

LEAD THE WORK · STRATEGY &amp; OUTCOMES

# Alignment & Strategy Reset Toolkit

Alignment erodes when success is implied instead of defined. Drift rarely begins with conflict. It begins with ambiguity.

- 1 What does success actually look like?
- 2 What are we not optimizing for?
- 3 Who holds this decision?
- 4 When do we revisit?

60 minutes

Team or solo use

Strategy &amp; Outcomes

Criteria made visible. Tradeoffs named. Decisions recorded so alignment survives the meeting.

# What you leave with

Observable criteria for success. Named tradeoffs. A decision record that holds alignment beyond the meeting.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

### Part I — Define Success

Write success in observable terms. Three to five criteria. If you cannot measure it, you cannot align around it.

### Part II — Name the Tradeoffs

If we optimize for X, what slows or stops? Tradeoffs named now prevent conflict later.

### Part III — Decision Record

Document the decision, the criteria, the owner, and when you revisit. A decision without a record is a conversation that will happen again.

## WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

Success is observable — not implied.

Tradeoffs are named before the work starts.

Decisions are recorded with criteria.

Revisit conditions are defined.

## USE IT WHEN

The team is moving in different directions without conflict. Priorities feel shared but criteria aren't written. Decisions get revisited because they were never fully made.

Strategic Clarity  
*Criteria visible to everyone*

Stakeholder Alignment  
*Shared definition of success*

Reduced Drift  
*Less rework from misalignment*

*Alignment is not agreement on everything. It is agreement on what matters most and what we are willing to trade to get there.*

## PART I

## Define Success

Success that lives in someone's head cannot be shared. Write it in observable terms — what you would see, hear, or measure when the work has landed well. Three to five criteria. No more.

1

State the outcome in one sentence

Not what you will do — what will be true when it is done.

2

Write 3–5 observable success criteria

Each one should be verifiable. If it requires interpretation, rewrite it.

3

Name what is not included

Scope is defined as much by what is out as what is in.

4

Identify the evidence standard

How will you know the criteria have been met? Who confirms it?

---

WORKSHEET

SUCCESS IN ONE SENTENCE:

*What will be true when the work has landed.*

---

---

OBSERVABLE SUCCESS CRITERIA (3-5):

*Specific and verifiable.*

---

---

---

---

---

WHAT IS EXPLICITLY OUT OF SCOPE:

*Named boundaries prevent conflict.*

---

---

EVIDENCE STANDARD:

*How you will know. Who confirms.*

---

---

## PART II

## Name the Tradeoffs

Every priority implies a tradeoff. When tradeoffs are unnamed, they surface as surprises — conflict, rework, the moment someone says 'I didn't know we were giving that up.'

## TRADEOFF MAP

| IF WE OPTIMIZE FOR | WHAT SLOWS OR STOPS | WHO ABSORBS IMPACT |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
|                    |                     |                    |
|                    |                     |                    |
|                    |                     |                    |
|                    |                     |                    |

## PROMPTS WORTH SITTING WITH

**What are we choosing not to prioritize right now?**

*This is not a failure — it is a decision. Name it.*

**Whose work absorbs the most impact from this direction?**

*They deserve to know, and to be consulted.*

**What evidence would cause us to revisit this priority?**

*If you can't answer this, the criteria aren't clear enough.*

**What boundary protects focus from expanding?**

*Focus requires something that says no on your behalf.*

## PART III

## Decision Record & Stakeholder Script

A decision without a record is a conversation that will happen again. Document enough to make the next decision easier.

**DECISION STATEMENT:**

*What was decided. One clear sentence.*

---

---

**SUCCESS CRITERIA USED:**

*What good looks like, in observable terms.*

---

---

---

**TRADEOFFS ACKNOWLEDGED:**

*What we accepted as a consequence.*

---

---

**DECISION OWNER:**

*One person.*

---

**REVISIT DATE AND TRIGGER:**

*When and under what condition we reopen this.*

---

---

**STAKEHOLDER ALIGNMENT SCRIPT**

*Use this to communicate the decision to those affected.*

"Here is what we are optimizing for."

*State the criteria. Not just the goal.*

"Here is what we are not optimizing for."

*Name the tradeoff. It builds trust.*

"Here is the decision and who owns it."

*One person. Clear.*

"Here is when we revisit."

*Revisit conditions signal this isn't permanent if wrong.*

REFLECTION

# After the Work

Use these prompts after the situation has stabilized — not to assign blame, but to understand what the work revealed and what to carry forward.

WHAT EVIDENCE WOULD CHANGE THIS DECISION?

*If you can't answer this, the criteria need more work.*

---

---

WHOSE WORK IS MOST AFFECTED — AND WERE THEY CONSULTED?

---

---

WHAT BOUNDARY PROTECTS THIS FOCUS FROM EXPANDING?

*Name the thing that will say no on your behalf.*

---

---

Criteria made visible today become the foundation that holds under pressure tomorrow.

## Maypop Grove

A leadership education platform for people navigating complexity, transition, and the deep work of change.

[maypopgrove.com](https://maypopgrove.com) · [grow@maypopgrove.com](mailto:grow@maypopgrove.com)

Related Resources

[Risk Visibility & Response Toolkit](#)

[Decision & Accountability Toolkit](#)

[First 48 Hours Decision Script](#)

[maypopgrove.com/resources](https://maypopgrove.com/resources)