

DACI Matrix

Framework: DACI (Driver, Approver, Contributor, Informed)

Use for: Decision-making clarity — defining who has the authority to make a decision, who drives the process, who contributes input, and who gets notified of the outcome.

Time required: 20–30 minutes to draft per decision area. Best done with the decision-making team present.

DACI vs RACI: what's different

DACI is optimized for decisions rather than for tasks. The key distinction from RACI:

Role	RACI	DACI
Who does the work	Responsible (R)	Driver (D)
Who owns the outcome	Accountable (A)	Approver (A)
Who provides input	Consulted (C)	Contributor (C)
Who gets notified	Informed (I)	Informed (I)

The key difference: In RACI, the Accountable person answers if something goes wrong and may or may not do the work. In DACI, the Driver actively manages the decision process (gathering input, structuring options, driving toward resolution), while the Approver has final authority to accept or reject.

When DACI works better than RACI: When the work is primarily decision-making rather than task execution — product roadmap decisions, hiring choices, architectural tradeoffs, budget allocations.

The four roles

Role	Meaning	Count
D — Driver	Owns the decision process: gathers information, structures options, facilitates discussion, drives to a timely outcome. Does NOT have final authority — that's the Approver.	Usually 1
A — Approver	Has final authority. Makes the call or explicitly delegates it. If the decision falls apart, the Approver is accountable.	Exactly 1

Role	Meaning	Count
C — Contributor	Provides expertise, data, or perspective that informs the decision. Is consulted before the decision is made.	As needed
I — Informed	Notified after a decision is made. Does not influence it.	As needed

Project / decision set being mapped

Project or decision domain: __

Date: __

Prepared by: ____

Stakeholder key

Abbreviation	Full name / role

DACI Matrix

Each row = one decision. Enter D / A / C / I. Every row needs exactly one A.

Decision	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Deadline	Notes
PRODUCT / ROADMAP									
Prioritize features for next quarter									
Define MVP scope									
Approve feature spec before development									
Make or buy decision for [component]									
HIRING									
Open a new role									
Choose final candidate for offer									
Set compensation offer									
BUDGET & RESOURCES									
Approve discretionary spend > \$X									
Allocate engineering headcount between teams									
ARCHITECTURE / TECHNICAL									
Select vendor / third-party tool									
Choose technical approach for [initiative]									
[Add your decision areas]									

Decision log (use this to record decisions made)

Decision	Date	What was decided	Approver	Driver	Rationale

Clarity check

- ☐ Every decision row has exactly one **A** (Approver)
- ☐ Every decision row has exactly one **D** (Driver)
- ☐ No decision has zero Contributors when expertise is needed
- ☐ "Informed" list is complete but not excessive — over-informing is noise
- ☐ Decision deadlines are set for time-sensitive rows

Recurring failure mode to watch: If the Driver and Approver are the same person in most rows, the Driver role is not doing its intended work (lifting the decision-coordination burden off the person with authority).

DACI is a decision-rights framework used widely in product and tech organizations. Covered in the Frameworks & Mental Models Guide on biztechprimer.com.

Generated for biztechprimer.com — free to use and adapt.