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R2A2 Job Description Playbook

Stop Guessing, Start Clarifying

Role	Responsibilities
Accountability	Authority

√ Hire better – candidates see what they're really walking into

√ Onboard faster – new hires know their lane from day one

√ Reduce bottlenecks – delegate decisions with clear boundaries

√ Improve retention – people feel trusted, not trapped

A Free Resource for Small and Mid-Sized Businesses

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> **PRO TIP**
>
> Quick Start: If you want to dive right in, jump to Part 3 for step-by-step instructions and Part 4 for fill-in-the-blank templates.

Welcome

Most job descriptions are useless. They're vague lists of tasks that don't tell anyone what success looks like or where they have permission to act. This playbook gives you something better.

R2A2 is a simple framework that makes four things crystal clear for every role in your business:

Role	Why this job exists and how it helps the business
Responsibilities	What this person actually does (5-10 core things, not a laundry list)
Accountability	What outcomes they own
Authority	What decisions they can make without asking permission

This playbook walks you through how to build R2A2 job descriptions for your team—regardless of your industry or business stage. Use it to clarify roles, speed up hiring, reduce bottlenecks, and build a team that owns outcomes instead of just following orders.

> **PRO TIP**
>
> Time investment: You can complete one solid R2A2 in 60-90 minutes. Start with your most critical or problematic role.

Part 1: Why R2A2 Matters

The Cost of Unclear Roles

Let's be honest. Vague roles cost you real money and create real problems. When expectations are fuzzy, you get:

- New hires stumbling for 60-90 days trying to figure out what they actually own. That's lost productivity and frustrated people.

- Decisions getting stuck or delayed because no one is sure who has authority to decide.

- People responsible for outcomes they can't control. Burnout and resentment follow.

- You, the owner, in every decision. Your business has hit a ceiling where you're the bottleneck.

- Performance conversations that are emotional and vague instead of anchored in clarity.

- High-performer turnover because good people get frustrated with lack of clarity and leave.
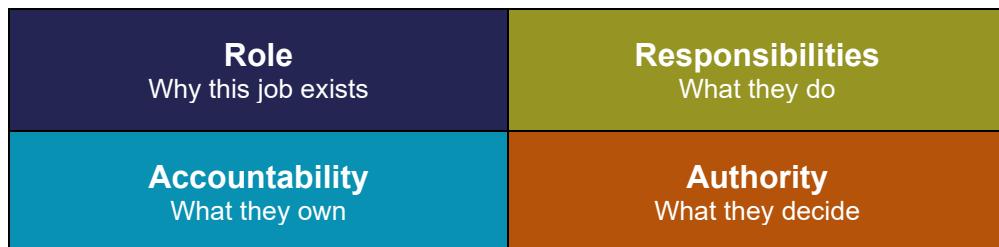
> **IMPORTANT**
>
> The math: A bad hire typically costs 50-200% of that person's annual salary (recruiting, training, lost productivity, and hiring again). Clear R2A2 job descriptions help you screen candidates better and set them up for success from day one.

Traditional vs. R2A2: A Side-by-Side

Aspect	Traditional Job Description	R2A2 Job Description
Purpose	Lists tasks; often for HR compliance	Defines role clarity for actual performance
Outcomes	Vague or absent	Explicitly stated (Accountability)
Decision Rights	Rarely mentioned	Clearly defined (Authority)
Usefulness	Filed and forgotten	Used daily for alignment

Part 2: The Four Quadrants Explained

Let's break down each part of the R2A2 framework so you understand not just what to write, but why each piece matters.

Role Why this job exists	Responsibilities What they do
Accountability What they own	Authority What they decide

Quadrant 1: ROLE — Why This Job Exists

The question this answers: Why does this role exist? What would break if we didn't have it?

This is not a title. This is the purpose.

✗ **Instead of:**	✓ **You write:**
"Title: Operations Coordinator"	"You're the link between sales, scheduling, and delivery. Your job is to keep work moving smoothly from when we promise it to the customer through completion."

