

Week 34

Clarify Decision Rights



8/24/26

Why it Matters: Unclear decision rights create bottlenecks, unnecessary approvals, and frustration. When people know what they can decide, where they need input, and when to escalate, they can move with greater confidence, ownership, and speed.

This Week's 1% Better Practice: identify one recurring decision that regularly comes to you for approval and ask yourself: *"Am I actually the right person to make this decision?"* If the answer is no, identify who should own it. Then tell that person explicitly: *"This decision is yours. You do not need my approval. Here are the parameters, and here is when I need you to escalate it."*

Applying It:

Find the Bottleneck. Think about decisions that regularly come to you. What is one decision you are frequently asked to make or approve that someone else may be capable of owning?

Why does this decision currently come to you? (check all that apply)

That's just how we've always done it

The employee isn't sure they have authority

I haven't clearly delegated it

I have difficulty letting go of it

There is legitimate risk involved

The employee needs more development first

Other: _____

Identify the Right Decision Owner. Who has the information, expertise, and context needed to make this decision well? _____

Is that person currently empowered to make the decision? _____

Define the Decision Rights.

Decision to be made: _____

Decision Owner: _____

They may decide without my approval when: _____

They should seek input from: _____

They should escalate to me when: _____

Have the Conversation. Use this language if helpful:

"I want you to own this decision. You do not need my approval as long as _____. I trust your judgment. If _____ happens, that's when I want you to bring it back to me."

