



FREE RESOURCE — ENCODING LOOP STARTER KIT

# The AI Champion

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A one-page role spec for the forward-deployed engineer  
inside your firm.

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# What this role is

The Champion is the person inside your firm whose job is to operate the encoding loop — turn corrections into encoded firm methodology so commodity AI gets meaningfully better, every month, on the work your firm actually does.

This is not a power-user role. Power users adopt tools as they ship. The Champion does something different: they pull the firm's expertise out of senior heads, encode it as Claude skills, prompt templates, SOPs, and client context files, and watch the same corrections stop recurring. The role's product is not better prompts. It's a sharpening loop the firm owns.

The closest contemporary parallel is the forward-deployed engineer. OpenAI's forward-deployed engineers spent six months embedded in Thrive Holdings' Crete Professionals Alliance to build the tax agent the senior accountant used to drop from 180 hours of prep to 15. Tomoro's engineers do the same work for Fidelity International and Virgin Atlantic. The Champion is the firm-scale version of that role — same work, against the firm's own stack instead of a client's.

The institutional pattern is now visible at every scale: the PCAOB recruited technologists onto its Inspections Modernization Council. PwC deployed 30,000 Claude-certified professionals across delivery. The smallest version is one Champion inside a ten-person firm. Same shape. Smaller scale. Same job.

# What the Champion does (and doesn't)

| The Champion does   | The Champion doesn't   |
|---|--|
| Operates the Correction Capture Log against the firm's chosen vertical                                  | Run every workflow personally  |
| Encodes recurring corrections into Claude skills, prompts, SOPs, and client context files               | Replace senior accountants — the senior is the source of the methodology |
| Decides the next vertical to open a second loop on, when the first is producing diminishing corrections | Open loops on every workflow at once                                     |
| Reports the leading indicator monthly: corrections-per-job trending down                                | Report tool-adoption KPIs (logins, prompt counts, license usage)         |
| Defends the role internally with a documented log of encoded rules and time-on-job changes              | Defend the role with enthusiasm or anecdote                              |

Owns the loop's kill criteria — knows when a vertical isn't producing encodable signal

Stay loyal to a workflow that isn't paying off

## What the Champion needs from the firm

**Permission to narrow.** The instinct to encode the whole firm is the wrong instinct. The Champion needs explicit sign-off from the owner to ignore four out of five workflows in service of going deep on one. Without that permission, the loop produces nothing.

**Time, named explicitly.** Encoding work is invisible until it isn't. The Champion needs a defended block of time each week — four to six hours minimum for the first 90 days — and the owner has to back it when client work tries to absorb it.

**One vertical's worth of senior attention.** Encoding is methodology transcription. The senior who knows how to do the work has to be willing to be interviewed, watched, and corrected. Not all the time — but enough that the encoded rules are theirs, not the Champion's guess at theirs.

**A read on the bigger pattern.** The Champion reads the institutional signals — what OpenAI ships to firms in its portfolio (Thrive, Crete), what consulting firms deploy inside their delivery teams (PwC's 30,000 Claude-certified professionals), what regulators recruit for (PCAOB's Inspections Modernization Council). The role is not insulated from the rest of the industry.

## Where the role goes in 12 months

In the first quarter, the Champion stands up the loop on one vertical, captures 60 to 120 corrections, encodes the first six to ten of them into skills/prompts/SOPs, and produces a measurable drop in corrections-per-job on the chosen workflow.

In months four to six, the loop runs with less daily attention — the encoded rules do the work. The Champion opens a second loop on the next-highest-scoring vertical.

By the end of the year, the firm has two or three running loops, a documented set of encoded rules that competitors cannot copy by buying the same AI tool, and a Champion who defends the role with evidence — not enthusiasm.

That's the moat. The agent isn't the moat. The accumulated, encoded firm methodology running against commodity AI is the moat. The Champion's job is to compound it.

# Hiring or naming a Champion

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Look for someone who already does three things naturally: writes down how things work so others can repeat them, notices when the same mistake happens twice, and prefers fixing the system over fixing the symptom. The role is closer to a senior bookkeeper who likes documentation than to a developer who likes AI. Technologist-adjacent thinking matters more than technologist credentials.

If the firm has fewer than ten staff and no obvious candidate, the Champion is often the owner for the first quarter — long enough to prove the loop, then handed off as the firm hires.

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Pairs with the QC Starter Kit ([theaiaccountant.ai/qc-starter-kit](https://theaiaccountant.ai/qc-starter-kit)). QC Kit catches the errors; the Encoding Loop turns the catches into firm methodology. Same loop, different surface.