



Hiring, Managing & Retaining People

The Founder's Guide to Building and Leading Teams from 0 to 1,000

Key Takeaways by Guillermo Flor



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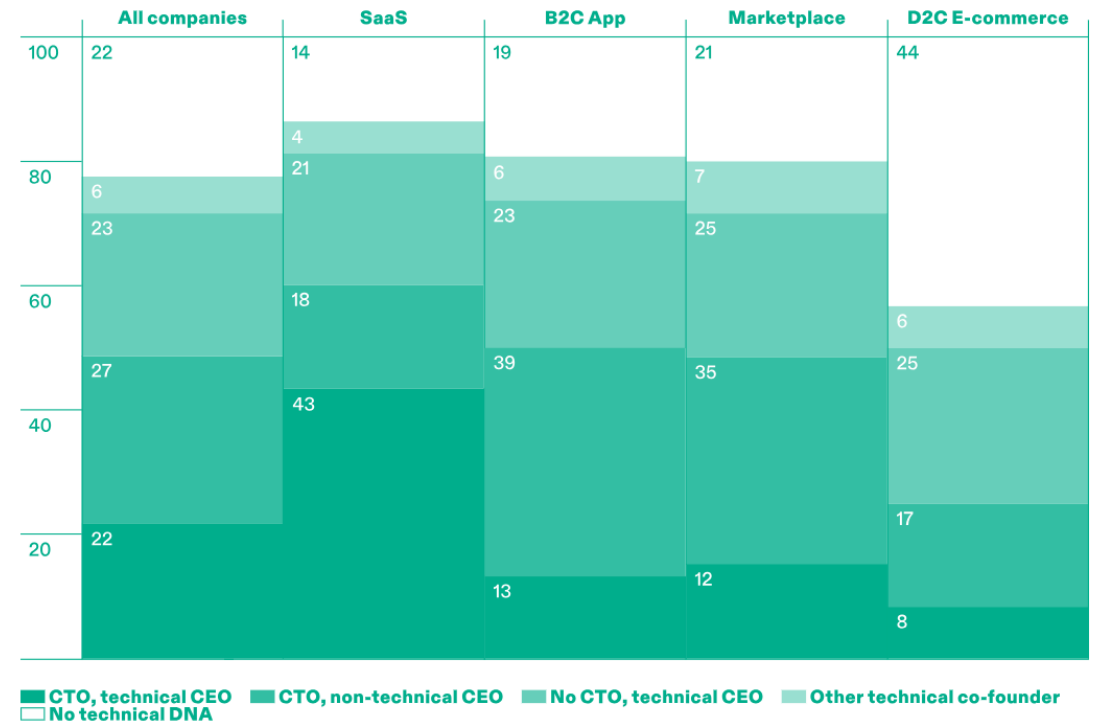
3. FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS

FOUNDING TEAM

Critical Decisions for Startup Success

- **Founding DNA:** Who you choose as your initial team shapes your company's values, culture, and hiring priorities.
- **Number of Founders:** While solo founders are not uncommon, most successful startups have two or three founders.
- **Business Model Consideration:** Different business models may require varying skill sets in the founding team.
- **Diverse Backgrounds:** Diversity in the founding team brings different perspectives and strengths, enriching the company's capabilities.
- **Technical DNA:** Founding teams with technical expertise have an advantage in developing products and iterating towards product-market fit.

THE MAJORITY OF TOP FOUNDING TEAMS HAVE TECHNICAL DNA
FOUNDING TEAM TECHNICAL DNA—BY BUSINESS MODEL (%)

