

Nine sentences that can move a decision

Here are nine sentences a colleague might say to you. Each can be read two ways, and the sentence alone won't tell you which.

1. "I just want to align." Reading one: the call is made, and you hear about it before it goes out. Reading two: nothing is decided yet, and "aligned" ends up meaning whatever you say next.	2. "Can you just take a look?" Reading one: a second pair of eyes, and it goes out either way. Reading two: it doesn't move until you've looked. Your look is the approval.	3. "Can we jump on a quick call?" Reading one: ten minutes of context, then the decision gets made elsewhere. Reading two: the call is where it gets decided, by you, out loud.
4. "I'd just like another set of eyes." Reading one: your view goes on the pile with everyone else's. Reading two: yours is the only view it waits for.	5. "I just want to double-check." Reading one: a fact gets confirmed and the work carries on. Reading two: the work stops until you answer, and your answer becomes the decision.	6. "What do you think?" Reading one: your view is heard, and someone else makes the call. Reading two: your answer goes out as the answer.
7. "Who owns this?" Reading one: the question is answered in a line, and the decision carries on. Reading two: the question stays open, and the decision waits on the answer.	8. "I brought three options." Reading one: three options with a recommendation. You agree or push back. Reading two: three options and no recommendation. Picking one is the decision.	9. "Just need your sign-off." Reading one: the decision is already made, and your signature records it. Reading two: your signature is where the decision gets made.

Same sentence, two different decisions. Log the next three that land on you and compare what each one was.

The next three returns →