Why this matters: When people understand why the role exists, they understand how their work connects to business success. It's not just a job; it's a purpose.

> **HOW TO WRITE YOUR ROLE**
>
> Answer these three questions in 2-3 sentences: 1. What part of the business does this role serve? 2. What would break if this role didn't exist? 3. How does this role connect to your strategy or customer promise?

Quadrant 2: RESPONSIBILITIES — The Core Work

The question this answers: What are the 5-10 core things this person does every week?

This is not a 40-item checklist. This is the meaningful work.

✗ **Vague:**	✓ **Clear:**
"Responsible for scheduling, communication, and customer relations."	1. Confirm service appointments and build weekly schedule 2. Adjust daily routes when urgent jobs come in 3. Communicate changes to customers within 24 hours 4. Track job completion for real-time visibility

	5. Flag problems early so team can solve them

Notice the pattern: Action words (confirm, adjust, communicate). Real outcomes, not just tasks. Clear enough that someone could actually do the work. Prioritized—5 things to focus on, not 40.

> **THE TEST**
>
> Can someone read this list and actually understand what the job is? If not, rewrite it until they can.

Quadrant 3: ACCOUNTABILITY — What This Person Owns

The question this answers: If this goes well or badly, whose name is on it?

This is where most businesses get fuzzy. People are "responsible" for tasks, but no one is truly accountable for outcomes. And when everyone is kind of accountable, no one is.

✗ **Vague:**	✓ **Clear:**
"Responsible for scheduling and communication."	1. Owns on-time completion of scheduled jobs. 2. Owns customer satisfaction for scheduling experience. 3. Owns team scheduling efficiency.

> **IMPORTANT**
>
> Accountability is not about blame. It's about clarity. It means: this person is expected to drive this outcome. They're not just supporting it; they own it. If it's not happening, they're the first person we talk to. And they have authority to make decisions to improve it.

Quadrant 4: AUTHORITY — What They Can Decide

The question this answers: What decisions can this person make on their own, and where do they need to check in?

This is the most neglected piece of most roles—and where burnout happens. You can give someone accountability for an outcome but trap them by not giving them the power to decide.

✗ **Vague:**	✓ **Clear:**
"Must ask manager for approval on schedule changes."	**CAN DECIDE SOLO:** • Adjust daily schedule for urgent issues • Approve reschedules within 7 days • Offer credits up to $50 **NEED APPROVAL:** • Approve new vendors • Credits above $50

> **WATCH OUT**
>
> The burnout formula: High Accountability + Low Authority = Burnout. When accountability and authority are aligned, people feel trusted. When they're misaligned, people feel trapped—responsible if it fails, but not allowed to fix it.

Part 3: Building Your First R2A2

Step 1: Pick One Critical Role

Don't try to do your whole org chart. Start with the role that's causing the most friction, confusion, or bottleneck. Where do you hear complaints? Where are decisions getting stuck?

Good roles to start with:

- A new hire you're about to bring on
- A role that keeps having turnover
- A role where you're always the bottleneck
- A role where the person is frustrated or burning out

Step 2: Conduct Discovery Interviews

Interview the person in the role (if there is one) and their manager separately. Ask open-ended questions:

Quadrant	Discovery Questions
ROLE	"Why does your job exist?" "What would break if this role didn't exist?" "How does your work connect to business strategy?"
RESPONSIBILITIES	"Walk me through a typical week." "What are the 5 most important things you do?" "What takes most of your time?"
ACCOUNTABILITY	"What happens if you do your job really well?" "What outcomes are you measured on?" "When something goes wrong, does it come back to you?"
AUTHORITY	"What decisions do you wish you could make without asking?" "Where do you have to wait for approval when you shouldn't?"

Step 3: Draft the R2A2

Based on your interviews, write the first draft. Don't overthink it—you'll validate and refine. Use the templates in Part 4 as your starting point.

