

Role Clarity Framework

Define what a role does, decides, and delivers — before you fill it.

THE CLARITY PROBLEM

Most role confusion is not a people problem — it is a design problem. Use this framework before you write a job posting, backfill a departure, or kick off a reorg. A role that is unclear on paper becomes a conflict in practice.

ROLE PROFILE

ROLE TITLE	LEVEL / BAND	REPORTS TO
TEAM SIZE (DIRECT)	LOCATION / MODE	DATE DEFINED

THE FOUR QUADRANTS — COMPLETE ONE BEFORE HIRING

<p>Core Accountabilities</p> <p>Not tasks — outcomes. What must exist because this role exists?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ 	<p>Decision Rights</p> <p>What can this role decide without escalating or consulting?</p> <p>Decides alone: _____</p> <p>Decides with input: _____</p> <p>Must escalate: _____</p>
<p>Key Relationships</p> <p>Who does this role depend on — and who depends on it?</p> <p>Internal: _____</p> <p>External: _____</p> <p>Upward: _____</p> <p>Cross-functional: _____</p>	<p>Year-One Success Metrics</p> <p>How will we know this role is working in the first 12 months?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> _____ _____ _____

ROLE CLARITY CHECK — 5 QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU POST THE JOB

- 1. Can you describe what success looks like in this role without mentioning tasks?
- 2. Does this role have a clear decision boundary — things it owns completely?
- 3. Could someone in this role reasonably disagree with their manager and still be right?
- 4. Are the key relationships defined well enough to avoid structural conflict?
- 5. Would two different hiring managers describe this role the same way?

If you answered No to any of the above:

The role is not ready to be filled. Resolve the design question first. A misaligned hire is significantly more expensive than a delayed one. Clarity is not bureaucracy — it is respect.