION				

CLARITY CHECK

- ☐ Routine choices stay close to the work
- ☐ Strategic consequences remain visible
- ☐ The exception path is explicit

Clarity is not the same as control. Clarity distributes good judgment outward.