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The checklist for reading the room

A practical framework for interpreting weak signals.



✦ Quick instructions

Prepare a sheet with three columns — company, context, person — and fill in each row before entering a meeting with people from other organisations.

🏢 Company

What stage is the company at? Is it growing, defending market share or restructuring?

🌍 Context

What is the culture (national or corporate) that I am dealing with?

👩 Persona

Who am I dealing with? What motivates them? How much power or influence do they have?

Fill in your checklist on the back ↩️

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Here are some examples of what to note down for each item.

Companuy (Read the latest news, view financial results, and review the Careers page to understand what kind of people they are seeking.)

Context (What is the cultural context? The communication style? Pace, formality, type of relationship: relaxed, direct, ritualistic?)

Person (Tone of voice, body language, curiosity, listening skills. If possible, review their LinkedIn profile for clues about their interests and background.)