

Neotheta AI Readiness Decision Gates

A practical checklist for moving an AI capability from pilot to governed production

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Use this checklist before approving a new AI system for production. A capability is ready when the business owner can explain its value, the technical owner can bound its behavior, and the risk owner can verify the evidence.

Gate 1 — Business value

- ☐ The business problem is stated in one sentence.
- ☐ The user group, workflow, and decision affected by the AI system are named.
- ☐ A baseline exists for time, quality, cost, revenue, or risk.
- ☐ The success metric is measurable within one operating cycle.
- ☐ The system has a stop condition if the measured benefit does not appear.

Gate 2 — Data and provenance

- ☐ Every production data source has an owner and an approved use.
- ☐ Sensitive data classes are identified before they enter prompts, retrieval, or tools.
- ☐ Retrieval sources have freshness, provenance, and deletion controls.
- ☐ Training, fine-tuning, and evaluation data are separated where required.
- ☐ The system can show which sources supported a material answer or action.

Gate 3 — Model and architecture

- ☐ The selected model is compared with at least one lower-cost or lower-risk alternative.
- ☐ Model routing, fallback, timeout, and rate-limit behavior are documented.
- ☐ Tool permissions are scoped to the minimum required action.
- ☐ Human approval is required for irreversible or high-impact actions.

- ☐ The system can be rolled back without losing business records.

Gate 4 — Evaluation and security

- ☐ Tests cover normal, adversarial, ambiguous, and out-of-distribution inputs.
- ☐ Red-team findings have owners, deadlines, and retest evidence.
- ☐ Identity, secrets, logging, and network boundaries are defined.
- ☐ Prompt injection and unauthorized tool use are tested explicitly.
- ☐ Quality, safety, latency, and cost thresholds are monitored in production.

Gate 5 — Operating model

- ☐ A named executive sponsor owns the outcome.
- ☐ A named product or process owner manages changes.
- ☐ Security, legal, privacy, and compliance reviewers are identified.
- ☐ Users know when they are interacting with AI and how to escalate an error.
- ☐ Incident response includes model, data, tool, and vendor failure modes.

Decision record

Capability: _____

Business owner: _____

Technical owner: _____

Risk owner: _____

Decision: ☐ Approve ☐ Approve with controls ☐ Hold ☐ Retire

Evidence reviewed: _____

Next review date: _____

Strategic rule: do not scale a capability whose permissions, evidence, rollback path, and accountable owner are still implicit.

About Neotheta

Neotheta helps leadership teams move from AI experimentation to secure, scalable, business-ready AI. Visit the Neotheta strategy team to design an operating model that connects capability, governance, infrastructure, and measurable outcomes.