WORKSHEET + WORKED EXAMPLE

Decide, Act, Look Again

A next move with its assumptions, boundaries, and a signal to look again.

8-12 minutes | OODA decision cycle

Use it in three moves

1. Observe what is new. Keep direct signals separate from the explanation you attach to them.

2. Orient with context: whose view is missing, which assumption may be stale, and what does your role hide?

3. Decide a bounded move, act within your authority, and choose when to observe again. Speed alone is not the point.

What has changed? What is the source?

A direct observation, a report, or an unconfirmed signal?

What might this mean in context?

Consider more than one explanation. Include the people who see another part of the situation.

Which assumption needs checking?

What did the old plan rely on?

Decide, Act, Look Again

YOUR WORKING NOTES / CONTINUED

What is your next decision, and who can make it?

Keep a recommendation separate from authority to act.

What bounded action will follow?

Name an owner, timing, and a limit.

What would make you pause or change course?

A clear signal, not “if things get worse”.

When will you look again, and with whom?

Choose a time or event. Keep looking for effects you did not intend.

A question for me

How could my response make the next round of information more honest?

See one way through

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE / NOT THE ANSWER TO YOUR SITUATION

What has changed? What is the source?

Two clients asked to postpone onboarding today. The account team has the messages; reasons are not confirmed.

What might this mean in context?

Could be a timing conflict, a confusing invitation, or a problem with the setup. Ask the account team before changing the whole launch.

Which assumption needs checking?

We assumed the scheduled dates still suited the clients.

What is your next decision, and who can make it?

The onboarding lead can offer a choice of dates. Any change to the wider rollout needs the product owner.

What bounded action will follow?

Jo will contact those two clients today, ask what changed, and offer the existing alternative slots.

What would make you pause or change course?

If either client reports an access barrier, pause that onboarding path and involve the accessibility lead.

When will you look again, and with whom?

At the end of today, review the replies with the onboarding lead and account team.

The thinking behind it

You are part of the environment you are reading. Your response changes what people tell you next, so observation includes noticing your own effect on the picture.

US Air Force Colonel John Boyd developed the OODA decision cycle: Observe, Orient, Decide, Act. Air University emphasizes that orientation shapes what we notice and how we act. This workplace adaptation centers shared understanding and revision, rather than treating colleagues as opponents to outpace.

Air University: OODA and orientation

Read The Hollow Crown: Why Our Leadership Narratives Have Failed by Nic Payne