



# Close the Loop

Your free sample from the  
Manager Rituals Toolkit

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

[www.ritualsforperformance.com](http://www.ritualsforperformance.com)

# MANAGER RITUALS TOOLKIT AT A GLANCE

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

What's included in the three core sections

We coach you to use this practical toolkit to drive performance

## 1 EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Clarity and accountability in every meeting

- Reduce the Meeting Load
- Design Meetings for Outcomes
- Open Meetings Well
- Run Inclusive and Accountable Meetings
- Close the Loop
- Cascade with Clarity
- Meeting Templates

Your free sample section

## 2 CONFIDENT FEEDBACK

Confident and continuous feedback culture

- Create the Conditions for Feedback Culture
- Vulnerability: Turn Mistakes into Shared Progress
- Role Modelling: Ask for Feedback First
- Give Clear Feedback for Tasks and Behaviour
- Clarify Outcomes, Not Just Tasks
- Prioritisation and Course-Correction
- Recognise and Share What Good Looks Like

## 3 TRUST-BUILDING 1-1 CONVERSATIONS

Handle tough conversations early and effectively

- Master Your Mindset Before the Conversation
- Create Trust Before You Need It
- Coach, Don't Rescue
- Clarify the Real Issue
- Have the Tough Conversation Early
- Turn Conflict into Collaboration
- Repair Misunderstandings and Relationship Fallout
- Agree Commitments and Follow Up

# CLOSE THE LOOP

End meetings with clear decisions, owners, deadlines, questions, contributions and next actions.

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Inefficient meetings are the number one productivity disruptor

Source: Microsoft's 2023 Work Trend Index

## CLOSE THE LOOP is part of the solution.

This sample section from the Manager Rituals Toolkit gives you three simple Meeting Closer rituals and an action tracker you can use straight away.

Start with The Hard Stop, then add a spoken or written loop when the meeting needs it.

These will help you have clearer endings, better contribution and more visible ownership.



### Meeting Action Tracker

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

A simple tool for turning meeting conversations into visible follow-through.

#### WHAT THIS TRACKER IS FOR

Use this tracker during the final minutes of a meeting to capture the actions that matter: what needs to happen next, who owns it and by when. Keep the Action Tracker focused on commitments. Move unfinished discussion into the separate Car Park tab so the meeting can close cleanly.

#### WHY IT MATTERS

A useful discussion is not enough. Microsoft's 2023 Work Trend Index shows that 78% of surveyed people said next steps at the end of a meeting are often unclear.

#### Action Tracker

Capture commitments during the Hard Stop. One action. One owner. One deadline.

Open actions		Blocked		
7		2		
Date added	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
06-Jun-2026	Estimate effort for automating the monthly reporting pipeline	Tom Reeves	11-Jun-2026	Not started
06-Jun-2026	Share the revised assumptions log with the client sponsor	Priya Shah	08-Jun-2026	Blocked
05-Jun-2026	Draft the model validation approach for the pricing project	Owen Brooks	10-Jun-2026	On track
05-Jun-2026	Clarify whether the weekly client update needs a written summary	Amira Khan	06-Jun-2026	Complete
04-Jun-2026	Run quality checks on the latest CRM data extract	Grace Liu	07-Jun-2026	On track
04-Jun-2026	Create a simple dashboard mock-up for the client workshop	Nina Patel	09-Jun-2026	Not started
03-Jun-2026	Prepare first draft of churn-model feature list	Priya Shah	06-Jun-2026	On track
03-Jun-2026	Book stakeholder interview with the Head of Operations	Leo Martin	04-Jun-2026	Complete

# MEETING CLOSING RITUALS

Use them this week

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

A quick-start slide for introducing the three meeting closing rituals in a live meeting this week.

ONE ACTION. ONE OWNER. ONE DEADLINE.

## 1 Before the meeting

Choose a Timekeeper. Add a five-minute Hard Stop to the agenda. Open the Action Tracker before the meeting starts.

## 2 With five minutes remaining

Pause the discussion. Move unfinished topics into the Car Park rather than allowing the meeting to overrun.

## 3 Close with clarity

Ask: What did we agree? What actions need to happen next? Who owns each action? By when? Does anyone understand it differently?

## 4 After the meeting

Review open actions at the next agreed follow-up point. Keep the tracker focused on live commitments only.

## Choose the right close

Start with The Hard Stop. Add one spoken or written loop only when the meeting needs it.



Default close: protect the final five minutes.



Spoken loop: hear every voice briefly.



Written loop: create quiet thinking time.

### Team intro line:

“We’re going to protect the final five minutes so we leave with clear actions and ownership.”

