

## **THE FOUNDER ALPHABET**

*Become So Good They Can't Ignore You — From A to Z*

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### **Dear Founder**

*You're probably reading this book because you've already made the choice. The choice to build. To try. To dream dangerously. And for that, I respect you deeply.*

*Founders are a strange species. A little crazy. A little stubborn. Often misunderstood. But in the end, it's always these crazy ones who end up moving the world forward — one product, one team, one courageous decision at a time.*

*I've been building since I was a student, alongside my day-to-day jobs at Red Bull and later Unilever. I started my first catering company while still at university, then expanded it into a restaurant. It taught me a lot — and it burned me out completely. Since then, I've been through multiple ventures. Some failed. Some succeeded. I've split companies, sold companies, walked away from things I loved, and stayed too long in things I shouldn't have.*

*When I finally sold the escape game business — the biggest in Czechia — I had the chance to breathe. I took the money, invested in public markets, and quickly realized my heart was elsewhere. I moved fully into crypto, where I found my edge investing in early-stage ecosystems.*

*Eventually, we launched Moonhill Capital. Through the fund, I've worked closely with over 100 founders. Some of them brilliant, some still learning, all of them driven. And through that lens, combined with my own entrepreneurial chaos, I began to see patterns. The same mistakes. The same fears. The same lonely doubts, over and over again.*

*That's why I wrote this book.*

*To create a kind of alphabet for the modern founder. Something simple. Something real. Something that could speak to you whether you're in your first idea sprint or deep in a Series A raise.*

*If you take away only one thing from this book, let it be this: **You don't have to feel ready to build something that matters.***

*You might feel misunderstood by your friends, your parents, your partner, your investors. That's okay. You're not building for them. You're building because something inside you refuses*

*to sit still. Because something in you believes the world can be better and you're bold enough to try. And I believe that too.*

*This book is not a shortcut. Experience will always be your best teacher. But maybe, just maybe, this book can save you a few wrong turns. Maybe it gives you a phrase to hold when things get hard. Maybe it reminds you that greatness doesn't always feel great while it's being built.*

*When in doubt, rest. When it's not your path, say no. When the vision still moves you, keep going.*

*I wrote this because I've made the mistakes. I've paid the price. But in this game, you only need to win once to change everything — for yourself and for others.*

*Stay courageous. Stay curious. Stay human.*

*— Rene*

## **A – AI**

***AI isn't just a tool. It's your cofounder.***

*We're no longer in the era of "hiring fast."*

*We're in the era of building solo, smart, and superhuman.*

*Founders used to spend months raising a seed round just to hire a small team.*

*Now? You can go from idea to product with nothing but a laptop and a few AI tools.*

*AI lets you collapse five roles into one: researcher, strategist, designer, coder, and marketer.*

*All on demand, all without payroll. No salaries. No HR. No team dynamics to manage.*

*Just build.*

*As Clarence Wooten argues in CoFounder.AI, the next generation of startups won't be defined by the size of their founding team.*

*They'll be defined by how well that founder can wield AI.*

*This isn't a gimmick. This is leverage.*

*And leverage is what separates founders who ship from founders who stall.*

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### ***What AI does for the modern founder:***

- *Research markets in seconds*
- *Generate pitch decks and business models*
- *Build MVPs with no-code + AI-generated code*
- *Write copy, emails, ads, and launch tweets*
- *Run support, summarize feedback, plan product updates*

*AI shortens the distance between idea and iteration.*

*It removes friction from execution.*

*And it forces clarity: if you can't explain it to AI, you probably don't understand it well enough yet.*

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***This changes how you think about startups.***

*You don't need funding to validate your idea.*

*You don't need a cofounder to get started.*

*You don't need permission to launch.*

***AI lets you fail fast with zero capital.***

***Or succeed quietly before anyone even knows what you're doing.***

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*"Startups of the future will be AI-native. If you're not thinking AI-first, you're already behind."*

*— Clarence Wooten, CoFounder.AI*

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*So stop looking for a cofounder.*

*You already have one. It never sleeps, never argues, and never asks for equity.*

*Use it well — or get left behind.*

## **A – Audience**

*You don't build a product first.*

*You build an audience.*

*Most founders get this backwards.*

*They spend months building in silence, perfecting something no one asked for,  
then launch to crickets.*

*Your audience is your unfair advantage.*

*It's your seed investors, your beta testers, your first 100 users, and your distribution engine,  
all in one.*

*An audience is not a vanity metric.*

*It's real time market validation.*

*Build the audience, and they'll tell you what they want.*

*They'll even fund it — before you build a thing.*

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### **Why Audience-First Wins**

- **Faster validation:** *Talk to your followers before building. They'll save you months of wasted effort.*
- **Launch leverage:** *The bigger the audience, the louder the launch.*
- **Ongoing feedback:** *You're never building in the dark, your users are already talking.*

