Tough Questions Checklist

1. What does your company, product, or service do?
2. What is the real problem you are solving?
3. What are the greatest risks?
4. How will you make money?
5. Who cares? or So what! Why should I or anyone else care?
6. If this is so great, why hasn't this been done before?
7. This has been tried before and failed. Why is it going to work this time?
8. Why you and your team?
9. What about Slide 7? [while you are on slide 4]
10. This sounds like a product in search of a problem, isn't it?
11. I didn't ask you that. I asked you about...?
12. What is your unique or biggest differentiation?
13. I have a 3 part question. One... Two... Three...?
14. How many customers do you have?
15. How many customers have you validated your product/service with?
16. Come on. Move on already. Aren't you stating the obvious?
17. What is your go-to-market strategy?
18. What are you replacing today with your solution?
19. What are the most important issues you see facing in the next 3-6 months?
20. Why should we invest in your company?
21. Isn't this just a feature?
22. Haven't we seen this before?
23. Why will people fall in love with your product or service?
24. How do you stack up against your competition?
25. What barriers have you put in place to stave off the competition?
26. How big is the market, really?
27. How big is your total addressable market (your TAM)?
28. Why is this technology defensible?
29. How do you compare to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
30. Who is desperate or dying for your solution?
31. Aren't you leaving money on the table?
32. What are your real barriers to entry?
33. What are the top 3 risks you face in your business right now?
34. What is your exit or acquisition strategy?
35. How many companies have you raised money for?
36. How long do you see yourself remaining in the CEO role?
37. How did your investors make out in your last company?
38. How long before I capitalize on my investment?
39. What's in it for me (WIIFM)?
40. What do you want to be when you grow up?
41. How do you want people to feel after your pitch?
42. So what are you working on?
43. Have you raised funding?
44. What makes new users try you?
45. What competition do you fear most?
46. What’s the worst thing that has happened?
47. Will you reincorporate as a US company?
48. What’s an impressive thing you have done?
49. Where is the rocket science here?
50. Why did you pick this idea to work on?
51. Why do the reluctant users hold back?
52. Who would you hire or how would you add to your team?
53. What problems/hurdles are you anticipating?
54. Who is “the boss”?
55. What is the next step with the product evolution?
56. What obstacles will you face and how will you overcome them?
57. Who needs what you’re making?
58. How does your product work in more detail?
59. What are you going to do next?
60. What do you understand that others don’t?
61. Where do new users come from?
62. How big an opportunity is there?
63. Six months from now, what’s going to be your biggest problem?
64. What’s the funniest thing that has happened to you?
65. Tell us something surprising you have done?
66. Who are your competitors?
67. What’s new about what you make?
68. How many users do you have?
69. Why isn’t someone already doing this?
70. What are the top things users want?
71. What is your burn rate?
72. How do you know customers need what you’re making?
73. What domain expertise do you have?
74. What, exactly, makes you different from existing options?
75. What’s the conversion rate?
76. What systems have you hacked?
77. Who would use your product?
78. How will customers and/or users find out about you?
79. Why did your team get together?
80. In what ways are you resourceful?
81. What is your distribution strategy?
82. What has surprised you about user behaviour?
83. What part of your project are you going to build first?
84. What resistance will they have to trying you and how will you overcome it?
85. How are you understanding customer needs?
86. What’s the biggest mistake you have made?
87. Who might become competitors?
88. What do you understand about your users?
89. What is your user growth rate?
90. What are the key things about your field that outsiders don’t understand?
91. Who is going to be your first paying customer?
92. If your startup succeeds, what additional areas might you be able to expand into?
93. Who would be your next hire?
94. How do you know people want this?
95. Would you relocate to Silicon Valley?
96. What do you know about this space/product others don’t know?
97. How much money could you make per year?
98. How long can you go before funding?
99. How will you make money?
100. Will your team stick at this?
101. How much does customer acquisition cost?
102. How did your team meet?
103. Who in your team does what?
104. How are you meeting customers?
105. How many users are paying?
106. How is your product different?
107. Are you open to changing your idea?
108. How do we know your team will stick together?
109. What is your growth like?