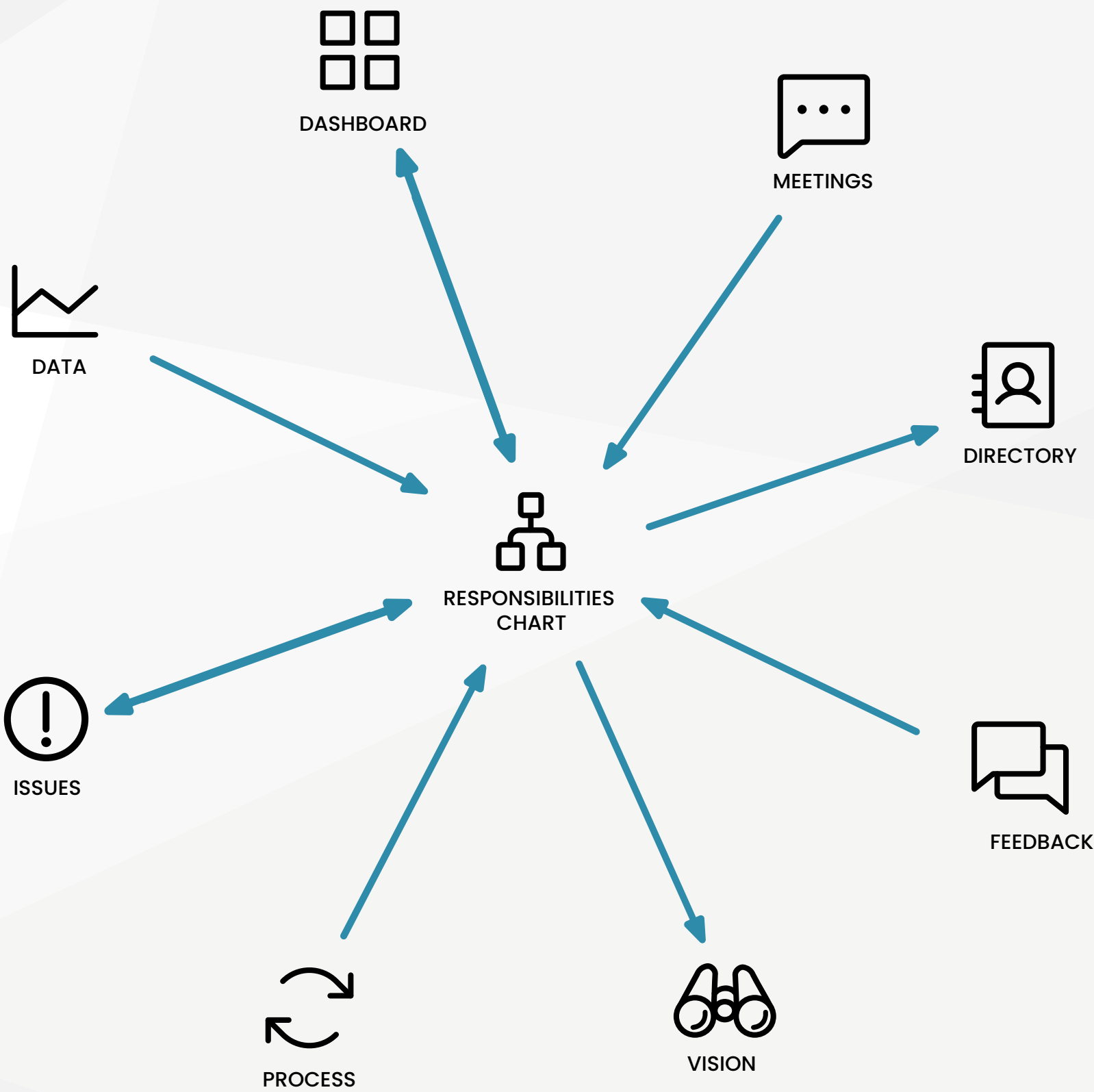# Responsibilities Chart

Whether we have ten, 100, or 1,000 people working in our business, it's crucial that "who is responsible for what" is crystal clear. When that's in place, everyone knows the exact role they play, as well as everyone else's role.

