

Scaling a business with your greatest Asset



Most startups don't fail because of a bad idea.
They struggle because founders try to scale without the right people, structure, and support.

Personal Background

- Helped scale a company from \$5 million to \$17 million in 5 years.
- Managed 12 companies with Fortune 500 that were between \$3 million to \$100 million in annual revenue.
- 5 years supporting companies from 3 or 4 employees to 150 in size.
- 5 years Mentoring early-stage and startup Entrepreneurs.

Don't Confuse Building a Company with Hiring Employees

Expertise should come before Employees

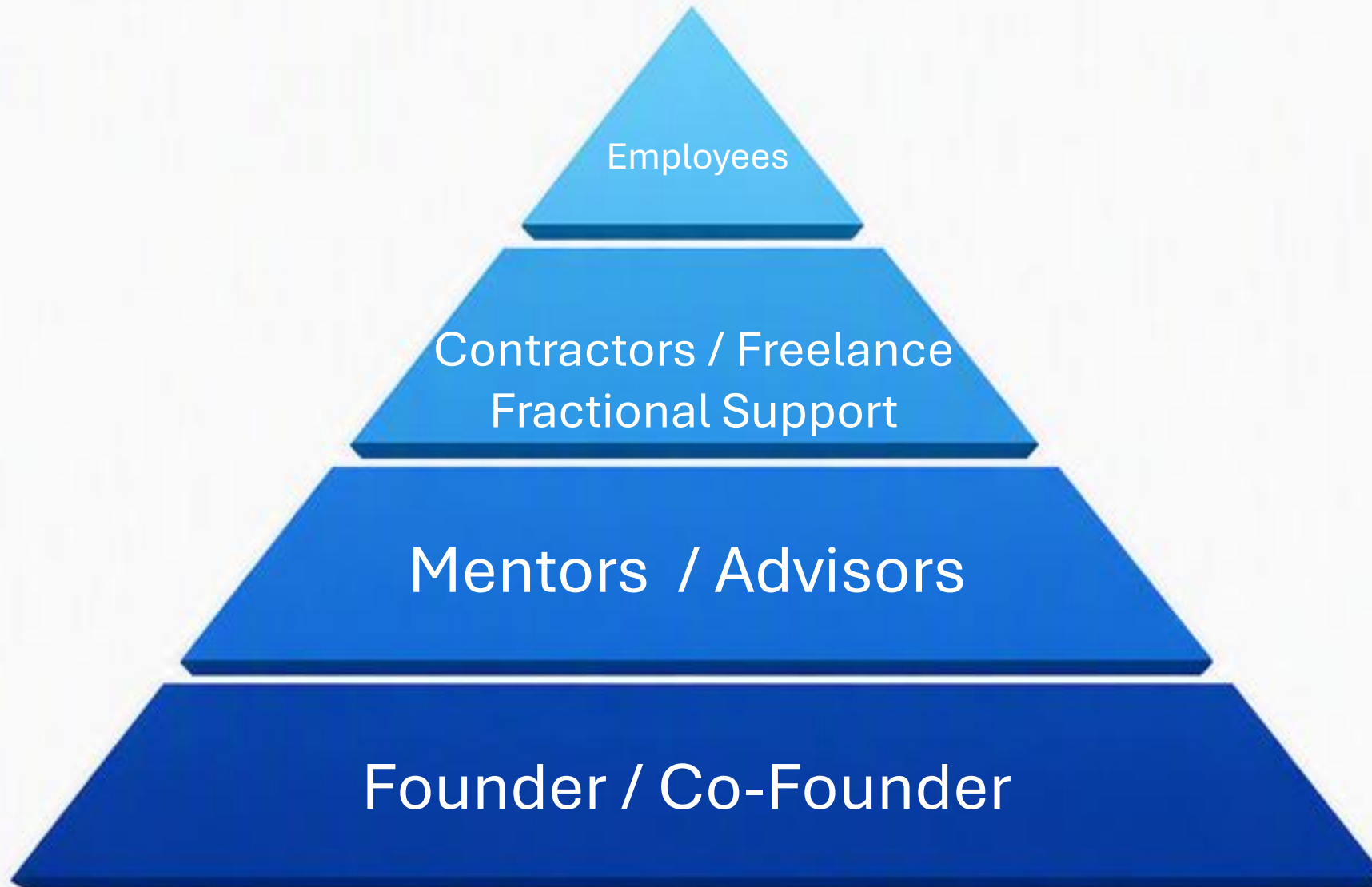
Early-Stage Ecosystem Recommendations:

- Mentors
- Advisors
- Service providers / Fractional Support
- Freelancers
- Strategic Partners
- Potential Co-Founders



Who are you currently relying on to help you make better decisions?

