

The Friday Ops Reset — 30 Minutes That Buy Back Your Week

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Every ops team I've run got the same 30 minutes on Friday afternoon. Not a status meeting — a reset. It clears the decks, kills zombie projects, and makes Monday start clean. Here's the whole thing.

The agenda (30 minutes, alone or with your second)

Minutes 0-5 — Close the loops. Every open commitment from this week gets one word written next to it: done, moved, or dropped. If "moved" twice in a row, it's "dropped" wearing a disguise.

Minutes 5-15 — Scan the metrics. Only three questions, in this order: 1. What did we promise the market this month, and are we on pace? 2. What's trending worse that nobody's talking about? 3. What's one number that surprised us?

Write the answers. Trends you don't write down don't exist by Tuesday.

Minutes 15-25 — Face the stuck thing. There's always one. Name it, then ask the question that unsticks weeks:

"What would this look like if it were easy?"

Not as a motivational poster — as an engineering constraint. If the project is stuck, the easy version usually reveals what the complicated version was hiding: a decision nobody made. Make that decision now, or put it in front of the person who can, with a deadline.

Minutes 25-30 — Set Monday's first hour. Write the one thing Monday-you should do first. One thing. Monday-you is dumber than Friday-you (no offense, it's just true at 8am) — leave instructions.

The rules that make it work

- It happens on Friday. Not Monday ("we'll reset when the week starts" means never).
- It's 30 minutes. When it regularly takes longer, you're avoiding a decision, not running a reset.
- Zombie rule: any project "moved" three weeks running dies in minute 25 of the third week, no appeal.
- The metrics scan uses the same three questions every week. Novelty is not the point. Comparability is.

The one-page metric scan sheet

For each of your five core numbers, three columns: **this week · last week · 4-week trend (up/down/flat)**. Five rows, fifteen numbers, one glance. If you can't name your five core numbers, that's your first reset's real work.

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