THE 3I LEADERSHIP LAB

Decisive Leadership & Executive Presence SOP • Smarti Mehta

OPERATIONAL PLAYBOOK

AUTHOR & COACH	TARGET AUDIENCE	CORE MECHANISM
Smarti Mehta (Coach Smrati)	Executives & Emerging Leaders	Intuition, Insight & Intention

PROTOCOL 01 The Pre-Meeting Intentional Frame

Eliminate reactive meeting attendance by establishing an unshakeable intentional anchor before crossing the conference room threshold or joining the video call.

1. Write down your Primary Strategic Objective in exactly one sentence (e.g. 'Secure authorization to reallocate Q3 engineering resources to the payments gateway').
2. Define the single pivotal moment you will intervene during the meeting agenda.
3. Ground your breathing with three 4-second box-breaths to reset somatic tension before speaking.

Mistake to Avoid: Entering meetings without a clear intentional anchor, allowing others to dictate your mental state and conversation boundaries.

PROTOCOL 02 3-Second Intuition Gut-Check

Stop confusing strategic intuition with emotional fear. Train your internal filter to voice high-value insights immediately.

1. When an intuitive business observation arises, immediately evaluate: 'Does this solve a root issue or protect my ego?'
2. If it addresses a root issue, voice the headline within 3 seconds before internal imposter conditioning talks you out of it.
3. Frame it objectively: 'Looking at current friction points, the critical risk we need to confront is...'

Mistake to Avoid: Second-guessing your instincts until a louder colleague states the exact same point and receives full executive credit.

PROTOCOL 03 Executive Brevity & Headline-First Framing

Boardrooms evaluate executive maturity by signal-to-noise ratio. Deliver bottom-line recommendations first, supporting context second.

1. Open every intervention with the bottom-line recommendation in under 20 seconds.
2. Provide exactly two supporting strategic pillars (financial, operational, or market impact).
3. Close by stopping completely: 'That is our proposed direction. Happy to open for questions.'

Mistake to Avoid: Data-dumping all methodology and operational nuance upfront, which exhausts senior decision-makers and triggers interruptions.

PROTOCOL 04 Stakeholder Room Current & Power Center Mapping

Unspoken political agendas dictate boardroom decisions far more than public consensus. Map the room before presenting proposals.

1. Identify the true Decision-Maker, Chief Skeptic, and Key Ally prior to meeting kickoff.
2. Pre-align with the Key Ally on one mutual objective to build immediate momentum in the room.
3. Directly address the Chief Skeptic's primary risk exposure within your opening two minutes.

Mistake to Avoid: Assuming pure merit wins arguments without diagnosing stakeholder political motivations and risk tolerances.

PROTOCOL 05 Vocal Gravitas, Grounding & Strategic Silence

Physical presence and vocal delivery communicate confidence before words register cognitively. Eliminate uptalk and nervous fillers.

1. Speak from the diaphragm rather than the throat, grounding your vocal pitch at the end of statements.
2. Replace verbal crutches ('um', 'you know', 'basically') with deliberate 1.5-second pauses.
3. Maintain relaxed shoulders and eye contact across key decision-makers while speaking.

Mistake to Avoid: Ending assertive sentences with an upward inflected pitch, which turns strategic assertions into perceived requests for approval.

PROTOCOL 06 Assertive Boundary & Interruption Mastery

Hold physical and psychological floor control without defensiveness when interrupted or talked over.

1. When someone speaks over you, do not rush. Continue speaking at the same steady volume for three words, then hold a calm 1-second pause.
2. Calmly interject with eye contact: 'Let me complete the final recommendation, and then we will integrate your point immediately.'
3. Reclaim your thought with composure and zero visible irritation.

Mistake to Avoid: Going silent and retreating into resentment, or conversely, reacting with combative emotional defensiveness.

PROTOCOL 07 Delivering Contrarian Views Without Conflict

High-impact executives dare to challenge groupthink constructively without triggering organizational antibodies.

1. Validate the room's overarching intent first: 'We all share the goal of accelerating enterprise revenue by Q4.'
2. Introduce the counter-perspective as a risk-mitigation lens: 'To protect that goal, we must examine the hidden operational bottleneck in option A.'
3. Present your alternative path with quantifiable downside safeguards.

Mistake to Avoid: Attacking existing proposals personally rather than framing your contrarian view as protection for the team's shared outcome.

PROTOCOL 08 Rapid Decision Calibration Under Ambiguity

Executive leadership is defined by decision velocity under conditions of incomplete information.

1. Apply the 70% Information Rule: If you possess 70% of necessary data and high conviction, make the call immediately.
2. Categorize decisions into Reversible vs. Irreversible bets to determine appropriate deliberation time.
3. State the ownership frame publicly: 'We are committing to Course B. I take responsibility for tracking weekly milestone progress.'

Mistake to Avoid: Waiting for 100% certainty, which produces paralyzed teams and missed commercial opportunities.

PROTOCOL 09 Cross-Functional Alignment Architecture

Convert peer skepticism into collective ownership by translating your priorities into their operational success metrics.

1. Schedule 15-minute informal alignment sprints prior to high-stakes decision forums.
2. Ask peer leaders: 'What is your single biggest operational concern if this project launches next month?'
3. Integrate their feedback directly into your proposal, crediting their input publicly during the final review.

Mistake to Avoid: Blindsiding peer stakeholders during the main meeting, forcing them into defensive opposition.

PROTOCOL 10 Sovereign Follow-Through & Ownership Ledger

Meeting agreements evaporate without immediate written single-point accountability. Close the loop within 2 hours.

1. Send an Executive Decision Memo within 120 minutes of meeting adjournment.
2. Structure memo into: 1. Decisions Approved; 2. Single-Point Accountable Owners; 3. Exact Delivery Timelines.
3. Establish public check-ins to track commitments transparently and eliminate ambiguity.

Mistake to Avoid: Assuming verbal consensus translates into execution without unambiguous written closure.

Ready to Command the Room with Unshakeable Authority?

Implementing these 10 protocols in live corporate settings requires personalized calibration. Book a private 1:1 Strategic Clarity Session with Smarti Mehta to refine your executive delivery.

Direct Access: https://calendly.com/coachsmrati/clarity