Founder support Framework



Your support system should evolve before your payroll does.

Choosing the Right Co-Founder or Business Partner

Discussion Points:

- Complementing skills vs. similar skills
- Shared Values
- Shared Vision
- Clear Expectations

Common Mistakes:

- Partnering with a friend because it's comfortable
- Splitting ownership equally without discussion
- Assuming alignment without difficult conversations

Examples: Business transition, buy out partner. Veto capability



Founder Bottleneck

Symptoms:

- Every Decision goes through you
- Customers wait for responses
- Growth Stalls
- Founder is working nights and weekends



Founder is at capacity and limiting growth of business

How to know You're Ready to Hire

You're Ready When:

- ✓ Revenue supports the investment
- ✓ Work is repeatable
- ✓ You know exactly what needs to be handed off
- ✓ Hiring creates growth rather than solving panic

You're Not Ready When:

- ✗ You just want relief
- ✗ No defined role exists
- ✗ You can't measure success



What to focus with your first hire

Common First Hires:

- Administrative support
- Customer service
- Operations coordinator
- Sales support
- Marketing specialist

Rule:

Hire for your lowest-value repeatable work first



What am I doing that someone else could do at 80% as well?

Employee vs Contractor vs Freelancer

Employee

Best for:

- Long-term core functions
- Ongoing responsibility

Contractor/Freelancer

Best for:

- Specialized projects
- Flexibility
- Expertise you don't need full-time

Discussion:

- Cost vs commitment vs control



Misclassification risks and compliance Concerns

Important Areas to focus with Employees

What is Required vs Nice to have:

- Workers Compensation
- Quickbooks / Accounting / Payroll Taxes.
- Benefits – ICHRA vs Traditional / PEO
- Retirement – 401K. Who are they intended?

Compliance Risk or Cost Risk

The Most Common People Mistakes

Mistake 1:

- Hiring because you are overwhelmed

Mistake 2:

- Hiring base on personality only

Mistake 3:

- No defined expectations

Mistake 4:

- Keeping underperformers too long.



What concerns do you have before hiring your first W2 employee?

Why focus on people? The Real Cost of a Bad Hire

Costs:

- Lost Productivity
- Lost time
- Training expense
- Missed revenue
- Team morale



The wrong hire often costs more than waiting another month to make the right one.

Define Success Before you Hire

Ask Before Posting a Job:

- What problem am I solving?
- What outcomes do I expect?
- What skills are absolutely required?
- What does success look like after 90 days.

Simple Framework:

- 30 Days: Learning Stage
- 60 Days: Starting to Contribute
- 90 Days: Own the job description



When to Let Someone Go

Red Flags:

- Repeated performance issues
- Misalignment with company Values
- Lack of accountability
- Constant management burden



