

“Even Over” Strategies

Clarify and guide decisions in a simple, direct and memorable way

What it is

A brief statement to clarify priorities and tradeoffs, used to guide difficult decisions that teams face on a regular basis.

Use cases

Move quickly without needing to wait for alignment or approval

Keep decisions aligned to a particular guiding strategy

Make your strategies clearer and more powerful by communicating the choices and tradeoffs

Statement Model

Good thing A

even over

Good thing B

Think about where your team has gotten stuck and identify the two positive outcomes that were in conflict.

Examples

Progress

even over

Perfection

Candor

even over

Comfort

Growth

even over

Profit

Decision *Rights*

Clarify authority and empower decision owners

What it is

A simple framework to identify levels of decision authority across a team or project

Use cases

Clarify who has authority to make different types of decisions

Decrease the amount of time spent in decision meetings

Increase trust and autonomy between project team members and sponsor

Put it into practice

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Sponsor decides

Manager makes the final decision

Is it “Safe to try”?

Team proposes and manager consents if it's “Safe To Try”

Team decides

The team has full authority to decide as long as they communicate with the manager

Candid Comms

Share information - even bad news - frequently and predictably

What it is

Four simple questions that make it easy to share regular, transparent updates

Use cases

Strengthen team trust and healthy communication habits

Build skills around sharing difficult news

Normalize transparent communication

Put it into practice

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Questions

What is my goal?

Openly share your strategy behind this communication

What do we know?

Share the information you have, no matter how negative

What don't we know or can't share?

Be honest about where there's uncertainty or purposeful privacy being protected

What is our first next step?

Share your proposal on what we should do first as a next step

Behaviors

- ✓ Share regularly, openly, and often
- ✓ Avoid excessive easing-in when sharing bad news
- ✓ Model how you'd like others to speak up

Decision *Comms*

If it isn't written down, it isn't decided

What it is

Document decisions and share with all stakeholders to increase clarity and transparency

Use cases

Make a decision explicit by writing it down

Minimize the time spent on confirming decision details

Provide clarity for broader stakeholder group

Put it into practice

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Steps for decision capture

Write down the decision and the name of the decision owner in an open, shared, digital document

Circulate the decision as soon as possible, outlining:

- decision method
- stakeholders who engaged in the decision making process
- rationale and context
- decision's impact and tradeoffs

Set a schedule for implementing the decision, evaluating the decision, and making changes, if necessary

Team *Retrospective*

Gather information on how your team is doing, and get better on purpose

What it is

A predictable process to reflect on and discuss what is and isn't working, to improve teamwork and effectiveness

Use cases

Build a habit of team learning and reflection

Catch issues before they become a problem

Discuss the gap between how you'd like to be working as a team and the current reality

Put it into practice

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The agenda

1

Ask “what’s working?”

Write silently (2 minutes). Focus on successful actions and choices, not people who did well.

2

Ask “where are you getting stuck?”

Write silently (2 minutes). Focus on individual experiences: “I got stuck when...”

3

Share

Notice and discuss common themes.

4

Ask “What might we do differently?”

Write silently (3 minutes). Share, prioritize, and commit to next actions.