# SCALE / PIVOT / KILL DECISION GUIDE

**AI Leadership & Project Management Masterclass**

Curtin University

2025-10-29

## SCALE / PIVOT / KILL DECISION GUIDE

---

### YOUR TASK

You completed a 6-week pilot. Now you have data. Time to decide:

**Should you SCALE it? PIVOT it? Or KILL it?**

---

### THE THREE PATHS

#### SCALE

**Roll out to 100% of customers/operations**

**Choose this when:** - You met 80% of your Go/No-Go criteria - Proof of concept is validated - Key risks are addressed - You're confident it will work at scale

**Questions to ask:** - Did we hit our targets? - Are remaining gaps minor or major? - Is the team ready?

---

#### PIVOT

**Continue the pilot with changes**

**Choose this when:** - You met 50-80% of your criteria - Gaps are solvable (not fundamental problems) - You have a clear plan to fix issues - 4-6 more weeks will give you better data

**Questions to ask:** - Which gaps are fixable vs. fundamental? - What would it take to hit our targets? - How much more time/money do we need?

---

### KILL

**Stop the project**

**Choose this when:** - You met <50% of criteria - Key assumptions are proven wrong - Fundamental problems (not fixable) - Not worth the continued investment

**Questions to ask:** - Is this a solvable problem or a fundamental failure? - What evidence would change our minds? - What's the cost of continuing vs. stopping?

---

## HOW TO DECIDE

### Step 1: Score Your Criteria

Look at your original Pilot Scoping worksheet.

For each Go/No-Go criterion, ask: **Did we meet it?**

Count: - Criteria MET - Criteria CLOSE (within 2-3 points) - Criteria MISSED

### Step 2: Identify Solvable vs. Fundamental

**Solvable problems:** - "Accuracy is 88% vs. 90% target" → 4 weeks of model training can fix this - "Cost is $14 vs. $12" → Will improve with higher volume - "Team adoption at 75%" → Sarah is now leading adoption, others will follow - "Escalations at 3.5% vs. <2%?" → Normalized after Week 3, stable now

**Fundamental problems:** - "AI can't handle this type of work" → Wrong approach, might need to kill - "Team refuses to use it" → Deep trust issue, hard to fix - "Accuracy stuck at 60% and won't improve" → Data problem might be unfixable - "Cost is 2x worse than human agents" → Math doesn't work

### Step 3: Make Your Call

**80%+ criteria met + gaps are solvable?** → SCALE

**50-80% criteria met + gaps are solvable?** → PIVOT

**<50% criteria met + gaps are fundamental?** → KILL

---

## REMEMBER

**Don't let sunk costs trap you.** You spent $150K. That investment is done—don't use it to justify scaling a bad project. But DO recognize that $150K bought you learning, proof of concept, and data. That WAS valuable. For the decision: only ask "Will scaling create more value than other options?"

**Data beats gut feel.** Use your numbers. Don't say "I think it's ready" when the data says it's not.

**Pivot is often the right answer.** Not everything is Scale vs. Kill. Most projects are "continue with improvements."

**You can decide with imperfect data.** Perfect information doesn't exist. Make the best call you can with what you have.

---