Founders often wait too long because they feel loyal or guilty

Building for Scale

Build Roles Before you Build Headcount

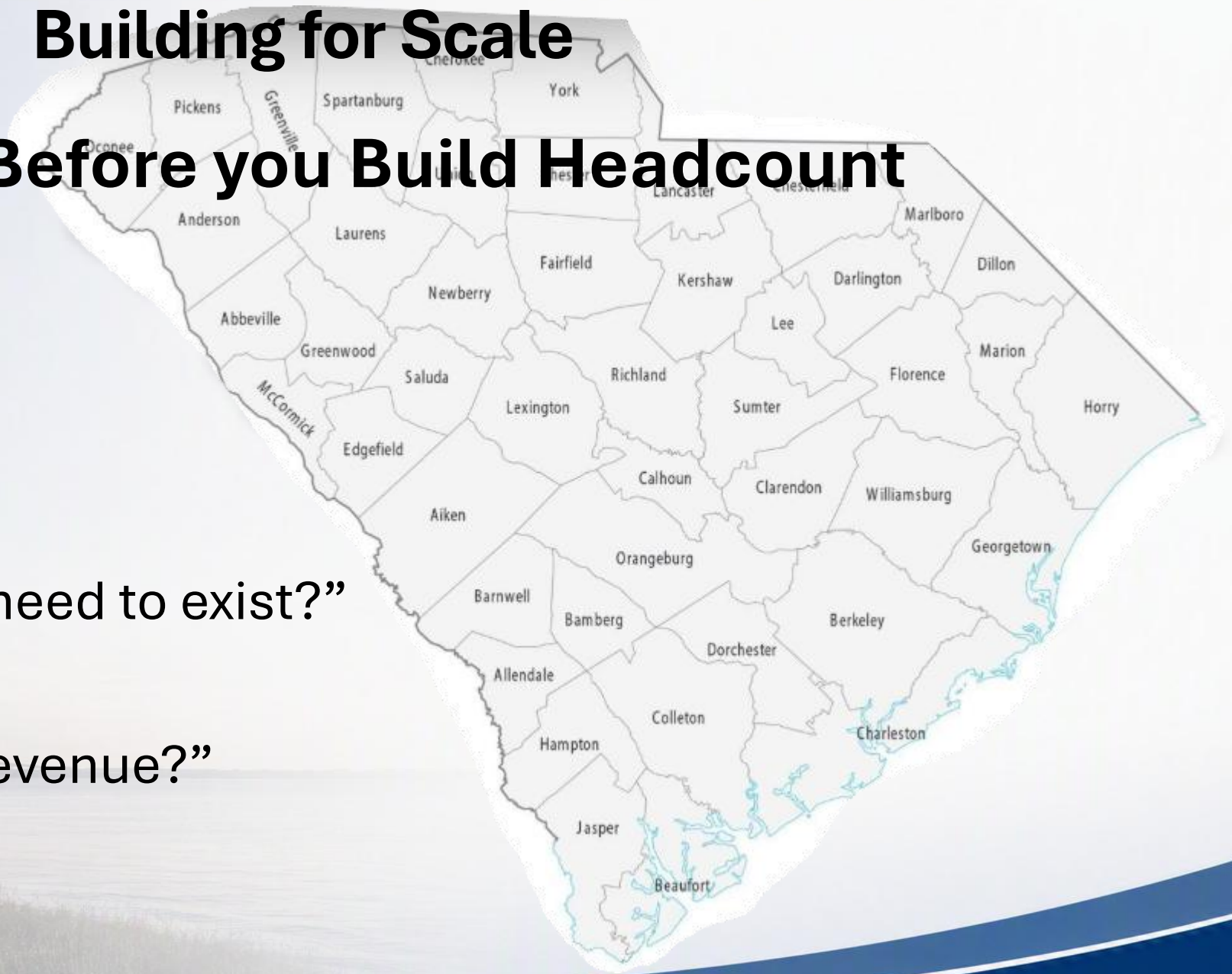
Instead of asking:

“Who should I hire?”

Ask:

“What responsibilities need to exist?”

“What roles can drive revenue?”



What do you think is a critical component of hiring?

The Evolution of Team Building

Stage 1

Founder

Stage 2

Founder + Support Network

Stage 3

Founder + Contractors

Stage 4

First Employees

Stage 5

Managers and Specialists

Stage 6

- Leadership Team



Each Stage requires different leadership from the founder

The Founder Mindset Shift

Early-Stage

“I do everything.”

Growth Stage

“I oversee everything.”

Scaling Stage

“I build leaders who run things.”



Many Founders struggle because they never make this transition

Three Things to Remember

1. Build your network before your payroll

2. Hire to eliminate bottlenecks, not stress

3. The quality of your people decisions determines the speed of your growth.

Planning Job Descriptions, pay, and purpose is key to growth

Conclusion Discussion Prompts

Discussion Starters:

- What is your biggest hiring challenge right now?
- What role are you struggling to fill?
- Have you hired too early or been too late?
- What people decisions would you change if you could?

Who are you currently relying on to help you make better decisions?



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