Step 4: Validate with the Person in the Role

Schedule 20 minutes to walk through your draft together. Ask:

- "Does this match what you actually do?"
- "What's missing? What's on here that shouldn't be?"
- "Where do you have accountability but not enough authority?"

Step 5: Cross-Check with Adjacent Roles

Make sure there are no gaps or overlaps. Ask: "Is anyone else claiming this accountability?" "Does anyone else think they have this authority?"

Step 6: Finalize and Use

Update the document based on feedback, then:

- Share the final version with the person in the role
- Add it to your onboarding materials
- Reference it in 1:1 conversations
- Update it when the role evolves (at least annually)

> **PRO TIP**
>
> Living document: R2A2s aren't "set it and forget it." Review them when roles change, when people are frustrated, or at least once a year. Roles evolve; your documentation should too.

Part 4: Industry-Agnostic Templates

These fill-in-the-blank templates work for any industry. Customize them for your specific context.

Template 1: Operations / Coordinator Role

ROLE:

You're the _____ between _____ and _____. Your job is to _____ so that _____ (customer/team benefit).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. _____ (action verb + specific task + outcome)
2. _____ (action verb + specific task + outcome)
3. _____ (action verb + specific task + outcome)
4. _____ (action verb + specific task + outcome)
5. _____ (action verb + specific task + outcome)

ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. Owns _____ (outcome). If _____ happens, this role addresses it.
2. Owns _____ (outcome). Success means _____.
3. Owns _____ (outcome). Measured by _____.

AUTHORITY:

Can decide solo:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Need approval for:

- _____
- _____

Template 2: Sales / Business Development Role

ROLE:

You're the face of _____ to _____. Your job is to _____ so that _____ (revenue/growth outcome).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. _____ (lead generation activity)
2. _____ (qualification activity)
3. _____ (presentation/demo activity)
4. _____ (closing activity)
5. _____ (handoff/follow-up activity)

ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. Owns pipeline of $_____ in qualified opportunities.
2. Owns closed revenue of $_____ per _____ (time period).
3. Owns customer handoff quality. Success = _____.

AUTHORITY:

Can decide solo:

• Discounts up to _____% off standard pricing
• Payment terms up to _____
• Commit to delivery dates within _____ window

Need approval for:

• Discounts above _____%
• Custom terms or pricing
• Deals above $_____ in value

Part 5: Complete Real-World Examples

Here are fully completed R2A2s from different business types. Use them as inspiration.

Example 1: Operations Manager (Service Business)

ROLE:

You're the bridge between sales, field teams, and customers. Your job is to turn promises into delivered work—ensuring customers get what they were promised, on time, and that our team has what they need to execute without chaos.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Build weekly schedules that balance customer needs with team capacity.
2. Coordinate daily adjustments when emergencies or changes happen.
3. Communicate proactively with customers when timelines shift.
4. Track job completion so we have real-time visibility on work in progress.
5. Maintain equipment and supplies so the team has what they need.
6. Flag problems early so leadership can help before they become crises.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. Owns on-time job completion. Target: 95%+ within promised window.
2. Owns customer scheduling experience. Target: Scheduling NPS of 8+.
3. Owns resource readiness. Team never shows up without what they need.

AUTHORITY:

Can decide solo: Adjust daily schedule for emergencies • Approve overtime up to 4 hrs/week per person • Issue customer credits up to $100 • Purchase supplies up to $200

Need approval: Overtime beyond 4 hrs/week • Credits above $100 • Purchases above $200 • Hiring/termination • Changes to core scheduling processes

Example 2: Customer Success Manager (SaaS)

ROLE:

You're the relationship owner for our customers after they buy. Your job is to help customers succeed with our product, expand their usage, and renew—so they stay customers and refer others.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Onboard new customers to ensure they reach first value within 30 days.
2. Conduct regular check-ins to track health and identify expansion opportunities.
3. Monitor usage metrics to catch at-risk accounts before they churn.
4. Drive renewals by demonstrating value before contract end.
5. Identify and pitch expansion opportunities (upsells, additional users).
6. Collect customer feedback and communicate to product team.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. Owns net revenue retention (NRR). Target: 105%+ for your book of business.
2. Owns customer health scores. No more than 10% in "red" status.
3. Owns expansion pipeline. Maintain qualified expansion opportunities.
4. Owns time to first value. 90%+ reach milestone within 30 days.

