

Tension OS Primer (v3)

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This Primer introduces the Tension OS method and its GPT-powered assistant. It is designed to give consultants, team leads, and innovators a fast start: enough to run a first discovery cycle with GPT and see value immediately. For organizational training, certification, and scaling across teams, see the full Field Guide.

Introduction

Organizations succeed or stall not because of lack of talent, but because of unresolved tensions: conflicting KPIs, unclear ownership, misaligned incentives, and ambiguous priorities. Tension OS is a structured method to surface, diagnose, design around, and decide on these tensions. Paired with GPT, it becomes a live assistant that accelerates synthesis, documentation, and decision quality.

The Four-Step Loop

Tension OS is built around a repeatable four-step cycle that provides structure and consistency across teams:

- Discovery — Surface tensions through structured intake and questioning.
- Stakeholder Mapping — Clarify who influences and where alignment gaps exist.
- Prioritization — Score tensions (Reach, Impact, Confidence, Effort) and rank focus areas.
- Decision Records — Document, communicate, and trace decisions to avoid drift.

This loop can be run in hours for a team or scaled for enterprise transformations.

GPT as Your Assistant

Tension OS GPT makes the framework easier to apply by providing structured guidance and automation. It supports each step of the loop with practical outputs, making the process faster and more reliable:

- Summarizing interview transcripts into tension statements.
- Clustering survey results into themes.
- Drafting stakeholder matrices and highlighting risks.
- Calculating prioritization scores and generating visuals.
- Drafting executive briefs in professional tone.

Sample Prompt: “Summarize the top 5 tensions in this transcript, highlighting conflicting priorities and unspoken assumptions.”

Quick Start Guide

- Collect inputs (survey responses, interview notes, meeting minutes).
- Paste into GPT with a discovery prompt. (See the appendix for an example).
- Review outputs and refine with your team.
- Use GPT to draft a Tension Map, Stakeholder Matrix, or Executive Brief.

In one afternoon, you can generate a decision-ready brief without needing to master the full method.

Next Steps

This Primer equips you to start experimenting with Tension OS individually. However, scaling across an organization requires shared training, facilitation scripts, and standard templates. That’s where the full Field Guide comes in:

- Comprehensive document with detailed playbooks and case studies.
- Anti-patterns and edge cases to avoid common pitfalls.
- Appendices with ready-to-use surveys, logs, and workshop agendas.
- Certification path for consultants and enterprise rollout.

Visit jorgemaisonetcolon.com/Tension-OS to access the full Field Guide and institutionalize Tension OS across your organization.

Bonus: GPT Conversation Starters

To help you get the most out of the GPT assistant:

Three public starters (featured in the GPT setup):

- Run a 7-day Tension OS quickstart for my team.
- We’re torn between speed and compliance—frame the decision and design two tests.
- Allocate explore vs. exploit for next quarter and set rebalancing triggers.

Extended starters (for advanced users):

Learn more at: jorgemaisonetcolon.com/Tension-OS

- Turn my notes into a Tension Map.
- Build a Stakeholder Matrix with influence and alignment scores.
- Prioritize tensions using RICE/ICE and generate a bubble chart.
- Draft a one-page executive brief.
- Spot anti-patterns in our process.
- Facilitate a 60-minute workshop agenda.
- Plan org-wide adoption with a 30-day communication plan.

Appendix: Try This Example

Corporate Strategy Conflict

Scenario:

- Company: Mid-size SaaS platform expanding into Europe.
- Tension: Sales team wants aggressive discounting to win market share vs. Finance pushing strict margin control.
- Additional context: CEO favors speed, investors worried about profitability.

Pass/Fail Threshold:

- **Pass:** GPT identifies the paradox (growth vs. margin control), frames it as a tension, and produces at least **two viable resolution pathways** (e.g., tiered pricing, regional pilots).
- **Fail:** GPT delivers generic advice (e.g., “balance growth and profit”), misses the paradox, or outputs fewer than two actionable paths.

Input (Scenario Summary & Discovery Prompt)

Copy and paste the following text into the GPT:

Scenario Summary:

We're a mid-size SaaS company preparing to expand into the European market.

Right now, the sales team wants to offer aggressive discounts to capture market share quickly.

The finance team is pushing back, insisting on strict margin control to protect profitability.

The CEO is leaning toward speed and market entry, while our investors are worried about sustainable profits.

This conflict is creating internal tension about how to approach our pricing and market strategy.

Analyze the tension in this situation.

- *Identify the core paradox at play.*
- *Map the key stakeholders and what each is trying to achieve.*
- *Propose at least **two concrete resolution pathways** that could help us move forward while addressing both sides of the tension.*
- *Include any **metrics or decision gates** we should monitor to know if our chosen approach is working.*

Expected Output

The GPT will generate a complete analysis based on the input you submitted. And you can download it as a PDF.