

The Decision Matrix

Decision hygiene: impact, effort, risk, certainty, moral cost—then commit with a review date.

TIER: BOARD / FOUNDER TAG: GOVERNANCE · ACCOUNTABILITY · SPEED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Most bad decisions are not immoral; they are undisciplined—no criteria, no owner, no review date.
- The Matrix is a governance tool: it makes reasoning visible and auditable.
- A decision without assumptions and triggers is a gamble pretending to be strategy.

OPERATING LOGIC

Criteria must be explicit

When criteria are hidden, power fills the vacuum. Explicit criteria reduce political drift.

Review dates are humility

Markets move; assumptions decay. A review date is operational intelligence.

Moral cost belongs in the model

A decision can be profitable and still be corrupt. Moral cost protects trust.

APPLICATION PLAYBOOK

1. Step 1 — Define the decision

Write one sentence: “We are deciding whether to ____ by ____.”

'Output: Decision statement.

2. Step 2 — Lock constraints

List constraints and non-negotiables. These become hard filters.

'Output: Constraints list.

3. Step 3 — Score with agreed meaning

Score impact, effort, risk, certainty, and moral cost.

'Output: Rubric + scored options.

4. Step 4 — Capture assumptions

For the top option, list the top assumptions that must be true.

'Output: Assumptions list.

5. Step 5 — Triggers + review date

Define what would change your mind and when you will revisit.

'Output: Trigger list + review date.

KEY METRICS

Decision cycle time	Speed without chaos; too slow kills opportunity.	Monthly
Decision reversal rate	High reversals indicate weak assumptions.	Quarterly
Assumption accuracy	Improves organisational judgment over time.	Quarterly
Risk events realised	Confirms whether risk assessment is real or ceremonial.	Quarterly

BOARD QUESTIONS

- ? What is the real decision—and what are we refusing to decide?
- ? Which assumption is most likely wrong, and what evidence would prove it?
- ? What moral cost are we accepting, and is it compatible with our values?
- ? What is the review date—and who owns the revisit?