A Responsibilities tool is essential if we want a culture of accountability that lets us Get Smart Stuff Done (GSSD). The Responsibilities chart, especially when coupled with a thoughtful Vision, clarifies roles and makes it easier for us to anticipate our human resource needs as we grow.

DASHBOARD

MEETINGS

DATA

DIRECTORY

RESPONSIBILITIES CHART

ISSUES

FEEDBACK

PROCESS

VISION

Tool Overview

At its core, the Responsibilities chart helps us demonstrate how we collectively divide and conquer to create value for our customers while building high-trust relationships with all our stakeholders.

Context

At the heart of every decent company is a strong Visionary who provides a compelling Vision of the future. Visionaries see how we can collectively make life better. They also create a clearly defined set of guardrails that help us stay focused as we progress toward that Vision. These include defining and championing Core Values, a Unique Value Proposition (why our Ideal Customers love buying from us and working with us), and the more significant longer-term goals that position us well for the future.

In about half the companies running on Ninety, the Visionary is supported by an Operator who works closely with the Visionary and all department heads (like Sales, Marketing, Operations, and Finance) to ensure they have the resources they need. This enables everyone to do their part in turning the Vision into reality. Operators also ensure that the entire organization works extraordinarily well together.

The purpose of the Responsibilities chart is to clearly define what Seats own the distinct Roles and Responsibilities (R&Rs) in our organization. At the outset, there's a good chance one person is sitting in multiple Seats because, in the not-too-distant future, we envision new people assuming those R&Rs.

For example, some companies might start with one person overseeing Sales, Marketing, and Customer Success even though it's unlikely that person is great at all three. Establishing the separation of particular R&Rs allows companies to survive in the short term, then grow and thrive later with the right people in the right Seats.

Core Disciplines of a Great Responsibilities Chart

1. **One person is responsible for each core function (e.g., Sales).** As the saying goes, "when more than one person is responsible, no one is responsible." However, that doesn't mean one person does all the work; a thoughtful Responsibilities chart helps identify which R&Rs need to be delegated to others.

2. **Think Roles and Responsibilities, not titles.** Which R&Rs are needed to turn the next phase of the Vision into reality? Get specific. Is a project manager necessary? Pinpointing the types of work each Seat will be responsible for develops a better feel for potential capability and capacity issues.