*As Sahil Lavingia (founder of Gumroad) says,*

*"Build in public. Not just to show your work — but to find your people."*

*Clarence Wooten (CoFounder.AI) goes further:*

*"Audience and AI together are the ultimate founding team. AI helps you build faster.  
Your audience tells you what to build — and what to ignore."*

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### ***From the Trenches: Pieter Levels (Nomad List)***

*Pieter Levels built products in public, blogging progress, shipping fast, and sharing raw numbers. No investors. No cofounders. Just code, audience, and compounding trust.*

*He now earns 7 figures a year and he never raised a cent.*

*His secret?*

*He didn't just build tools.*

*He built trust with digital nomads who wanted those tools before they existed.*

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### ***Don't have an audience yet? Start here:***

- *Post your learnings. People love those who learn in public.*
- *Share your failures. Vulnerability is magnetic.*
- *Teach as you go. Document what you wish existed when you started.*

*You don't need to "go viral."*

*You need to be consistent. Honest. Useful.*

*"You don't need a product to start a company.*

*You need a point of view, and people who share it."*

*— Anonymous indie hacker wisdom*

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*Your first 100 followers are your first 100 investors.*

*Not with money — with attention, trust, and belief.*

*Audience is the new capital.*

# A – Ask

## ***Founders who don't ask, don't get.***

*You don't get users. You don't get feedback. You don't get funding, distribution, partnerships, or introductions.*

*And worst of all, you don't get clarity, because you're stuck in your own head, too proud or too scared to ask.*

*Asking isn't a weakness.*

*Asking is leverage.*

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## ***Why Asking is a Superpower***

- ***Ask for feedback*** — not to feel good, but to make the product better.
- ***Ask for help*** — from mentors, founders, customers, even strangers.
- ***Ask for the sale*** — if you don't believe in what you built, why should they?

*We live in a world where you can DM a billionaire, cold email an investor, or pitch your idea in public — for free.*

*The only thing stopping most founders is ego.*

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## ***How to Ask Better***

- ***Be specific.*** People want to help. Don't make them guess how.
  - ***Be clear.*** Ask one thing, not five. Don't write a thread. Write a sentence.
  - ***Be human.*** Don't sell. Connect.
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## ***Founder in Focus: Amanda Goetz (House of Wise)***

*Amanda built her audience while working full-time and launching her startup, House of Wise (a wellness brand for women).*

*How? By asking real questions, in public — about building, motherhood, mindset, and growth. Her vulnerability became credibility.*

*Her questions turned followers into advocates.*

*She built both a company and a movement, one ask at a time.*

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*Most people don't ask because they're afraid of rejection.*

***But rejection is free education.***

***And silence is worse than no.***

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*"If you don't ask, the answer is always no."*

*— Nora Roberts (bestselling author)*

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*You don't get what you deserve.*

*You get what you ask for — clearly, boldly, and without apology.*

*Closed mouths don't build startups.*

# ***A – Attitude***

***Your attitude is your startup's operating system.***

*Everything flows from it — how you respond to failure, how you lead a team, how you pitch an idea, how you show up on a zero-momentum Monday.*

*You can't fake attitude long-term.*

*You either run on conviction, or you burn out.*

*Startups are emotional sports.*

*And attitude is the only thing you fully control.*

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## ***What Attitude Really Means as a Founder***

- *It's not fake positivity. It's durable optimism.*
- *It's not bravado. It's self-respect, under pressure.*
- *It's not ignoring risk. It's confronting it with clarity and action.*

*You'll get ghosted by investors.*

*You'll ship things that flop.*

*You'll doubt yourself at 2am.*

*And you'll still get up and go again — because that's what founders do.*

*Not because they're fearless.*

*But because their attitude is built for chaos.*

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## ***Founder in Focus: Melanie Perkins (Canva)***

*Before Canva became a \$26B company, Melanie Perkins was rejected by over 100 investors. She pitched in coffee shops, sent cold emails, and flew across continents for 15-minute meetings.*

*What kept her going? Not traction. Not connections.*

*Attitude.*

*She believed the world needed better design tools and she acted like it, every day, long before the world believed back.*

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***The Wrong Attitude Will Kill a Great Idea.***

*It turns rejection into resentment.*

*It turns failure into finality.*

*It turns you inward when you should be building forward.*

*The right attitude? It compounds.*

*People notice. Teams reflect it. Investors bet on it. Users feel it.*

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***Your startup might fail.***

***But your attitude better not.***

***It's the one asset you can't afford to lose.***

## ***A – Alone = Ambitious***

***You can't stand out if you never stand alone.***

*If you're building something great, you're probably not at the party.*

*You're not on the group chat.*

*You're not doing the easy yes.*

*You're in the corner of your room, laptop glowing at 1:47am, chasing something only you can see.*

*And that's not sad.*

*It's sacred.*

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***Greatness demands distance.***

