STEM-HER
Empowering Women in STEM

Team

04 / Who does what, and who helps

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eit Food

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Plan for the next 45 minutes

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The case and the first question	Six areas of work	Who owns each piece	Kinds of help	Four contributions	Co-founders	Keeping it going
5 min	7 min	7 min	7 min	10 min	5 min	4 min

The case: Olena, Iryna and a booking tool

Two STEM students want to make booking shared lab equipment easier. In their lab, bookings run on a paper sheet.

Students and lab staff

share one microscope and one 3D printer

Paper booking sheet

double bookings and forgotten slots today

Booking screens

a sketch of how booking could work

Status display

an idea: a small display shows when the equipment will be free

WHAT THE TEAM HAS

A sketch of the booking screens and an idea for a status display on the equipment.

WHAT THE TEAM NEEDS TO LEARN

How booking works today and what goes wrong, whether students understand the booking screens, and what the lab manager needs from a tool.

Fictional case used in sessions 04 to 06. Every result shown is illustrative.

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“I need a business co-founder.”

What would that person do next Tuesday?

Think about it for
a moment

From a title to tasks

THE TITLE

Business co-founder

Sounds like one need.

A ONE-OFF JOB

Prepare the interview questions

Done once, reviewed by someone who knows the field.

A CONNECTION

Open a door to a pilot lab

Needs someone who knows a lab manager.

A RECURRING ROLE

Own the repeated student research

Calls, notes and follow-ups every week.

Six areas of work

1 Domain and science
What are the lab's access and safety rules?

2 Technology and engineering
How will bookings and reminders work?

3 Product and users
What goes wrong today for students and staff?

4 Design and prototyping
What do the booking screens show?

5 Communications and sales
Who can try it in a real lab?

6 Operations and finance
Who keeps the equipment list up to date?

One person can cover several areas. Blank areas can wait.

The six areas, applied to the case

AREA	OLENA	IRYNA	WORK IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS
Domain and science	Some	Strong	Check the lab's access rules with the lab manager
Technology and engineering	Gap	Strong	Decide how bookings and reminders will work
Product and users	Strong	Some	Interviews with students and the lab manager
Design and prototyping	Some	Some	Turn the sketch into clickable screens
Communications and sales	Some	Gap	Ask a lab to try it
Operations and finance	Later	Later	Not needed this month

Illustrative reading of the case. "Gap" marks where the pair needs help or time.

Anatomy of an owner row

TASK	OWNER	SUPPORT	NEXT ACTION	DATE
Learn what goes wrong with booking today	Olena owns the interviews	Iryna joins two calls	Ask the lab manager and one student for 15 minutes. Note what happened the last time a booking went wrong.	By Friday
What needs to be learned or built	One person who answers for it	Who helps and with what	One concrete step, small enough to start	A day, so everyone can ask about it

The owner defines the next action, brings in help and returns with a result or a blocker.

One name per action

BEFORE

"Both founders will talk to the lab manager."

Who books the call, and when?

AFTER

"Olena books a 15-minute call with the lab manager by Friday. Iryna joins."

One owner, one support, one date.

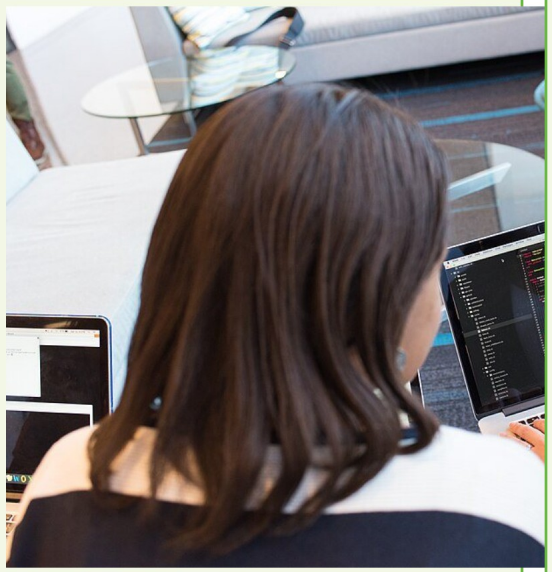
BEFORE

"We will sort out the booking rules."