AUTHORITY:

Can decide solo: Offer contract extensions up to 30 days • Provide free training sessions • Approve goodwill credits up to $500 • Schedule executive business reviews

Need approval: Discounts above 10% • Credits above $500 • Custom contract terms • Escalations requiring engineering • Early terminations

Part 6: Practical Worksheets

Use these worksheets to guide your R2A2 development process. Print them out and work through them with your team.

Worksheet 1: Role Selection Criteria

List your key roles. Check each criterion that applies. Start with the role that has the highest score (most checks).

Role Name	Confusion?	Bottleneck?	Turnover?	Critical?	Score
	☐	☐	☐	☐	/4
	☐	☐	☐	☐	/4
	☐	☐	☐	☐	/4
	☐	☐	☐	☐	/4
	☐	☐	☐	☐	/4
	☐	☐	☐	☐	/4

PRIORITY GUIDE

Start with roles scoring 3-4. These have the highest impact potential.

Notes:

_____

_____

_____

Worksheet 2: Accountability-Authority Alignment Check

For each accountability, check whether the person has sufficient authority to achieve it.

> **REMEMBER**
>
> High Accountability + Low Authority = Burnout. If someone owns an outcome but can't make the decisions needed to achieve it, you've set them up to fail.

Accountability	Authority Needed	Have It?	Action if No
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	

Key misalignment to resolve:

_____

_____

Part 7: Implementation Checklists

Single Role R2A2 Implementation

Phase 1: Preparation

☐ Selected pilot role using selection criteria worksheet

☐ Scheduled 30-minute interview with person in role

☐ Scheduled 30-minute interview with their manager

☐ Prepared discovery questions

Phase 2: Discovery

☐ Conducted interview with person in role

☐ Captured notes on all four quadrants

☐ Conducted interview with manager

☐ Identified gaps and alignment issues

Phase 3: Draft & Validate

☐ Created first draft of R2A2 using template

☐ Validated with person in role (20-30 minutes)

☐ Incorporated their feedback

☐ Validated with adjacent roles for overlaps

☐ Finalized R2A2 document

Phase 4: Implement & Maintain

☐ Shared final R2A2 with person in role

☐ Added to onboarding materials

☐ Referenced in next 1:1 meeting

☐ Updated job posting (if recruiting)

☐ Scheduled 90-day review to refine

Completion date: _____

Part 8: Troubleshooting Common Issues

Here are the most common problems people encounter when building R2A2s—and how to solve them.

Issue 1: Accountability-Authority Mismatch

Symptom: Person feels stuck or burned out. They own outcomes but can't make decisions to achieve them.

Solution: Either expand their authority OR reduce their accountability to match what they can actually control. Use the Alignment Worksheet to identify specific misalignments.

Issue 2: Authority Gaps Between Roles

Symptom: Multiple people think they have authority over the same decision, OR no one thinks they do.

Solution: Map out who has authority for which decisions. When you find gaps or overlaps, make explicit decisions about ownership. Document clearly in both R2A2s.

Issue 3: Templates Don't Fit

Symptom: The fill-in-the-blank templates feel forced for certain roles.

Solution: Start from scratch using the four quadrant questions. The templates are starting points, not rigid requirements. What matters is clarity in all four areas, not following a specific format.

Issue 4: Role Keeps Drifting

Symptom: The R2A2 you wrote 6 months ago doesn't match reality anymore.

Solution: This is normal—roles evolve. Schedule quarterly check-ins to review R2A2s. Ask: "What's changed? What should we update?" Keep the document living, not filed away.

