Kill criteria checklist

A practical stop/continue framework that keeps teams focused on outcomes and makes "no" a disciplined decision.

A checklist to make stopping work normal, fast, and defensible—so capacity flows to what's working.

Pre-commit the kill criteria

Before you start a bet, define what would make you stop. This prevents sunk-cost decisions.

- We defined the decision date (when we will decide to ship/iterate/stop).
- We defined the minimum win threshold (MDE / target lift).
- We defined guardrails (trust/safety/quality) and stop thresholds.
- We defined what evidence would invalidate the hypothesis.

Kill triggers (check any that apply)

- No meaningful movement on primary metric after the planned runtime/sample.
- Guardrail metrics degraded (complaints up, churn up, NPS down, latency up).
- We learned the problem is smaller/different than expected.
- Evidence shows the solution is wrong or adoption is structurally capped.
- Cost/complexity expanded beyond the expected ROI.
- A higher-leverage opportunity emerged (clear tradeoff documented).
- Dependency risk is unresolved and blocks progress beyond __ weeks.
- The work duplicates another initiative or platform capability.

Stop decision memo (one page)

Field	Fill in
What we were trying to achieve	Hypothesis + target metric
What we did	Brief description of test/launch
What we observed	Data + customer feedback summary
Why we are stopping	Which kill triggers were met
What we learned	3 bullets max
What we will do next	Redirect capacity to _____
Artifacts	Links: dashboards, PRDs, experiment readout

Culture note

Stopping is a success when it saves time, protects trust, and accelerates learning. Celebrate the decision, not the sunk cost.