AFTER

"Iryna writes a draft of the booking rules and sends it to the lab manager by Tuesday."

What owners look like in practice



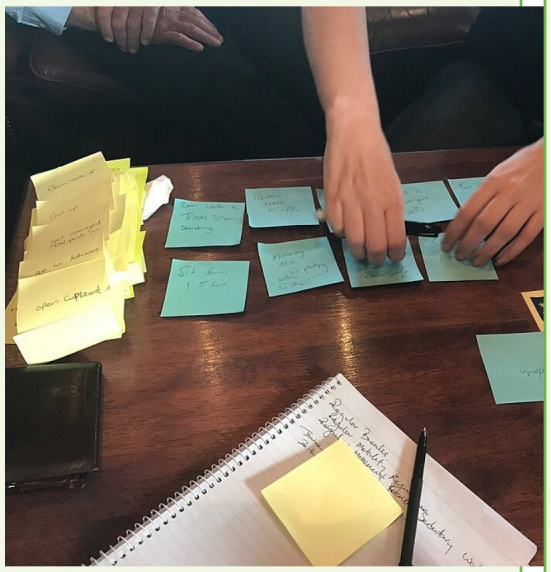
Two people, one screen

Shared work is split into steps, with a name on each step.



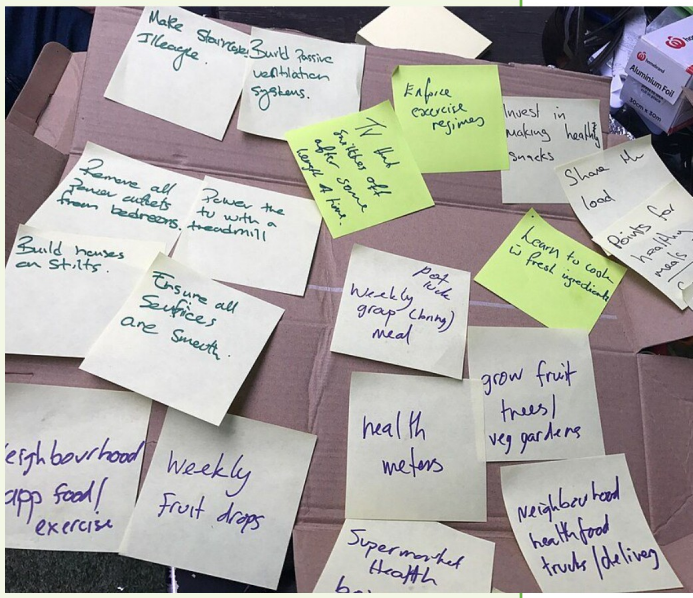
A task board behind the desk

Everyone can see who owns what.



Sorting tasks on sticky notes

One task per note, one owner per task.



Grouping notes by area

The six areas of work as a map on a table.

Photos: WOCinTech Chat (CC BY 2.0), Lisamarie Babik (CC BY 2.0), Steveonmz (CC BY-SA 4.0). Wikimedia Commons.

A board for the next two weeks

Next

Agree one booking rule with the lab manager

Iryna | Tue

Find someone to build clickable screens

Help needed | Thu

In progress

Book 15-minute calls with the lab manager and a student

Olena | Fri

Done

Interview questions written

Olena | Mon

Booking screens sketched on paper

Iryna | Wed

Every note has one name and one day. The tasks are examples from the case.

Own, delegate, learn, defer

HIGH SKILL

LOW SKILL

Own

Olena: the interviews

Delegate

Olena: a one-off review of the booking rules

Learn

Olena: sketching the booking flow

Defer

Olena: logo and branding, for now

I ENJOY IT

I WOULD RATHER NOT

When another person helps

The work needs more hours than you have

Two people can run two streams in parallel.

