**AoR Crafting Cheat Sheet**

**Context**

Areas of Responsibility are a way of capturing the distribution of responsibility within your company. They’re based on the idea that everyone owns some part of the business. While managers have the greatest decision-making power, you don’t want your VP of Marketing deciding what to publish on the blog or your CEO reviewing code. Those AoRs should be the responsibility of subject matter experts within each team. AoRs provide transparency to colleagues, speed up decision-making, help managers delegate, and highlight skills gaps in your company. This cheat sheet will help you craft your AoR list. Be sure to keep it somewhere public and accessible to your entire team.

**Areas of Responsibility**

* Individual AoRs are meant to turn a mandate’s baseline KPIs into action and responsibility.
  + As such, mandate AoRs have baseline KPIs, but individual AoR don’t need to have KPIs (but can as needed).
* AoRs may cover
  + Recurring tasks. E.g. order beer, compile KPIs, run a maintenance, etc
    - Use repeating subtasks to codify the AoR into recurring/routine actions
  + Reactive responsibilities. E.g. questions, requests, take a decisions when no consensus, etc
  + Proactive improvement. E.g. automate a step, revamp something to improve a KPI
    - Low effort improvements can be done on the side, during hackternoons, or during recurring time blocks
    - Medium+ effort improvements should be surfaced as company/team/personal OKRs
* AoRs can change frequently, don’t hold back
  + Be mindful: changing people’s AoRs requires communications, possibly training, and a ramp up
  + Communication is key as changing AoRs will trigger healthy discussion around responsibilities and org structure
* AoRs can be refactored as needed
  + If the assignment of an AoR to a single person is not obvious, it’s a sign to refactor
  + Refactoring = split or carve-out
    - Split: 1 AoR becomes 2 independent AoRs
    - Carve-out: extract and delegate a small AoR from a bigger one. E.g. “Keep the office stocked with food & drinks” and “Keep the fridge stocked with beer”  
      Great to give smaller responsibilities to new hires, while having everything else fall on the parent AoR. In the bigger AoR add a note that it excludes <link to carved out AoR>.
  + Don’t go too granular: if someone has multiple similar AoRs, group them in one and just add more in the description
  + Go granular when you are planning on hiring and/or re-assigning to someone else in the future
    - Use the tag *Delegate* to mark AoRs you are planning on reassigning
    - Helps build hiring plan and job profiles, just look for tagged AoRs to find what you’re need to hire for
    - Tells people an AoR assignment is temporary
* AoRs are crafted and assigned by Mandate owners
  + Nothing prevents an AoR to be assigned to someone outside the mandate owner’s team or department
  + Do ask their direct manager before assigning an AoR to someone outside your team
  + Mandate holders can unassign AoRs within their mandates at will, especially if an AoR holder is not doing a good job