



# RAPID

Decision-Making framework





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# Why clarity in decision-making roles matter

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- Speedy, high quality decisions are critical for high performance organizations
- Defining the RAPID can speed decision-making, especially for cross-functional projects
- “Clean escalations” are productive & encouraged
- We need to spend time to decide how to decide



## Recommend

Has broad visibility and access to relevant inputs / info. Has credibility with both 'I' and 'D'.  
80% of the work is here.

## Input

People with valuable, relevant info which could potentially change the decision -- avoid 'I' proliferation

## Decide

Makes the final decision  
Commits the organization to action  
Only one 'D' allowed

## Agree

Formally agree to the decision  
Limit to 1-2 people

## Perform

Execute decision once made  
May also be involved as an "I" for upfront planning



# When to use the RAPID

**When a decision is cross-functional / cross-team, and big enough that we need to get 80% confidence of the answer**

E.g. Roadmap requests, customer emergencies, M&A integration

**When there is a reason to believe that roles & responsibilities need to be clarified, even if a decision is within one function.**

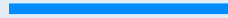
For leaders, this can help you explicitly call out if someone else on your team (not you) is the D

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Note: Many decisions will not need the RAPID, especially if they can be made quickly by one person.



# Examples





# RAPID done well

## SENDGRID TESTING BACK TO FREEMIUM

### Context

In 2017, we learned that pushing a “free trial” was not as beneficial as the “freemium” model for longer-term revenue. We needed to test our way back.

Multiple stakeholders -- Revenue Marketing, Customer Growth, Revenue Assurance, UI/UX, Engineering, Pricing, and BizOps

### First defined and aligned on the RAPID

Recommend: Adrian

Agree: Carly

Perform: Product, Eng, Marketing

Input: Katrina, Minli

Decide: Calvin

### The “R” pulled the team together to agree on RAPID and approach

Adrian developed a recommendation based on feedback from A, I and D, and presented this to all parties

**During the meeting, the parties agreed to a path forward.**

**No escalation required.**



# RAPID done badly

## SENDGRID ORANGE COUNTY SITE SELECTION

### Context

We needed a new location for the Orange County office

Many considerations -- sq ft, \$\$, proximity to food, employee convenience, etc

Office Ops shortlisted 3 locations and had a recommendation for their top option

### What happened

There was a RAPID... but there were too many people in the A

Recommend: Stacy, Yev, Mindy (Office Ops)

Agree: Committee of people across locations

P: Office Ops, IT

I: ELT

D: Craig

Rs felt that they needed to get everyone in the “Agree” to “Agree”

**Significant cycles spent, resulting in decision delay by several weeks**





# Other example RAPIDs from SendGrid

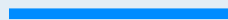
Business problem	Recommend	Agree	Perform	Input	Decide
<b>Should we buy XYZ company?</b>	LT (Corp Dev)	Yancey (CFO)	(relevant teams)	Steve (Product) Craig (Eng) Togs (Legal) Leandra (GTM)	Sameer (CEO)
<b>Where should the EMEA GTM team focus most of their time / effort to drive 2018 revenue?</b>	Mark and Minli (BizOps)	Leandra (GTM)	EMEA Team	Scott W (Product) Carly (Mktg) Greg (Finance)	Yancey (COO)
<b>How should we change the CSM quota model given Q1 performance?</b>	Ryan, Angela (CSM lead)	Nathan (FP&A)	Finance, EDO, RevOps	CS Managers, Greg (Finance)	Leandra (GTM)

## Potential opportunities for Twilio

- When R&D gets new input from the field that may change priorities / roadmap?
- When there are complex customer communications that require multiple stakeholders?



# Let's Practice





# EXERCISE

1. For the decision that you need made, [draft the RAPID](#) (5 mins)
2. Pair up and review your RAPID with your partner. Edit your RAPID based on your discussion, if needed. (5-10 mins)

Remember to provide clarity and specificity on the decision that needs to be made. Anchoring on the right problem statement is a must have.

	Recommend	Agree	Perform	Input	Decide
<Decision>					



# SHARING

1. Was there something that surprised you?
2. Any learnings that you can share with this group?
3. Any questions that you have?

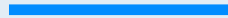


# Frequently asked questions

- **What happens if the “A” and the “D” don’t agree?**
  - Smart, good-intentioned, people can disagree. It’s absolutely normal.
  - If there is lack of agreement, do a Clean Escalation -- i.e. the “A” and the “D” go together to their respective managers and lay out the situation and why they are not in agreement
  - Avoid a Dirty Escalation -- i.e. if one person escalates without the other
- **Can we have 2 “D”s?**
  - No.
- **Can we have more than one “A”?**
  - It’s rare, but possible to have 2 As. Typically when a decision requires both Finance and Legal.
- **I’m not a “D” or an “A”, but I don’t agree. What then?**
  - Welp. Most decisions don’t require 100% agreement. Make sure you’ve provided your input to the D or the A
  - “Disagree and commit” enables us to avoid the Consensus Trap, in which the need for consensus leads to inaction



# Clean Escalations





At times, smart, rational,  
well-intentioned colleagues do not  
agree ... and that is okay



# Clean escalation is

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Teams coming together with one story and shared narrative, with clearly articulated options and tradeoffs.

More details in the [escalations doc](#)

## Dirty Escalation

- Alone
- Advocate
- Exclude
- Authority
- Compliance
- **I know best...**

## Clean Escalation

- **Together**
- Collaborate
- **Include**
- Consensus
- Commitment
- **We don't know...**





# Why do proper clean escalations not happen?

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- ❑ People genuinely believe they have taken the steps to escalate...
- ❑ People are self limiting, and don't realize the possibilities
- ❑ People believe the status quo is an intentional decision



# Let's get practical

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# Take action on BAD RAPIDs

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- **If you see that a meaningful decision that needs to be made, and roles are not clear,** ask to define the RAPID
- **If you see a bad RAPID, call it out.**
  - More than One D
  - More than One A
  - Not enough (or too many) Is
  - D does not have the ability to “commit the organization to action”
  - Lack of alignment that this is the right RAPID