A needed skill is missing

Someone else can bring or teach it.

The same job returns every week

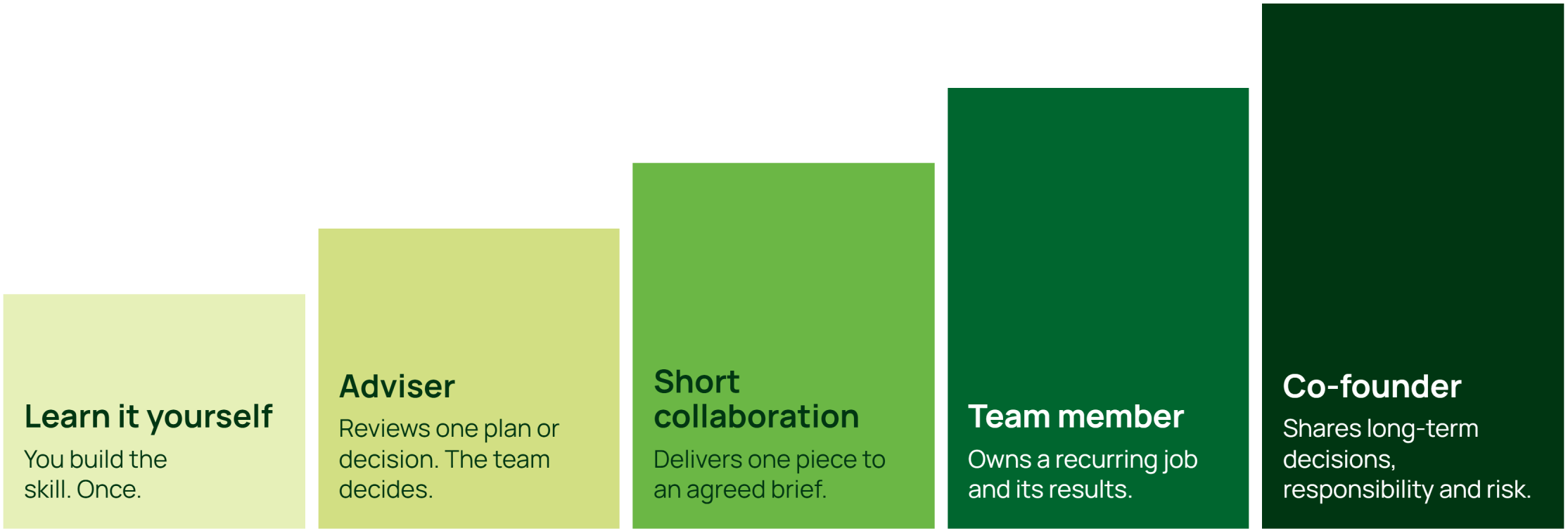
A recurring job needs a named owner.

Long-term decisions and risk must be shared

That is the territory of a co-founder.

Working alone is a valid way to begin.

Choose the kind of help



Commitment grows from left to right: scope, how often, who is responsible.

Matching gaps to help

Review the booking rules once	→ Adviser	A lab manager checks the rules. The pair decides.
Build clickable booking screens to an agreed brief	→ Short collaboration	One deliverable with a clear end.
Run student interviews every week	→ Team member	A recurring job with a named owner.
Share the direction of the project for years	→ Co-founder	Long-term decisions, responsibility and risk.

Suggested matches for the booking-tool case.

Where teams get stuck

ROLE OVERLAPS

Many people steer, nobody executes

Too many visionaries mean competing ideas without follow-through.

PERSONALITY CLASHES

Differences turn into misunderstandings

Different working styles need a conversation.

POOR COLLABORATION

Time and money drain away

Inefficiency shows up as wasted resources.

Naming how people contribute helps a team see overlaps and gaps early. Next: four contributions.

Source: Digipal, Guide to Startup Team Archetypes.