Issue 5: Too Much Complexity

Symptom: The R2A2 has 20 responsibilities and 15 accountabilities. It's overwhelming.

Solution: Force prioritization. Limit responsibilities to 5-7 core items. Limit accountabilities to 3-4 key outcomes. If a role truly has more, it might be two roles.

Issue 6: People Don't Use It

Symptom: You created beautiful R2A2s but they're sitting in a folder, unused.

Solution: Reference them constantly. Use them in 1:1s ("Let's check your R2A2—how are you doing on these accountabilities?"). Use them in hiring and performance conversations. Make them living documents.

Part 9: Taking It Further

Scaling R2A2 Across Your Organization

Once you've successfully implemented R2A2 for a few roles, you can scale it across your organization:

- Create an R2A2 library — Store all role definitions in one accessible place
- Train managers — Teach them how to create and maintain R2A2s for their teams
- Integrate with hiring — Use R2A2s as the foundation for job postings and interviews
- Connect to performance — Reference R2A2 accountabilities in performance reviews
- Update onboarding — Give every new hire their R2A2 on day one

Using R2A2 in Hiring

When you hire with an R2A2 in hand, you can:

- Write job postings that actually describe the role (candidates self-select better)
- Ask interview questions based on real accountabilities and authority decisions
- Set clear expectations before someone accepts the offer
- Onboard faster because the new hire knows exactly what they own

Your Business Health Journey

Role clarity is just one piece of building a healthy, scalable business. At BizHealth.ai, we help small and mid-sized business owners diagnose gaps, build capabilities, and grow with confidence.

> **READY TO GO DEEPER?**
>
> Take the free BizHealth Assessment at www.bizhealth.ai to discover where your business needs the most attention—across strategy, finance, operations, HR, and more.

Quick Reference: R2A2 At-A-Glance

R2A2 QUICK-FILL TEMPLATE

ROLE — Why This Job Exists

"You're the _____ who ensures _____. Your job exists to _____ so that _____."

RESPONSIBILITIES — The 5-10 Core Things

1. _____ (action verb + task + outcome)
2. _____ (action verb + task + outcome)
3. _____ (action verb + task + outcome)
4. _____ (action verb + task + outcome)
5. _____ (action verb + task + outcome)

ACCOUNTABILITY — What Outcomes They Own

1. Owns _____. If _____ happens, this role addresses it.
2. Owns _____. Success = _____.
3. Owns _____. Measured by _____.

AUTHORITY — What They Can Decide

Can decide solo:

• _____
• _____
• _____

Need approval for:

• _____

• _____

• _____

Discovery Questions:

ROLE: "Why does your job exist? What would break without you?"

RESPONSIBILITIES: "Walk me through your typical week. What are the 5 most important things you do?"

ACCOUNTABILITY: "What outcomes are you measured on? When something goes wrong, does it come back to you?"

AUTHORITY: "What decisions do you wish you could make without asking? Where do you feel stuck waiting for approval?"

About BizHealth.ai

BizHealth.ai is the Business Health Coach for small and mid-sized businesses. We help owners and leaders diagnose gaps, build capabilities, and grow with confidence—without the guesswork.

What We Offer

- **BizHealth Assessment** — A comprehensive diagnostic that reveals your business's strengths and gaps across 10 critical areas
- **BizGrowth Academy** — Practical curriculum and training to build business acumen and leadership capability
- **BizTools** — Templates, frameworks, and resources (like this playbook) to implement best practices
- **BizGuides** — Expert coaching and consulting when you need personalized guidance

GET STARTED TODAY

Ready to assess your business health?

Take the Complete Business Heaslth Assessment at:

www.bizhealth.ai

Discover where your business needs attention—and get personalized recommendations to grow stronger.

Stop guessing. Start growing.

Thank you for downloading the BizHealth.ai - *R2A2 Job Description Playbook*. We hope it helps you build clarity, accountability, and authority across your team.

Questions - Feedback? Contact us at hello@bizhealth.ai