

Stage 1 Leadership Check-In

A structured meeting guide for aligning leadership, confirming guardrails, and deciding whether to move forward to a pilot.

Purpose of This Check-In

This is a decision meeting — not a discussion. By the end, leadership will have agreed on direction, confirmed ownership, and made an explicit go / no-go call.

01

Align on current AI capability

Translate baseline scores into shared understanding.

02

Confirm risks and guardrails

Agree on what is — and is not — acceptable before moving forward.

03

Agree on direction before proceeding

Decide whether a controlled pilot is appropriate now.

04

Ensure ownership is clear

Leave with named owners, a defined pilot, and a timeline.

How to Run This Check-In

DURATION

30–45 minutes. Set a hard stop and keep to it.

WHO ATTENDS

2–5 leaders. Decision-makers only — no observers.

FACILITATION

One person facilitates. Their job is to drive decisions, not contribute opinions.

INPUTS

Baseline Capability Worksheet and AI Readiness Score. Distribute in advance.

FOCUS

Decisions, not discussion. Each section ends with an explicit group decision.

This meeting is most effective when participants have reviewed the baseline results before arriving.

Review Your Baseline

Surface where results do not align — not to relitigate what was scored.

Inputs for this section:

Baseline Capability Worksheet · AI Readiness Score

Look specifically at where the two sources do not match.

- Which pillar scored lowest — and does the group agree with that rating?
- Where do individual perspectives diverge from the formal score?
- Are there gaps that were not captured by the assessment?

Notes — record anything that needs to inform later decisions:

Leadership Alignment

Confirm that leadership is aligned on why AI is being explored and who is accountable.

- Do we agree on the reason we are exploring AI — and is that reason specific enough to act on?
- Is there one named person accountable for AI decisions during Stage 1?
- Have expectations been communicated clearly to the team?

Leadership Alignment Decision:

Aligned

Partially Aligned

Not Aligned

Notes:

Governance & Guardrails

Confirm that policy and acceptable use are sufficiently defined to support a pilot.

- Have we defined what is allowed — and what is not — with enough specificity to act on?
- Are data privacy and confidentiality boundaries clearly stated and understood?
- Is there a process for raising concerns if AI output is wrong, harmful, or unclear?

Governance Decision:

Defined

In Progress

Not Defined

Notes:

Workflow Focus

Identify the specific workflow that will serve as the first pilot candidate.

- Which workflow is the strongest candidate — is it low-risk, measurable, and contained?
- Can we define a clear start, end, and success measure for this workflow?
- Is there a named owner who will be responsible for running this pilot?

Workflow Focus Decision:

Pilot Candidate Selected

Needs Refinement

Not Ready

Notes:

Risks & Constraints

Name the risks that could derail the pilot before it begins — and decide if they are manageable.

- What concerns exist that have not yet been addressed by governance?
- Are there external constraints — regulatory, reputational, or contractual — that affect this pilot?
- What must be true before we move forward with a pilot?

Risk Level Assessment:

Manageable

Needs Attention

Blocker Exists

Notes:

Pilot Readiness Decision

Make the explicit go / no-go call. This is the purpose of the entire meeting.

Based on this conversation — are we ready to move to a controlled pilot?

YES

Proceed to Stage 2 — Controlled Pilot

NOT YET

Define conditions, then re-convene

If NOT YET — what conditions must be met before proceeding?

Condition 1:

Condition 2:

Condition 3:

Owner of follow-up:

Re-convene date:

This decision should be recorded and shared with participants within 24 hours of the meeting.

Ownership & Next Steps

Leave this meeting with names, a defined pilot, and a start date — not intentions.

AI Lead / Owner:

Name and role of the person accountable for Stage 2

First Pilot:

Specific workflow, team, and scope

Pilot Success Measure:

How will we know the pilot worked?

Start Date / Week:

A specific date, not a vague timeframe

Guardrails Confirmation:

Who confirmed they are in place before launch?

Outcome Summary



Aligned Direction

Leadership has agreed on why AI is being explored and what the first move is.



Guardrails Confirmed

Acceptable use, risk boundaries, and data policies are defined and understood.



Pilot Defined

A specific workflow, owner, and success measure have been named.



Owner Assigned

One person is accountable for driving Stage 2 forward.

You now have clarity, alignment, and direction.

Stage 2 begins with a controlled pilot — not exploration.