

# Roles at NFE

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NFE has three roles. Most people hold one; some hold two; in rare cases, one person takes on all three.

| Role                    | What they do                                                | Durable skill                              |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| IC (builder / operator) | Build or operate the company, working with the tools        | Judgement, taste, creativity               |
| DRI                     | Own customer outcomes and assemble ICs to deliver them      | Ownership, accountability                  |
| Player coach            | Build the capability and capacity of the people around them | Coaching, empathy, building human capacity |

## 1. IC: builder / operator

**Every IC is a manager of one.** You own your work from start to finish without needing daily check-ins. You get clear objectives and the freedom to decide how you reach them. When you can't find an answer, you look for it yourself first, ask in the open if you're still stuck, and write down what you learn in the Library.

Salespeople, engineers, designers, product people: anyone working hands-on with the tools to build or operate the company.

ICs are augmented, with access to agents. One person can now do the work that a team, or 10 people, did in the past.

**Durable skill:** judgement, taste, creativity.

## Leverage

The strongest ICs don't just produce more themselves. They do work that makes everyone else faster:

- building things others can reuse, such as tools, templates, skills and agents,

- solving several related problems at once instead of one at a time,
- sharing what they know through Library pages, demos and pairing,
- spotting and removing whatever is slowing the team down.

## 2. DRI: Directly Responsible Individual

Owens customer outcomes. A DRI:

- puts the strategy together,
- understands the roadmap well enough to understand customer needs and problems,
- assembles a team of ICs to get something done.

**Durable skill:** ownership and accountability. **The question every DRI can answer:** *what do you lead, and what are you ultimately responsible for?*

How DRIs make decisions, and when approvals are needed, is covered in [Directly Responsible Individuals](#).

Once a DRI decides, everyone commits to carrying out the decision, including people who disagreed. You can still argue to change it, but take that to the DRI, and keep executing while you do.

## 3. Player coach

What we would call managers today. Player coaches build the capability and capacity of other people. Instead of telling them how to do it, they show them how to do it.

- Player coaches are ICs or DRIs who are also really good at coaching the people around them.
- They need to keep building, so they can show the skill they're teaching.
- They don't need to be strategic, and they don't need to be a DRI.

**Durable skill:** building human capacity and coaching, with the empathy and soft skills great managers are known for.

## Holding more than one role

Roles combine: an IC can be a player coach, and a DRI can be a player coach. In rare cases one person takes on all three.

# Further reading

- [Directly Responsible Individuals](#): how DRIs decide, and when approvals are needed
  - GitLab handbook: [Values](#) (Managers of one; Disagree, commit and advocate) and [Engineering IC Leadership](#), which the IC section adapts
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