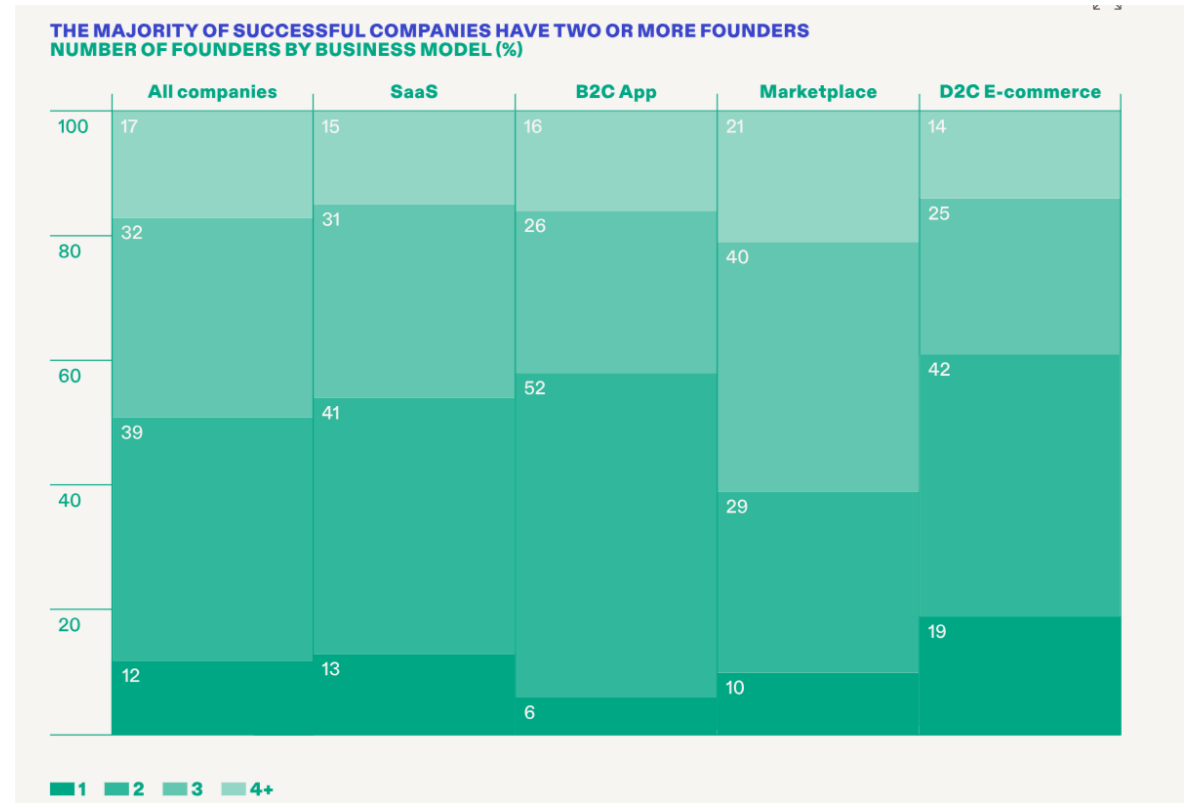


3. FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS

VALUES, CULTURE, AND DIVERSITY

Building a Strong Foundation

- Define Your Culture:** Articulate values early on and integrate them into every aspect of your company's processes.
- Make Diversity a Priority:** Prioritize diversity from the outset to foster resilience and innovation within your team.
- Challenge Assumptions:** Question conventional hiring practices and focus on competencies and character rather than past experiences.
- Vision, Mission, and Strategy:** Establish a clear vision and mission for your company, guiding your actions and decisions as you scale.



4. HIRING PEOPLE

START WITH FOUNDER-LED RECRUITING

Make the most of your network

Be your own recruiter

Expect half your early hires to have experience in tech companies

Hire great people with high potential

Look at your overall team composition

Secure some early senior hires

But avoid job title inflation

Don't be seduced by sexy brands on a resume

4. HIRING PEOPLE

BUILD YOUR RECRUITING ENGINE

Areas to explore when hiring your first Head of Talent or experienced recruiter

Beyond values-alignment and hunger/passion

- Volume hiring experience in a fast-growth environment
- Experience and interest beyond pure recruiting—e.g. employer branding, referral programs, interview training for hiring managers
- ATS implementation
- Hiring for diversity
- Interview scheduling and general admin efficiency
- Auditing and revamping current recruitment processes
- Technical hiring experience—dig into technical hiring chops, since these are the toughest roles to fill
- Senior hiring experience—Head/ Director level? VP/CXO level?
- Experience building and/or managing a Talent Acquisition (TA) team
- International hiring experience
- Compensation familiarity—cash and options/equity
- Hiring analytics—grasp, appreciation, interest?
- HR/PeopleOps experience, beyond pure recruiting—e.g. onboarding, or managing visa applications
- If a candidate is less experienced, their potential to grow and likely trajectory
- If a candidate is more experienced, their willingness to go back to a frontline role, and their desire/capability to take on the broader People role

5. MANAGING AND RETAINING PEOPLE

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND LEVELING

- Embed a culture of continuous feedback
- Formalize performance reviews and feedback
- Create job titles appropriate for your stage (leveling)

COMPENSATION

- Create a compensation philosophy

INTERNAL PROMOTIONS VERSUS EXTERNAL HIRES

Nurture homegrown talent (HiPo's)

When your company is small, your team will almost certainly lack the skills to navigate the next stages of scaling. It's extremely challenging to sustain high-growth if your team is having to learn everything on the job. Smarts alone are not enough, and you need to bring in people with specific kinds of experience. So in the early days, it's a **mistake to promote too much from the inside.**

5. MANAGING AND RETAINING PEOPLE

WORKFORCE PLANNING

- Plan your workforce months in advance

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (L&D)

Until you hit about 50 headcount, you're unlikely to have the need or capacity to institute any formal L&D activities. The focus is on one-to-one onboarding and training provided by you and your co-founders, extending to include other early hiring managers.

- Train your People Managers

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Invest in your internal comms

Almost all early stage startups hold a daily or weekly stand-up, which evolves into a weekly or fortnightly all-hands meeting.

PEOPLE ANALYTICS

Use data to support your people decisions

POV ON LEAVER	NON-VOLUNTARY	VOLUNTARY
Regretted	Tragic: typically due to unavoidable restructuring	CODE RED: Was it avoidable? Postmortem—What lessons to learn?
Non-regretted	Mis-hired: lessons to learn?	Mismanaged: weaknesses in onboarding or performance management?

Note: Voluntary leavers are resignations; non-voluntary leavers are fired or redundancies. Good overall attrition is about 10 % when you're at 50 headcount, but this tends to increase as your team grows. Once you're at a headcount over 250, it could be 15-20%, breaking down as follows:

BENCHMARKS (ANNUALIZED)	NON-VOLUNTARY	VOLUNTARY
Regretted	0 %	Green Flag < 3 % Yellow Flag 4-5 % Red Flag > 5 %
Non-regretted	Green Flag 4-6 % Yellow Flag < 4 % Red Flag > 6 %	Green Flag < 8 % Yellow Flag 8-12 % Red Flag > 12 %



SCALING THROUGH CHAOS

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