



# The RACI Model: A Framework for Project Management



Written by **Cole Abbott** • Updated: September 27, 2024 • 11 Minute Read

***Welcome to Founder's Framework, offering full access to objective, informational, and researched articles on core business frameworks — aggregated into a single, organized space.***

This article provides a detailed overview and expert insights on RACI to help leaders select the appropriate framework to support business growth and sustainability.

# At a Glance

**Framework:** RACI Model

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**Creator:** Unknown

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**Stage of Development:** [Stage 3: Scale](#)

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**Core Competency:** [Structure](#)

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**Business area:** [Organizational structure](#), [People](#)

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**Change required:** Low change management level

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**Key pain points addressed:**

- Role confusion and accountability issues
  - Communication gaps and team conflicts
  - Decision-making bottlenecks
  - Project delays
  - Resource allocation
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**Framework:** Stratified Systems Theory (SST)

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## What Is the RACI Framework?

The **RACI model** is a **framework** that provides a hierarchy of accountability during a project. It identifies the roles, accountabilities, and responsibilities (RARs) of team members to help reduce misunderstandings and improve communication. Use a RACI matrix to document who's responsible for completing specific tasks, who's accountable for the project's completion, who's consulted during the project, and who's informed upon project completion.



“ACCOUNTABILITY IS THE GLUE THAT TIES COMMITMENT TO RESULTS.”

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**BOB PROCTOR**

## Who Created RACI?

The RACI model is a project management tool that has existed since the 1950s. Over the years, the RACI framework has undergone several adaptations, making it difficult to attribute to a single creator.

In the 1970s, it evolved into the Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RAM) and began gaining popularity in project management and business process improvement methodologies. RACI has since become a staple in project management, particularly for its ability to clarify RARs within a team.

### KEY TERM

## RACI as an Acronym

RACI stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed.

## Key Elements of RACI

The letters in RACI stand for:

- **Responsible:** The person assigned to complete the work for a specific task or group of tasks that will advance the project.

- **Accountable:** The person who's accountable for ensuring stakeholders are clear on their level of participation by providing responsible parties with the resources they need.
- **Consulted:** The stakeholders who are consulted on the project. They'll provide feedback, offer insights, answer questions, and assist with problems.
- **Informed:** Those who are regularly updated on progress and outcomes but aren't directly involved in the work.

## RACI Chart Example

By creating a RACI chart, project managers clearly define who's involved in each task and to what extent. This helps reduce confusion and enhance efficiency throughout the project.

TO-DO   STAKEHOLDER	PRODUCT MANAGER	ENGINEERING LEAD	MARKETING MANAGER	SALES TEAM LEAD	CUSTOMER SUCCESS LEAD
PRODUCE A ROAD MAP	A   R	C	C	I	I
DEVELOP SOFTWARE	A	R	I	I	I
WRITE RELEASE NOTES	A	C	R	I	C
CREATE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS	I	I	A   R	C	I
HOST DEMO WEBINAR	C	I	A	R	R

**Also known as:** The RACI framework is also referred to as the RACI matrix, a RACI chart, or a responsibility assignment matrix. Another version is called the RASCI, which adds "Support" to the acronym.

## Key Pain Points Addressed

The RACI model addresses several common pain points experienced in project management, especially in small businesses.

- ✓ **Role confusion:** The RACI model tackles the issue of role ambiguity within teams and projects by clearly defining who is responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed for each task. This helps eliminate confusion about who does what.
- ✓ **Accountability issues:** RACI ensures there's a single point of accountability for each task or deliverable. It prevents tasks from falling through the cracks by assigning an Accountable role so someone takes ownership of the completion and quality of every task.

- ✓ **Communication gaps:** The RACI model improves communication by clearly outlining who needs to be consulted and informed about various tasks within a project. By streamlining information sharing, it ensures the right people are involved at the right times.
- ✓ **Team conflicts:** RACI provides a clear, agreed-upon structure for RARs. This minimizes disagreements over who handles what because it's all clearly defined.
- ✓ **Decision-making bottlenecks:** Since the RACI model clearly defines who's authorized to make decisions (that is, the Accountable person), it helps prevent situations where decisions are delayed due to uncertainty around who has the final say.
- ✓ **Project delays:** Projects move forward efficiently because there's no confusion over who should be doing what.
- ✓ **Overlapping responsibilities:** In many businesses, especially smaller ones, there can be an overlap in responsibilities, which can lead to tasks being neglected or duplicated. RACI prevents this by delineating the level of accountability for each person for each task so there's no unnecessary redundancy.
- ✓ **Resource allocation:** RACI allows for better resource management and workload balancing. It also helps identify when individual team members are overloaded with too many Responsible tasks or when there aren't enough resources allocated.
- ✓ **Lack of Clarity:** By defining who's Consulted and Informed, RACI ensures stakeholders are properly engaged throughout the project life cycle. This helps to form agreements rather than expectations and keeps all relevant parties involved appropriately.

