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Intent Baseline

Capture and structure client intent with clarity and governance.

Intent Baseline is the control point where the client objective is clarified before the organization begins translating it into scope, pricing, staffing, and delivery. It protects the original business need from becoming diluted as the opportunity moves through multiple functions.

WHAT IT MEANS

The organization establishes a shared record of what the client is trying to achieve, why it matters, what constraints exist, and what success should look like before solutioning accelerates.

WHY IT MATTERS

When intent is weak, every downstream function interprets the deal differently. Sales hears urgency, architecture hears requirements, pricing hears effort, and delivery inherits ambiguity.

COMMON BREAKDOWNS

- Client goals are captured as notes instead of governed operating inputs.
- Success criteria are unclear before solution and pricing decisions begin.
- Stakeholders agree to scope without a shared view of business intent.
- Delivery teams later discover the promise was different from the client need.

WHAT LIFECYCLE OS CONTROLS

- Structured intent capture and decision context.
- Required success criteria before pattern selection.
- Named ownership for intent preservation.
- Visible drift signals when scope moves away from intent.

EXECUTIVE QUESTIONS

- Do we know what the client is actually trying to achieve?

- Can sales, pricing, practice, and delivery describe the same intent?

- Where does intent first become distorted or oversimplified?

OPERATING SIGNAL

If the first clear version of client intent appears inside the SOW, the lifecycle is already late. Intent should be governed before the solution and commercial model are finalized.

PRESERVE THE CLIENT PROMISE

Create a governed baseline before the opportunity moves into pattern, pricing, and delivery decisions.

NEXT STEP

Use this brief to identify where the lifecycle needs stronger control, clearer authority, or better learning.