the commitment standard.

What belongs on your team's shared list — and what makes it real.

Most accountability problems begin before anyone misses a date. They begin when a team logs intentions as commitments. This is the filter that keeps the shared list honest. Run every candidate through both tests.

test 1 — does it belong on the shared list?

Put it on the list only when either is true:

- Another person, function, or team cannot move until it is delivered.
- It is materially tied to an enterprise priority, KPI, decision, or cross-functional dependency.

Everything else is a task. Keep it off the list.

test 2 — is it a valid commitment?

A commitment is valid only with **one owner** and three things clear:

- **Outcome** — what will be produced.
- **Definition of done** — what the person waiting can now do, not what the owner completed.
- **Date** — when it will be delivered or reviewed.

Saying it in a meeting does not make it a commitment. Meeting the standard does.

the done rule

"Done" describes what the receiving party can now do — not what the owner completed.

Weak: "Improve the forecast inputs."

Strong: "Sales submits forecast inputs by the third business day, and finance no longer has to chase them."

Task — yours to manage inside your own system.
Commitment — an outcome someone else is counting on, delivered by a date.

use it in the room

- The owner states the commitment aloud: outcome, definition of done, and date.
- Nothing lands on the list that the owner did not accept.
- If a commitment is unclear, the owner sharpens it — not the scorekeeper.
- A short list of real dependencies beats a long list of activity.