3. **Structure first, people second.** Don't build your Responsibilities chart based on your people or, even worse, titles. People are allocated to the Seats later, when we genuinely understand the R&Rs and can determine the skills and experience needed to succeed. Existing titles and chains of command frequently don't align with what the future requires; these are the types of issues a well-built Responsibilities chart reveals and helps to fix.
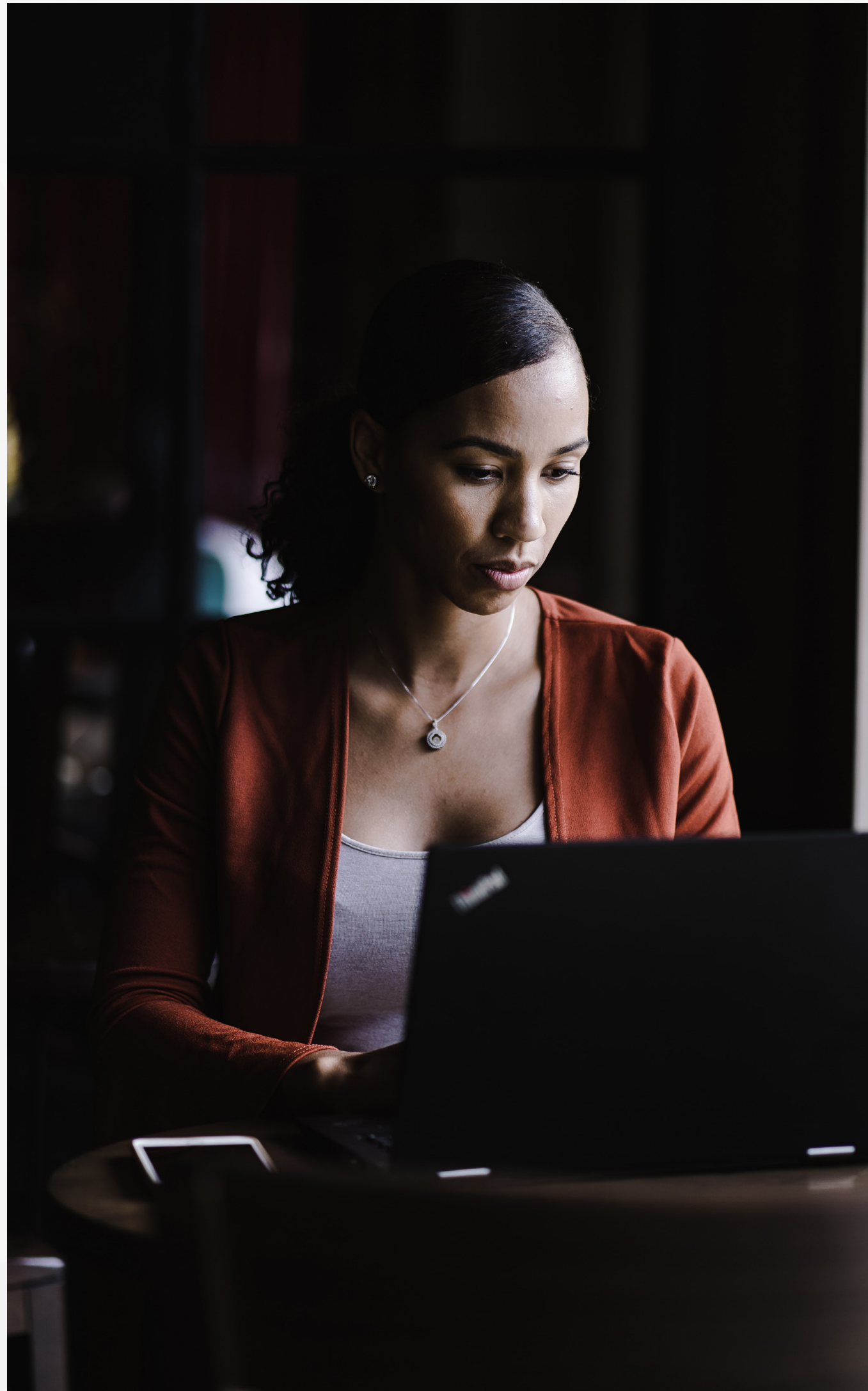
Hopefully Helpful Hints

After building the structure of your Responsibilities chart, you're ready to **start adding people to fill the Seats**. When you're confident someone is a great Core Values fit and has the Competency, Commitment, and Capacity to do that job successfully, add them to the Ninety Directory so they can be assigned to a Seat.

Invite team members to be Ninety users. Users can start with a free Observer account, which allows them to see the Responsibilities chart and get to know the Vision. Better yet, the more a company uses Ninety, the more powerful and organic the Responsibilities chart becomes. As an example, the 1-on-1 tool pulls R&Rs right off your Responsibilities chart, creating a perfect opportunity to update the chart during a feedback meeting if it's clear that changes are needed.

Think of the Responsibilities chart as a living tool. As a company grows, things change. Part of that change is realizing that we need to further divide and conquer by splitting a Seat or adding a new one. Part of the Responsibilities chart's power comes from making it easy to identify these needs preemptively. That way, there's time to launch a talent search before it's truly critical to do so.

Set aside time to review the chart. We recommend including "Review Responsibilities Chart" in the agenda of your Annual and Quarterly Planning Meetings in Ninety. This provides the opportunity to raise any Issues for discussion with the team. Is this chart going to be functional in 90 or 180 days when we achieve our goals? Will we need to add anyone or create any new Seats to remain on track for our 1-Year Goals?

Takeaway

Remember: It's best to have one person responsible for each task. The whole point of a Responsibilities chart is to add clarity by defining which seat is responsible for what, specifically. Why is this so important to us? We've seen it in action. When individuals have a clear set of tasks and expectations, our teams Get Smart Stuff Done.

What's next? Visit the 90u Library or try Ninety today.