Effective meetings  
Protected time to close meetings with clarity

# THE HARD STOP



The Hard Stop protects the final five minutes of every meeting. A nominated Timekeeper calls time on the discussion, moves unfinished items into the Car Park and creates space to confirm agreement and actions. A useful discussion is not enough. A good meeting needs a deliberate ending.

No.7

Ritual Operating System

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Turn useful discussion into clear actions and ownership.

### 1. Decide who is the Timekeeper

Before the meeting begins, agree who will call the Hard Stop. Usually not the Host.

### 2. Call the Hard Stop

With five minutes remaining, pause the discussion. Move unfinished topics into the Car Park so they can be revisited separately.

### 3. Close with clarity

What did we agree?  
What actions need to happen next?  
Who owns each action and by when?

### 4. Capture the actions

Record each action, owner and deadline in the Action Tracker. Ideally run meeting recording software to make this a cut and paste task.

Open Action Tracker

No.7

Ritual Operating System

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Challenge:

Meetings often run over and discussion ends up taking the place of actions and ownership

## Solution:

Introduce a 5 minute standing agenda point to all meetings. Run the Hard Stop Ritual.

## Results:

Clarity of actions and ownership become normal

Effective meetings  
A quick closing loop to hear every voice



The 30-Second Round Table gives everyone a short, equal opportunity to speak before the meeting ends. Choose one focus for the round: understanding, questions, contribution or challenge. Each person has up to 30 seconds to share one useful reflection before passing to the next voice.

No.3

Ritual Operating System

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Hear every voice and surface what might otherwise be missed.

### 1. Choose the focus

**Understanding:** What is your key takeaway and what happens next?

**Questions:** What is still unclear or unresolved?

**Contribution:** What would you add, build on or suggest?

**Challenge:** What risk, assumption or blind spot should we test?

### 2. Round Table 30 seconds each

The Timekeeper starts the timer. Each person has up to 30 seconds to share one useful reflection. It is always acceptable to pass..

### 3. Keep time, close the loop

Respect the 30-second limit. Capture anything that needs more time in the Car Park. Confirm actions, owners & deadlines in the Action Tracker.

[Open Action Tracker](#)

No.3

Ritual Operating System

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Challenge:

The most confident voices can dominate meetings. Useful questions, contributions and risks may remain unspoken

## Solution:

Add a 30-second closing Round Table. Choose one focus and give each person equal time to contribute or pass.

## Results:

Every voice is heard and important insight surfaces before the meeting ends.

Effective meetings  
Quiet reflection time to surface better thinking

## REFLECTION CLOSE



The Reflection Close creates five minutes of Alone Together Time before a meeting ends. Choose one focus for the reflection: understanding, questions, contribution or challenge. Each person writes a brief response avoiding bias and providing a summary that includes all voices equally.

No.9

Ritual Operating System

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Create space for quieter, more considered thinking to emerge.

### 1. Choose the focus

**Understanding:** What is your key takeaway and what happens next?

**Questions:** What is still unclear or unresolved?

**Contribution:** What would you add, build on or suggest?

**Challenge:** What risk, assumption or blind spot should we test?

### 2. Start the reflection

Timekeeper start the timer. Everyone writes silently for 5 minutes in the agreed place: a shared document, meeting notes or individual cards.

### 3. Capture & close the loop

Thank the team. Review and share the reflections after the meeting. Add actions and owners in the Action Tracker.

[Open Action Tracker](#)

No.9

Ritual Operating System

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

## Challenge:

Fast-moving meetings can favour people who think out loud. Quieter or more considered perspectives may be missed.

## Solution:

Add five minutes of Alone Together Time. Choose one focus and ask everyone to write a brief reflection before closing.

## Results:

Better-quality thinking and a more inclusive view of what the team needs next.

# HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT MEETING CLOSE

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

A quick guide to ending meetings with clarity, contribution and accountability.

Use these closing rituals to protect the ending, hear what matters and create visible follow-through.

## 1 START WITH THE HARD STOP



### THE HARD STOP

Protect the final five minutes, move unfinished topics into the Car Park and confirm actions, owners and deadlines in the action tracker.

What did we agree?

What actions happen next?

Who owns each action?

By when?

Different understanding?

## 2 THEN CHOOSE THE RIGHT CLOSING RITUAL



### 30-SECOND ROUND TABLE

A fast verbal close that gives everyone equal airtime and surfaces what might otherwise be missed.

HEAR EVERY VOICE AND BUILD CONTRIBUTION CONFIDENCE



### REFLECTION CLOSE

A written close that creates quiet space for more considered thinking to emerge.

CREATE RESPECTFUL THINKING SPACE AND UNBIASED CONTRIBUTION

# SIMPLE AGENDA PLANNING DECISION FLOW

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

Choose one closing ritual that fits the meeting need.