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Four contributions a team draws on



Visionary

sets direction



Operator

follows through



Pragmatist

checks assumptions



Catalyst

helps the team work together

These describe how people contribute to a piece of work. One person often does several, and the one a team needs can change between tests.

Adapted from Digipal, Guide to Startup Team Archetypes.

What each contribution looks like

Contribution	Typical traits	Strengths	Watch for
Visionary	Creative, future-focused, ambitious	Ideas, inspiring others, a clear mission	May overlook details or practical limits
Operator	Organised, detail-oriented, process-driven	Managing workflows, systems and deadlines	May find change and risk hard
Pragmatist	Analytical, realistic, cautious	Weighing risk and reward, logical solutions	May resist bold plans
Catalyst	Charismatic, empathetic, people-oriented	Relationships, resolving conflict, shared goals	May put people before process or avoid hard decisions

Source: Digipal, Guide to Startup Team Archetypes.

The four contributions in the booking-tool case

Visionary	Suggests starting with the one problem to solve first: double bookings.
Operator	Books the interviews with the lab manager and students and makes sure someone captures the notes.
Pragmatist	Asks what a sketch can show and what needs a try in the real lab.
Catalyst	Invites both teammates to say what matters to them, reminders or the status display, and helps them agree on the next test.

Course adaptation of the Digipal archetypes.

A reading of the case

	VISIONARY	OPERATOR	PRAGMATIST	CATALYST
Olena	Strong	Gap	Some	Some
Iryna	Strong	Gap	Strong	Gap

WHAT THIS EXPLAINS

Both teammates have ideas for the booking tool. The interviews keep slipping.

WHAT IT SUGGESTS

The contribution that would help this week is follow-through.

Illustrative reading. People can show different contributions in different situations.

Same symptom, different contributions

The interviews keep slipping. The first move depends on the reason.

Nobody owns the calls	→	**Operator move** Name an owner to book the first calls by Friday.
The two disagree about priorities	→	**Catalyst move** Each explains what matters to her, then they agree on the next test.
It is unclear what the calls should answer	→	**Pragmatist move** Write the assumption and the evidence that would change the plan.
It is unclear where to focus	→	**Visionary move** Choose one focus, for example stopping double bookings first.

The needed contribution changes between tests

TEST 0

Choose what to look at

Visionary

TEST 1

Run the interviews

Operator

TEST 2

Read the results of the screen test

Pragmatist

TEST 3

Agree what to test after mixed results

Catalyst

Early on, people wear several hats.

Illustrative sequence. Digipal also describes archetypes shifting through the startup lifecycle.

What a co-founder shares

TEAM MEMBER

Owns a recurring job

Responsible for the results of that role.

CO-FOUNDER

Shares the direction

Long-term decisions, responsibility and risk.

Calling someone a co-founder changes expectations on both sides. Equity and IP agreements need separate advice.

Four conversations before committing

Time

How many hours per week, and what would increase them?

Goals

What does each person want from this project?

Decision rights

Who decides what? What happens when evidence changes the plan?

A small trial

One joint piece of work with a clear end.

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A small trial project

WEEK 1

Agree the scope

Two calls each, who books, who takes notes.

WEEK 2

Run it together

Join each other's calls and share the notes.

WEEK 3

Review

What did we learn, and how did we work?

OBSERVE

How the pair handled disagreement

OBSERVE

Whether promised work was done

OBSERVE

How feedback was given and received

Example of a joint interview sprint. Adjust length and tasks to your team.

The meeting fell through

PLAN

A meeting with the lab manager on Tuesday.

UPDATE

The meeting is cancelled.

NEXT ACTION

Owner, new date, what we can still test.

A SHORT UPDATE CAN LOOK LIKE THIS

“The Tuesday meeting was cancelled. I asked for Thursday. Until then we can show the sketch to two students.”

EVERY WEEK, 10 MINUTES

What happened? What is blocked? Which decision is needed?

The wording of the update is an example.

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A working agreement, one page

WEEKLY TIME

Each of us gives ten hours a week, and we talk if that changes.

