

AI governance · Leadership decisions

Bring AI governance into the business review

Keep the business purpose, value, authority and evidence together. Use an ordinary leadership review to decide what may proceed, what needs a decision and what remains unknown.

What you finish with: A business-review record with the decision sought, permitted scope, accountable people, evidence, open conditions and next review point.

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GOVERNANCE / BUSINESS REVIEW

01 Purpose and consequence

What should improve, who uses it and what a failure would affect.

02 People and permissions

Who owns the work, what each person may decide and the limits.

03 Evidence and next decision

Results, failures, full effort and open conditions, with a review owner.

Continue, narrow, change or suspend the affected work on an explicit decision.

01 Start with the work and the consequence

An AI proposal gives leaders several decisions to make together: what work should improve, which actions may be delegated, what people remain responsible for, and what evidence will support the next step. Put those decisions in the same business review. Keep the purpose and expected value beside the authority, data, people and operating conditions.

Describe a specific task. Who uses the result? What changes if it is wrong, late, incomplete or acted on without permission? A draft for internal discussion and a message sent to a customer have different consequences, even if the same assistant prepares both. Selecting an option, changing records, contacting an external party and committing funds each require their own authority.

02 Name the decisions people retain

Identify the person accountable for the workflow and the people authorized to make its consequential decisions. Confirm who can grant access, accept the work, approve a purchase, handle an exception and suspend affected activity. A job title alone does not establish all those permissions.

Make room for Finance, technology, security, data, legal and the people doing the work when their responsibilities are affected. Their contribution should produce a clear decision or condition. A long list of reviewers is less useful than knowing whose judgment is needed for the specific issue.

03 Bring policy into the ordinary task

Translate the relevant policy into instructions people can apply: the information permitted for this task, the tools allowed, the intended recipients, the required review and the route for an exception. Ask how the relevant technical boundaries will be enforced and how their operation will be checked. Keep the written requirement, configured boundary and observed result distinguishable.

Permission to prepare an internal brief does not answer whether an external recipient may receive it. If a later request adds an external recipient, the person with the relevant authority must decide that new scope. Preserve the earlier record and identify the changed condition. Continue unrelated approved work where the confirmed boundaries allow it.

04 Review value and readiness together

Ask what preparation, checking, correction and ongoing support the work requires. Confirm who has time to do it and what other work would be affected. An employee reporting possible availability is not an assignment, and a faster draft is not established cash savings.

Report prepared, reviewed and awaiting-review work as separate states, together with the agreed criteria. Reviewed work does not establish the quality of unreviewed work, permission to expand the

workflow or a staffing reduction. Record any failures within the reviewed work and retain uncertainty about later defects.

05 Bring the evidence the next decision needs

The review pack should connect the intended outcome, current authority, permitted inputs, actual results, failures, full effort and open conditions. Distinguish vendor assertions, configuration records, test observations and evidence from actual operation. Proposed checks remain proposed until performed and reviewed.

Use the pack to decide whether to continue within the current boundary, narrow it, gather more evidence, change it or suspend affected work. Confirm the response owner, their authority and the conditions for resuming. Stopping further activity and reversing an earlier action are different decisions; determine what is possible and permitted before promising recovery.

06 Return when the arrangement changes

Set a review point appropriate to the task and the consequences. Also identify changes that call for earlier attention: a new source of data, recipient, connected tool, model, action, owner or business purpose. Record the affected scope and the evidence needed for the next decision.

The useful output is a business decision with a visible basis, accountable people and an explicit next step. Keep the record with the work so a later reviewer can see what changed, what was decided and what still needs attention.

Example business review

Internal supplier-comparison briefs

A distributor is assessing assistance that prepares internal supplier comparisons for a human purchasing review.

Work and boundary:

The proposed assistance assembles permitted information, drafts an internal comparison and identifies missing facts. Supplier selection, purchasing approval, supplier-record changes, vendor communication and payment remain separate decisions for the people who hold those permissions.

Results and unknowns:

Six briefs have been prepared in this example: four reviewed against agreed criteria and two awaiting review. The review must bring the criteria, findings, failures and total effort. The counts alone establish neither quality nor savings. The two awaiting review remain unknown.

People and operating conditions:

Confirm the workflow owner, reviewers, permitted sources, actual access and the time needed for preparation and checking. Possible staff availability is not a confirmed assignment. Written requirements do not establish that configured boundaries work.

Changed request:

A later request adds a vendor as recipient. The earlier internal-drafting permission does not authorize sending. Preserve the internal record and ask the person with the relevant authority to decide the new scope before transmission.

Decision and return:

Decide whether to continue a bounded evaluation after the missing conditions are resolved. Confirm who can suspend affected work, verify its state and authorize resumption. Do not assume a previous action can be reversed.

Your working record

AI GOVERNANCE IN THE BUSINESS REVIEW

Field	Your record
Work and business outcome / consequences of failure:	
Permitted actions / limits / where authority is recorded:	
Decisions retained by people / actual permission holders:	
Data / tools / recipients / source-use conditions:	
Policy in the task / configured boundaries / operating evidence:	
People performing and reviewing / confirmed skills, time and coverage:	
Results / failures / full effort / unknowns in the value assessment:	
Who may suspend / how state is checked / authority to resume:	
Changes requiring another review / owner of next decision:	
Decision sought:	
Missing evidence / owner / next action:	
Responsible people to confirm:	
Next review point:	

[Open the guide to copy this record into your team's document](#)

Related reading

[Check ownership across the six governance terrains](#)

Use the ownership test when the review identifies a responsibility or control that needs a clearer home.