



Define The Pause Trigger Before You Start

A simple way to stop AI projects drifting into cost, complexity, and low adoption

USE THIS WHEN

Use this before launching a pilot or programme where everyone is enthusiastic, but no one has defined what evidence would make the team stop, reduce scope, or redesign.

WHY IT MATTERS

Broad AI programmes can drift because the first decision is exciting and the later evidence is messy. A pause trigger protects the organisation by a green, before launch, what would count as a warning sign.

Set triggers before the project starts

- **Adoption:** if the people affected are not using or trusting the change by a defined point.
- **Cost:** if implementation, training, change, or support costs materially change the business case.
- **Quality:** if outputs require too much rework, checking, or exception handling.
- **Workflow:** if the project adds complexity rather than reducing friction.
- **Trust or reputation:** If customers, commerce, staff, or leaders cannot explain or defend the use of AI

What is a pause trigger?

- A pause trigger is the evidence that tells the leadership team to stop, reduce scope, redesign, or choose a smaller intervention.
- It is not a failure label. **It is a decision control.**

The discipline

- Start narrow. Solve one name problem well.
- Measure it honestly.
- Decide in advance what evidence would make you pause rather than drift.



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Working Page

Use this page with your leadership team. If the answer is vague, leave it blank and treat that as useful evidence.

CHECK	QUESTION	ANSWER / EVIDENCE
PROJECT SCOPE	What problem is this AI project meant to solve first?	
SUCCESS EVIDENCE	Would prove the project is working?	
PAUSE TRIGGER	What evidence would make us pause, reduce scope, or redesign?	
REVIEW DATE	When will the leadership team review the evidence?	
DECISION OWNER	Who has authority to make the pause or redesign decision?	
OWNERSHIP	Who owns outcome, adoption, cost, and risk	

If there is no pause trigger, there is no real control. Take a Human Pause before the project becomes hard to unwind.