

RAPID Decision Framework

Idea In Short

The RAPID decision-making model works by clarifying who should do what for each complex decision that needs to be made. You can trace every success, failure or missed opportunities back to a series of decisions made by an organization. When an organization's decision-making process is poor or nonexistent it leads to wasted time, confusion and frustration.

The RAPID decision-making model is a formal decision-making process developed by Bain & Company to clarify decision accountability. It gives organizations a clearer way to make decisions. Not all decisions need to use a formal model. Simple decisions with limited consequences do not require a formal process. Hence, you can make such decisions faster without incurring the overhead of the RAPID model. The RAPID decision-making framework is best-suited for strategic decisions impacting a broad set of stakeholders. This model also works best when multiple people execute the result of the decision. The model works best when involving multiple teams, such as:

- Two or more functional units or teams
- Global and local teams
- One or more suppliers

The RAPID decision-making model

The letters in RAPID stand for the key people involved in any decision. These key roles are:

1. **Recommend:** create the initial proposals and recommendations
2. **Agree:** Must agree the proposals from the Recommend group
3. **Perform:** Execute the work following the decision
4. **Input:** Provides information and facts to the Recommend group
5. **Decide:** The person who has the authority to make the decision

The central role of the model is the Decide role, with all other roles supporting this role. The order in which these roles are performed in practice is likely to be Recommend (with Input), Agree, Decide, and Perform.

Recommend

In essence, these are the person or persons that recommend a course of action or present a series of options. Consequently, they should back up their recommendations using facts, figures, and research. You can think of this role as the starting point for the RAPID process. The decision-making process flows following a stakeholder-proposed recommendation.

Agree

These are the people who must agree with a recommendation before it can move forward. This group has the power to veto the decision if appropriate. It is important to keep this group to as few people as possible or decision making can slow down. If they veto the decision, then they must negotiate with the Recommend role and adjust any recommendations until they are satisfied. If they can't find a satisfactory alternative, then they should escalate the issue to the Decide role.

Input

The Input role provides the foundation for good decision making. This role provides the necessary facts, data and evidence for decision-making. Usually, the decision-maker consults this role on the inputs to deliberate a recommendation. They will answer such questions as:

- What are the risks when executing the decision?
- How long will the recommendation take to implement?
- Are the key teams happy with the proposal as it stands?

The Recommend role doesn't have to consider the information from the Input role. This rule basically acknowledges that consensus can impede the speed of decision-making.

Decide

A decision-maker must make a decision when all options are on the table. There should be a

single person responsible for decision-making. Usually, a senior leader within the organization fulfills this role. Once the decision-maker makes a decision, he / she usually delegates implementation to the Perform role and important activities should immediately commence. Subsequently, the Perform role maintains the responsibility for work under execution.

Perform

This role corresponds to the people who will perform the decision. It is important that this role quickly acts on each decision. Often, a decent decision executed quickly is better than a great decision executed slowly.

Advantages

RAPID decision-making model:

- Gives all the key people a chance to be involved in decision making. As a result, you are more likely to achieve employee buy-in if you involve them in the decision-making process. You can even remove unhelpful people from the loop if necessary
- Ensures that decisions are made in a carefully considered manner, resulting in higher quality decisions
- Makes it absolutely clear who is responsible for each part of the decision

Disadvantages

The key disadvantages of the RAPID Decision-Making Model are:

- To work effectively it requires the buy-in of the entire organization. This basically means from the top management all the way down to employees on the ground
- It can slow down decision making. For this reason, it should only be used for larger, more important decisions

Summary

The most successful organizations use simple tools to be effective. The RAPID decision-making framework is a tool which can be used to make better decisions. It's an involved process so should be only be used for difficult or complex decisions. To be successful, the RAPID Decision-Making framework needs support throughout the organization.