*You will outgrow people.*

*You will disappoint people.*

*You will choose silence over small talk, strategy over drinking games, 5am workouts over late-night noise.*

*Not because you're antisocial.*

*But because you've chosen a different life.*

*A life of building.*

*A life of becoming.*

*A life of compounding.*

*It's not sexy.*

*It's not visible.*

*But it's how every real founder season begins.*

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***You're the average of your 5 closest people.***

*So what if your 5 closest aren't building anything?*

*What if they scroll? Settle? Coast?*

*Then you have to outgrow your circle.  
Or you'll end up matching their ceiling.*

*Aloneness isn't a flaw. It's a filter.  
It reveals whether you're building for approval, or for impact.*

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### ***Founder in Focus: Steve Jobs (Apple)***

*Jobs was known for being obsessive, intense, even disconnected.  
He lost friends, strained relationships, and often chose vision over harmony.*

*But he saw what others couldn't.  
And he was willing to be misunderstood until the world caught up.*

*Alone wasn't a weakness.  
It was the price of clarity.*

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*You're not skipping the party because you're boring.  
You're skipping it because you're building.*

***Alone is the tax ambition pays on the way to exceptional.***

# **A – Action**

***You don't learn by thinking. You learn by doing.***

*Everyone has ideas.*

*Ideas are cheap.*

*Execution is the currency of founders.*

*The market doesn't care what's in your head.*

*It only rewards what's out in the world.*

*No one remembers the Notion doc.*

*They remember the launch.*

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***Action is how founders think.***

*It reveals what theory hides.*

*You don't need a plan to build something small.*

*You don't need a roadmap to test demand.*

*You just need to move and adjust based on reality, not fantasy.*

*Action creates clarity.*

*Motion builds momentum.*

*Results teach faster than any mentor.*

*"Perfect" is a delay tactic.*

*Speed is a signal.*

*The faster you move, the more you learn and the more the world pays attention.*

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***Why founders avoid action:***

- *Fear of failure disguised as "more planning"*
- *Perfectionism as procrastination*
- *Seeking validation before delivering value*

*But your startup won't get better by sitting in a Google Doc.  
It improves in the hands of real users giving real feedback.*

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### ***Proof It's Possible: Alex West (Cyberleads)***

*Alex didn't build a deck or raise capital.  
He built an MVP, asked for feedback, and shipped.  
Then he iterated, fast.*

*He launched on Twitter. He built in public.  
He treated shipping as a sport.*

*He didn't raise money. He raised revenue.  
And every win started with action.*

*His lesson:  
Don't wait to be ready.  
You get ready by doing.*

*Action made him dangerous, not funding.*

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### ***Don't overthink. Out-execute.***

*Thinking is important. Planning is helpful.  
But too much of either becomes fear wearing a productivity mask.*

*Real founders ship.  
Then they learn.  
Then they ship again, faster.*

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*Action isn't always sexy.  
It's cold emails. Unread tweets. Broken code.  
Embarrassing first launches.*

***But every successful founder has a graveyard of awkward first versions behind them.***

*You don't need confidence to act.  
You need action to build confidence.*

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***You don't need more ideas.  
You need more action.  
Everything else is a delay dressed as preparation.***

## ***A – Accountability***

***If you don't hold yourself accountable, the market will.***

*It won't lie to protect your feelings.*

*It won't sugarcoat a broken funnel, a lazy launch, or a product nobody wants.*

*As a founder, no one's coming to rescue you.*

*No boss. No manager. No deadlines but the ones you set.*

*That's not a burden.*

*That's a gift.*

***Accountability is what turns ambition into traction.***

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***Why founders need it more than anyone else***

- *You set the bar. So you better raise it.*
- *You manage your own energy, goals, and output.*
- *You win or lose based on your standards, not someone else's.*

*You don't need shame to move forward.*

*But you do need ownership.*

*You can miss a day. You can pivot.*

*But you can't blame.*

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***Accountability isn't pressure.***

***It's power.***

***It gives you data:*** *Did I show up or not?*

***It gives you momentum:*** *small wins stack when tracked.*

***It gives you leadership:*** *people follow founders who own the outcome.*

*Want to attract great collaborators?*

*Start by being the person you would want to build with.*

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### ***Founder in Focus: Sam Parr (The Hustle, Hampton)***

*Sam built The Hustle into a multi-million dollar media company, not because he was the smartest,  
but because he held himself to a ridiculous standard.*

*He published daily. Built community. Closed ad deals himself.  
He shipped while others were still tweaking.*

*His success wasn't about genius.  
It was about showing up when it mattered, especially when no one was watching.*

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***Founders don't need more motivation.  
They need more ownership.***

*Motivation fades.  
Accountability compounds.*

*When you stop outsourcing responsibility,  
you start building like it's already yours.*

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***You can't control the outcome.  
But you can control whether you showed up, shipped, and owned it.  
That's what real founders do.***