

THE FRONT

THE RIGHT ALTITUDE · WEATHER SERIES

2 players mapped

Prepared for Jordan Hale

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This briefing is based on the observer's perceptions of the people and dynamics in this meeting. It is a preparation tool, not a prediction.

THE READ

Here's the thing, Jordan — this room comes down to one person. Morgan. Avery's with you, the outcome's open, the temperature's calm. None of that decides anything. Morgan decides.

This isn't a hostile room. Nobody's coming to fight you. But Morgan is cautious by nature, sees risk before opportunity, and is protecting their own standing. That caution is the friction you have to clear.

You've got a real asset in Avery — strong trust, and they speak early to set the frame. But Avery has low influence and is also close to Morgan. That closeness cuts both ways. If Morgan goes cool, Avery won't spend their own capital to drag them back.

Your reputation is on the line here, and the worst outcome isn't a no — it's a stall. No decision, more analysis, let's circle back. That's the failure mode you're walking in to prevent.

ROOM MAP

Avery	Supportive · Low influence
Morgan	Cautious · High influence

POWER MAP

Morgan holds the power. High influence, professional respect from the senior person, and the kind of person who listens first and then speaks with weight. When Morgan talks, the room recalibrates. That's your center of gravity.

Avery is your ally but not your lever. Low influence means Avery can open the door — set a favorable frame early — but can't carry the decision across the line. Use Avery for what they're good at: shaping the opening, not winning the close.

You — Jordan — are cordial with Morgan but not inside their circle. That's neutral, not negative. It means you earn this on the merits and the read, not on the relationship. Don't expect warmth to do the work for you.

COLLISION FORECAST

The collision won't be loud. It'll be quiet — Morgan raising a risk, pausing, and the room slowing down around them. That pause is the pressure point. That's where decisions go to die.

Morgan is protecting their reputation, so the risk they name may not be the real concern. The real concern is exposure — what happens to Morgan if this goes wrong. Hear the question behind the question.

Watch for the moment Avery sets the frame and Morgan doesn't immediately echo it. If Avery says "I think this is the path" and Morgan just nods and waits — that gap is where the meeting can tilt toward delay. You need to close that gap fast.

BEFORE THE MEETING

Talk to Morgan before the meeting. Not a long thing — fifteen minutes, today. Surface the risk privately so Morgan isn't discovering it in the room with an audience. People protecting their standing hate being surprised in public.

Go in with one question for Morgan: "What would make you comfortable saying yes to this?" Get the answer now, and bring the answer into the room as part of your proposal. Then Morgan's caution is already addressed before they voice it.

With Avery — align on the open. Tell Avery exactly the frame you want set, since they speak first anyway. Have them name the decision clearly and signal it's ready to be made, not ready to be debated again.

IN THE ROOM

Let Avery open and set the frame — that's their strength, use it. Then step in early with the decision stated plainly. Not "here's what we've discussed" — they've discussed it extensively already. Say: "We've worked this thoroughly. I'm here to lock the path and move."

Address Morgan directly and early. Bring up their risk before they do: "Morgan, I know the concern is X — here's how we've handled it." That move takes the air out of the stall before it forms. It also tells Morgan you respect their judgment.

Then go quiet. Ask Morgan straight: "Does that get you to yes?" And wait. Don't fill the silence. The pressure of the open question does more than another round of your talking ever will.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

Watch Morgan's first real comment. If they engage with specifics — "what about the timeline" — that's good, that's a buying question. If they go abstract — "I just want to make sure we've thought this through" — that's the stall dressing itself up. Name it gently and pull back to the decision.

Watch for the circle-back. Any version of "let's take this offline" or "maybe we revisit next week" is the meeting dying. The second you hear it, you've got about thirty seconds to redirect before the room agrees to do nothing.

Good signs: Morgan starts talking about implementation rather than whether. Avery and Morgan building on each other. Heads turning to you for the next step. That's the room deciding.

IF IT GOES SIDEWAYS

If Morgan plants and won't move, don't push the yes — narrow the no. Ask: "What specifically is unresolved?" Force the abstract worry into a concrete item. A concrete item can be assigned and dated. A vague unease just floats and stalls everything.

If it's truly not landing today, table it on your terms — not theirs. "Let's not lose the momentum. Morgan, what do you need by Thursday to decide?" That keeps the clock running and keeps you in control of the follow-up. A stall you scheduled is not the same as a stall that happened to you.

Protect the Morgan relationship regardless of outcome. Cordial-but-not-inner-circle can grow into an ally over time — and it won't if Morgan feels cornered today. Lose the round graciously and you keep the standing to win the next one.

CLOSING

Walk in knowing the whole meeting is one conversation with Morgan — everything else is staging. Name their risk before they do, then ask the closing question and hold the silence. If these dynamics keep replaying in every room, a coach can help you see what the room itself cannot.

This is your preparation tool. The room will move. Stay adaptive.

— *Don*