The RACI model helps create a more efficient, accountable, and collaborative work environment. This is particularly helpful for small businesses and startups, where clarity and efficiency are especially critical for success.

## When You Should Apply RACI

The RACI model is applied in organizations that have reached **Stage 3 (Scale)** of Ninety's Stages of Development. It's particularly useful when:



Managing complex projects with multiple stakeholders and tasks



Forming new teams where roles, accountabilities, and responsibilities are not yet clear



Looking to streamline processes and improve efficiencies

## Pros and Cons of Using RACI

As you evaluate RACI, consider the top pros and cons of this framework adoption:

### Pros

- ✓ Clearly defines roles, accountabilities, and responsibilities for tasks
- ✓ Improves communication among team members
- ✓ Ensures someone is accountable for each task
- ✓ Reduces overlapping and duplicated tasks

### Cons

- ✗ Requires time to set up and maintain
- ✗ May be too rigid for highly dynamic and complex projects
- ✗ Causes an increase in administrative overhead, especially in smaller projects

## TLDR: RACI in Summary

The RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) model is a project management tool designed to clarify the **roles, accountabilities, and responsibilities (RARs)** within a team. It addresses common pain points in project management, such as role confusion, accountability issues, communication gaps, overlapping responsibilities, decision-making bottlenecks, resource allocation, unclear communication, project delays, and team conflicts.

Small businesses can use RACI to manage complex projects, streamline processes, and resolve accountability challenges. It offers several advantages, such as clearly defining project RARs, improving communication, reducing overlap and task duplication, and ensuring accountability across teams.



## Guided Approach to RACI

If you believe the RACI model is applicable to your organization, consider the following steps for implementation.

### Identify the problem and set goals.

First, define the problem you're trying to solve with RACI. Then, determine what success looks like for your organization by setting clear goals and objectives.

### Select a pilot project or department.

Choose a pilot project or group that will benefit from improved role clarity and accountability to serve as your test case.

### Define and communicate RACI roles.

For your test case, map out who's responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed about each task or decision. Then clearly communicate these roles to everyone involved.

## **Engage key stakeholders.**

Gain input and buy-in by conducting a workshop or training session to introduce RACI to your team members. Explain the benefits of implementing RACI and how it can address your current pain points. Be sure to provide resources (for example, templates or guidelines) to help effectively implement RACI.

## **Implement and monitor.**

For your test case, put the RACI chart into practice, making sure everyone adheres to their defined roles. Gather feedback from your team to track progress during implementation.

## **Evaluate and refine the process.**

After you've conducted your test case, assess the impact of RACI and evaluate whether initial goals were achieved. Identify any challenges based on your team's feedback and make any necessary adjustments to RACI roles, processes, or communications. Document what worked well (and what didn't) for future implementations.

## **Develop a rollout plan.**

Using the lessons learned from your initial test case, create a phased plan to implement RACI across other teams or projects. This could include focusing on key projects first or implementing RACI one department at a time.

## **Train RACI champions.**

Identify and train team members within each department to serve as RACI experts and advocates for RACI implementation.

## **Implement RACI.**

Begin rolling out RACI gradually across your organization. Be sure to incorporate RACI into your project management methodologies, onboarding processes, and communication. Also, set your teams up for success by providing resources, templates, and guidance for creating and maintaining RACI charts.

## **Review and optimize.**

Regularly review how the RACI model is being used across your organization and course correct as needed. Encourage your teams to provide candid feedback, suggest improvements, and share best practices to help optimize the RACI model in your organization.



# Take Ninety

Every project has multiple stakeholders — those Seats in your company that need to be involved to some degree. That's why at Ninety, we use RACI across many teams, especially for our cross-functional project teams (what we call [Tiger Teams](#)).

We deeply believe in cultivating and maintaining an agreements-based culture, which includes making agreements with all team members on their roles, accountabilities, and responsibilities (RARs). Using RACI to support 90-day goals (aka [Rocks](#)) can ensure that every team member is clear on their involvement and what success looks like. When we focus on building out a matrix, we believe that mapping to the Seat ([the role itself, not just the person](#)) is key to making sure you have the right involvement in the work being done at the right level.

The bigger an organization gets, the more important it is to use a model like RACI to ensure that processes and responsibilities are clear for every new project. It ensures clear agreements are in place and minimizes wasted time and confusion so your business can get smart stuff done ([GSSD](#)).

## Next Steps

For those ready to take action, consider these actionable steps:

- ① Are you building an organization based on trust, accountability, and mutual respect? Find out how to **adopt an agreements-based culture**.
- ① Don't know what Stage of Development your company is in? Complete the **Stages of Development assessment** to find out.
- ① What other frameworks would help a company focus on scaling? Find more options in our **Stage 3 frameworks**.
- ① What does it mean to master the Structure Competency in your company? **Discover the areas to focus on**.
- ① Are you being intentional about how your business operates? Find out **where your company's approach ranks**.

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Tagged with: **People**, **Structure**, **Stage 3: Scale**, **Organizational Structure**, **RACI**