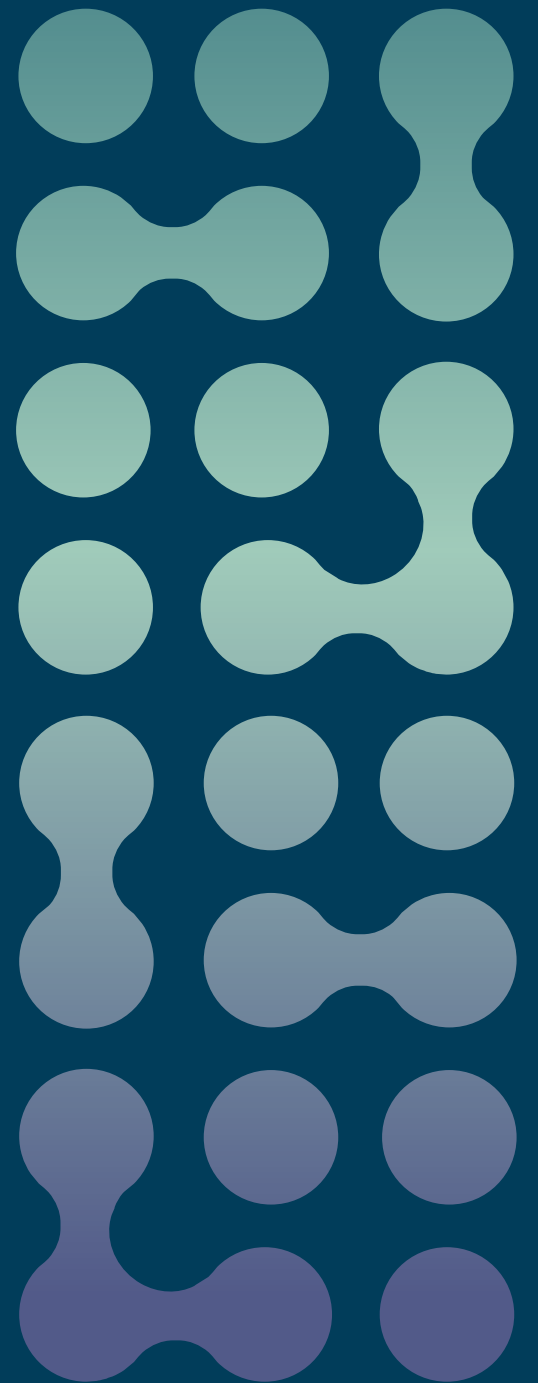


「MEJAVU」

Decision Rights Need Guardrails



WHY YOU NEED THEM

**Decision
rights are
useless
without
guardrails**

If you want teams to decide more on their own, “**use your judgment**” is not enough.

THE REAL PROBLEM

Why teams keep over- escalating

When guardrails are unclear, people do one of two things:

- Escalate everything to avoid overstepping
- Make inconsistent calls because the boundaries are vague

BOTTOM LINE

- Unclear guardrails create hesitation, inconsistency, and leader bottlenecks.

WHAT THEY DO

Guardrails make autonomy usable

Good guardrails clarify:

- What teams can decide on their own
- What threshold triggers escalation
- What factors must be considered first
- What needs to be documented or communicated after

BOTTOM LINE

- Guardrails are not bureaucracy. They are what make decision rights work.

EXAMPLE

What guardrails can look like in practice

Budget: team can approve decisions up to a defined dollar threshold

Risk: team can act on low-risk issues; escalate higher customer, regulatory, or security risk

Cross-functional impact: team decides in its own lane; escalate when tradeoffs affect other teams

- If it's a cross-functional team, they should negotiate tradeoffs across the team themselves—only escalating if decision infringes another guardrail

Reversibility: team owns reversible decisions; leadership weighs in on hard-to-reverse calls

Strategic scope: team can act within approved priorities; escalate when new scope is introduced

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THE GOAL

**Is not more
control—
it is clearer
decision
ownership**

- Without guardrails, decision rights become slogans.
- With them, teams move faster and leadership gets pulled into fewer decisions that should never have needed them.

**Autonomy works better when
the boundaries are explicit.**