CHECK-IN

Monday, ten minutes: what happened, what is blocked, what we decide.

DECISIONS

Priorities together. The owner of an action decides how to do it.

DISAGREEMENT

We say it at the check-in, with the evidence we have.

WHEN EVIDENCE CHANGES

We revisit the next test and update the owner row.

Example to adapt. The numbers and days are placeholders for your own team.

Worksheet 04, after the session

4 min

Skills map

Fill the six areas and leave dormant areas blank.

6 min

Two critical tasks

Name an owner and a next action for each.

5 min

A gap and an agreement

Choose the kind of help and one working rule.

Output: two owned tasks and one working agreement. Use your own idea or the booking-tool case.

Five things to take away

1. Describe the work in tasks before you pick a title.
2. Map the six areas and leave dormant ones blank.
3. Give every action one owner, one date and a ten-minute weekly check-in.
4. Match a gap to the smallest kind of help that covers it.
5. Check which contribution this week needs: direction, follow-through, checking or working together.

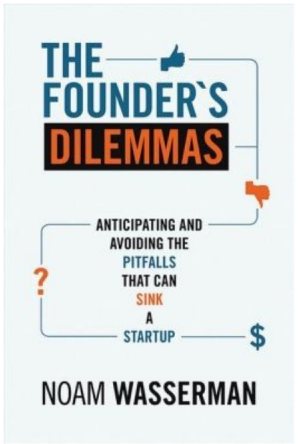
Bring one task into prototyping

Pick the task that can be tested next and write one line for it.

OWNER	NEXT ACTION	DATE
_____	_____	_____

Questions?

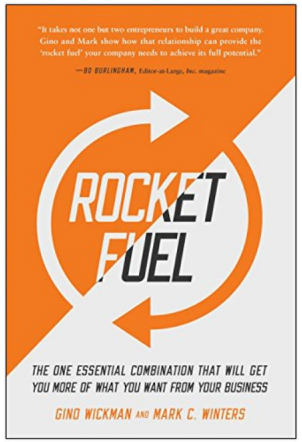
Books worth reading



The Founder's Dilemmas

Noam Wasserman

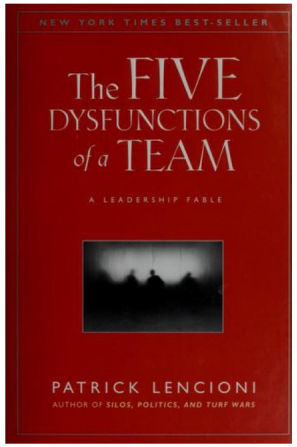
The early decisions founders face, backed by research.



Rocket Fuel

Gino Wickman and Mark C. Winters

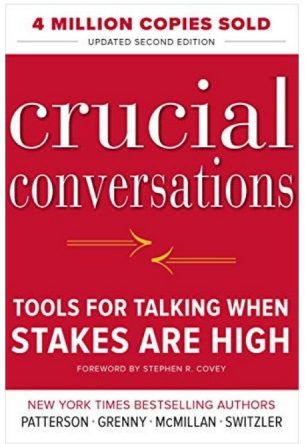
A visionary and an integrator working as a pair.



The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

Patrick Lencioni

A leadership fable about what keeps teams from working together.



Crucial Conversations

Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, Switzler

Tools for talking when stakes are high.

Cover images: Open Library. Covers belong to their publishers.

Also worth a look

1 **Digipal · Guide to Startup Team Archetypes**
Article. The four contributions used in this session.

2 **Y Combinator Startup School · How to Find a Co-Founder**
Video, about 20 minutes, with Harj Taggar: why, when and how to start working together.

3 **Y Combinator Startup School · Keys to Successful Co-Founder Relationships**
Video, about 32 minutes, with Cat Li and Divya Bhat: how to find, evaluate and work with a co-founder.

4 **Harvard Business Review · The Founder's Dilemma**
Article by Noam Wasserman, February 2008. The research behind his book.

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Thank you!

Any questions? You can reach out to

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