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The Approval Owner Framework

Stop work stalling with clear decision ownership

Work Stalls When No One Knows Who Approves What

THE PROBLEM

A task sits in someone's inbox for 3 days because they are waiting for approval, but they do not know who to ask. Or worse, they ask the wrong person, get conflicting answers, and the task bounces back and forth.

10-15 hrs

lost per week to approval delays

THE ROOT CAUSE

That is not because people are slow. It is because the approval process is undefined. No clear ownership. No approval criteria. No turnaround time expectations.

Work stalls not because of the decision, but because no one knows who makes it.

The solution: map every decision point to a single owner. No shared ownership. No "check with the team." One person owns the decision.

The Approval Owner Map Framework

WHAT REQUIRES APPROVAL?

Client-facing output: Errors affect client relationships and revenue

Compliance-related work: Errors create regulatory risk

Financial transactions: Errors affect cash flow and audit trail

Strategic decisions: Errors affect business direction

Routine data entry: Low-risk, no approval needed

Internal documentation: Low-risk, no approval needed

FAST APPROVAL REQUEST FORMAT

- **What I need approval for:** One-sentence description

- **Context:** Why this decision is needed, what led to this point

- **Evidence:** Attach relevant documents, screenshots, data

- **Approval criteria:** What standard does this need to meet?

- **Deadline:** When do you need the decision by?

- **Recommended action:** What do you recommend, and why?

6-Step Installation Process

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1 Choose one high-friction workflow (e.g., client onboarding, invoice processing, compliance documentation)

2 Map every decision point in that workflow (use the Approval Owner Map template)

3 Assign a single owner to each decision point (no shared ownership)

4 Define approval criteria for each decision point (what does "approved" look like?)

5 Set turnaround time expectations (how fast should approvals happen?)

6 Train the team on the Fast Approval Request format (10-minute walkthrough)

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Shared approval ownership
Assign one owner per decision point. If multiple people need to weigh in, one person owns the final call.

Undefined approval criteria
Define specific criteria (e.g., "all required fields filled, no errors, follows template").

No turnaround time expectations
Set clear SLAs (e.g., "24 hours for routine approvals, 4 hours for urgent").

Approval requests without context
Require the Fast Approval Request format (context + evidence + recommendation).

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Ready to Cut Approval Delays by 50-70%?

Unlock the Full Playbook

Get the complete Approval Ownership Playbook with escalation triggers, delegation boundaries, and approval automation rules.

Unlock the playbooks library →

Book a Strategy Call

I will review your specific workflows, identify your top 3 approval bottlenecks, and show you exactly how I would install approval boundaries.

Check to see if you qualify →

About Remotee

I help Australian businesses remove approval bottlenecks by building compliance-ready delegation systems. I do not just place people. I build the systems, train the team, and give you ongoing support.

remotee.com.au