## USE THIS FLOW DURING AGENDA PLANNING



ONLY NEED TO CONFIRM ACTIONS AND OWNERSHIP?

USE →

THE HARD STOP



WANT TO HEAR BRIEFLY FROM EVERYONE IN THE ROOM?

ADD →

THE 30-SECOND ROUND TABLE



NEED QUIETER, MORE CONSIDERED THINKING?

ADD →

THE REFLECTION CLOSE

**REMEMBER** Choose one closing ritual and one focus. The aim is to close the meeting well, not create another meeting inside the final few minutes.

# CHOOSE THE RIGHT FOCUS

Both the 30-Second Round Table and the Reflection Close use one chosen prompt.



CHOOSE ONE CLOSE. CHOOSE ONE FOCUS.

Select the prompt that best suits the meeting. Do not try to use all four.

U

## UNDERSTANDING

Check that the same meaning landed for everyone.

Prompt: What is your key takeaway and what happens next?

Q

## QUESTIONS

Surface anything unclear or unresolved.

Prompt: What question still needs an answer?

C

## CONTRIBUTION

Invite useful additions or improvements.

Prompt: What would you add, build on or suggest?

C

## CHALLENGE

Test assumptions and identify risk.

Prompt: What risk, assumption or blind spot should we test?

# WHEN TO USE WHAT

Use this as a quick starting point. The best close depends on the meeting, the team and the quality of thinking you need.

## MEETING SITUATION AND RECOMMENDED CLOSE

MEETING SITUATION	RECOMMENDED CLOSE
Weekly team meeting with clear next steps	<b>The Hard Stop</b>
Project meeting where several teams need to act	<b>Hard Stop + Round Table for Understanding</b>
Decision meeting where the room agreed too quickly	<b>Round Table for Challenge</b>
Complex planning meeting with a quieter team	<b>Hard Stop + Reflection Close for Contribution</b>
Sensitive discussion with strong power dynamics	<b>Reflection Close for Questions or Challenge</b>
Hybrid meeting where remote voices may be missed	<b>Reflection Close or Round Table</b>

**MATCH THE ROOM** Some teams speak best. Others think better when they write. Use the ritual that improves the quality of the close.

# FACILITATION TIPS

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

Keep the close protected, simple and useful.

1

## PROTECT THE CLOSE

Do not reopen discussion. Move anything substantial into the Car Park.

2

## CHOOSE ONE FOCUS

A useful closing loop is simple. One prompt is enough.

3

## MATCH THE ROOM

Some teams speak best. Others think better when they write.

4

## USE THE ACTION TRACKER

**Capture actions, owners and deadlines during the meeting — not afterwards.**

[OPEN ACTION TRACKER](#)

Move unfinished discussion into the separate Car Park sheet on the Action Tracker so it stays visible without allowing the meeting to overrun.

Date added

Action

Owner

Deadline

Status

Blocker

Follow-up

**ONE ACTION. ONE OWNER. ONE DEADLINE.**

# HOW TO USE THE ACTION TRACKER

RITUALS FOR PERFORMANCE

Capture actions, owners and deadlines during the meeting. Use meeting recording software to support full capture.

Use the action tracker during the Hard Stop so decisions turn into visible follow-through.

## RUN IT IN 4 SIMPLE MOVES

1

### Open it before the meeting

Have the Action Tracker ready so capture happens live, not afterwards.

2

### Capture clear commitments

Write one action per line. Each action needs a named owner and deadline.

3

### Use the Car Park separately

Move unfinished discussion or unresolved questions into the Car Park tab.

4

### Sort and review

Use Date added to keep newest items at the top. Review open actions next time.

## RECORD DATE, ACTION, OWNER, DEADLINE

Action Tracker				
Capture commitments during the Hard Stop. One action. One owner. One deadline.				
Open actions 7		Blocked 2		
Date added	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
Right click row and + insert 1 row above to add new entries				
06-Jun-2026	Estimate effort for automating the monthly reporting pipeline	Tom Reeves	11-Jun-2026	Not started
06-Jun-2026	Share the revised assumptions log with the client sponsor	Priya Shah	08-Jun-2026	Blocked
05-Jun-2026	Draft the model v			
05-Jun-2026	Clarify whether the summary			
04-Jun-2026	Run quality checks			

### KEEP IT SIMPLE

One action. One owner. One deadline.

OPEN ACTION TRACKER

Use this after every Hard Stop to make follow-through visible.

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**Marjan Oloumi**  
Associate Coach



**Jason Sinclair**  
Associate Coach



**Charlene Carrett**  
Associate Coach



**Ailin Werner**  
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**meet High  
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Expert**



**Greg Bateman**

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See what's in the full toolkit

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Or drop us an email  
with any questions you have  
[coach@ritualsforperformance.com](mailto:coach@ritualsforperformance.com)