

CROSS-ROLE INSTRUMENT · THE AFACTOR METHOD

# Decision Record

One decision, the reasoning behind it, what was traded away, and what would prove it wrong. This is the artefact that separates a professional from someone who ran a campaign.

## THE DECISION THIS TEMPLATE PROTECTS

Why this call was made, on what basis, and how you would know if it was the wrong one.

### ROLE

**Every role, every level**

### COURSE PLACEMENT

**Base Module · Decision-making, uncertainty and failure**

### REVISION

**Version 1.0  
Current as of 19 August 2026**

Write one of these for any decision you would struggle to defend in six months. It takes about fifteen minutes and it is the single highest-return habit in this library. Complete sections one to five **before** the outcome is known. Section six is filled in afterwards, honestly, including when you were wrong. A decision record edited after the result to look prescient is worse than no record at all.

## BEFORE YOU START, YOU NEED

- A decision that is actually yours to make.
- The alternatives you genuinely considered, not the ones you list to look thorough.
- Fifteen minutes, before you act.

## 01 The decision

### WHAT WAS DECIDED

*One sentence, in the active voice, naming who decided.*

DATE AND WHO WAS IN THE ROOM

02 The situation that forced it

WHAT MADE THIS A DECISION RATHER THAN A ROUTINE ACTION

WHAT WE KNEW

WHAT WE DID NOT KNOW AND COULD NOT FIND OUT IN TIME

03 Options considered

| OPTION | CASE FOR | CASE AGAINST | WHY NOT CHOSEN |
|--------|----------|--------------|----------------|
|        |          |              |                |
|        |          |              |                |
|        |          |              |                |

If you cannot fill in two genuine alternatives, you did not make a decision. You executed a default. That is sometimes correct, and it should be recorded as such.

04 What was traded away

Every choice costs something. Naming the cost is what makes the record credible.

WHAT WE GAVE UP BY CHOOSING THIS

WHO BEARS THAT COST, AND DO THEY KNOW

## 05 The falsification test

Written before the outcome. This is the part that makes a decision record a scientific object rather than a diary entry.

### WHAT WE EXPECT TO HAPPEN, AND BY WHEN

### WHAT WE WOULD SEE IF THIS WAS WRONG

### THE DATE WE WILL CHECK

## 06 What actually happened

Completed on the review date. Fill it in whether or not it flatters you.

### OUTCOME

### WAS THE REASONING SOUND, SEPARATELY FROM WHETHER THE OUTCOME WAS GOOD?

*Good decisions sometimes produce bad outcomes, and the reverse. Judge the reasoning.*

### WHAT WE WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY, AND WHAT WE WOULD REPEAT

#### JUDGMENT PROMPTS

1. Would you be comfortable showing this record to the client, unedited?
2. Did you write the falsification test before or after you knew the answer?
3. If the outcome was good but the reasoning was weak, are you willing to say so?

#### WHAT THIS TEMPLATE WILL NOT DO FOR YOU

- It will not improve a decision you have already made and rationalised.
- It does not work retrospectively. A record written after the result is a story.
- It is not documentation for its own sake. If nobody reads it at the review date, stop writing them.

## THE DEFENSIBLE OUTPUT

**A dated one-page record**, closed out at the review date. A portfolio of ten of these, including the ones where you were wrong, is more persuasive to a serious employer than any campaign screenshot.

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