**Gleb Chuvpilo Interview Template**

**Founder & Managing Partner, Thundermark Capital**

**Opening & Current Role**

* Can you tell me about Thundermark Capital and your investment thesis around AI, robotics, and deep tech?

**Venture Capital & Investment Philosophy**

* What do you look for in early-stage deep tech founders that others might miss?
* With your technical background from MIT, how hands-on do you get with portfolio companies on the tech side?
* What's been your most challenging investment decision, and what did you learn from it?
* What role does your relationship with Peter Thiel play in your investment philosophy?

**Career Transition Journey**

* You've had an incredible career arc from quant trading to tech entrepreneur to VC. What drove each transition?
* How did your time as a quantitative trader at Goldman Sachs and Lehman Brothers shape your approach to investing?
* What was it like working alongside Peter Thiel at Thiel Macro? What did you learn about macro investing?
* How did your experience at Palantir as an early engineer influence your view of what makes successful tech companies?
* What made you decide to leave the hedge fund world for entrepreneurship?

**Entrepreneurship Experience**

* You co-founded several startups including Authy (acquired by Twilio). What were the key lessons from being an operator?
* How does your entrepreneurial experience change how you work with founders as a VC?
* What was your experience like going through Y Combinator with Authy?
* How do you balance being a founder yourself (Thor Dynamics) while being a full-time VC?
* What's the story behind Thor Dynamics and "Laser Armor"?

**Technical & AI Perspective**

* What are the most overhyped versus underhyped areas in AI right now?
* How do you think about the intersection of AI and robotics from an investment perspective?
* What role do you see humanoid robotics playing in the next decade?

**Career Advice & Breaking Into Finance/VC**

* For someone trying to break into finance/Venture Capital from outside the industry, what would your advice be?
* How important was getting your Wharton MBA versus your technical MIT background for your career?
* What skills from your quant trading days do you still use regularly?
* How did you build your network transitioning from finance to tech to VC?
* What would you tell someone who wants to eventually start their own fund?
* How do you evaluate whether someone has the technical depth needed for deep tech investing?

**Industry Outlook & Trends**

* Where do you see the biggest opportunities in deep tech over the next 5-10 years?
* How do you think about the current AI bubble - are we in one, and if so, where are the real opportunities?
* What areas of robotics are you most excited about from an investment standpoint?
* How is the relationship between venture capital and deep tech changing?

**Working with Peter Thiel & Macro Perspective**

* What's the most valuable lesson you learned from Peter Thiel?
* How has your macro background influenced your sector-specific investing?
* Do you still think about macro trends when making individual investments?
* How do you balance contrarian thinking (very Thiel) with pattern recognition in VC?

**Personal Development & Learning**

* How do you stay current with rapidly evolving technologies across AI, robotics, and deep tech?
* What resources or communities do you find most valuable for deal flow and insights?
* How do you balance your technical knowledge with business judgment?
* What's been the most important skill you've developed as you've evolved from trader to entrepreneur to investor?

**MIT & Academic Connections**

* What role does academic research play in your investment decisions?

**Closing Questions**

* What advice would you give to your younger self when you were starting out?
* If you were starting your career today, would you follow the same path?
* What's the most contrarian view you hold about the future of technology?
* Who in the industry do you learn the most from?
* What question do you wish more people would ask you?

**Key Areas to Explore Based on His Background:**

* **Quantitative Foundation**: How quant skills apply to VC pattern recognition
* **Technical Due Diligence**: His unique ability to evaluate deep tech companies
* **Macro Perspective**: How global macro thinking influences sector investing
* **Operational Experience**: How being a founder changes his approach as an investor
* **Network Effects**: Leveraging relationships from Goldman, Thiel, MIT, Y Combinator

**Follow-up Opportunities:**

* Ask about specific portfolio companies he's excited about
* Inquire about co-investment opportunities or LP introductions
* Explore mentorship possibilities given his teaching role at MIT
* Discuss potential introductions to other deep tech investors in his network

**Gleb Chuvpilo Interview Template**

**Learning-Focused Conversation with Founder & Managing Partner, Thundermark Capital**

**Opening & Getting to Know Him**

* I'd love to start by understanding your journey. You've had this incredible path from Wall Street to tech to venture capital - can you walk me through how that all happened?
* What initially drew you to quantitative trading at Goldman Sachs?
* I'm curious about your transition points - what made you leave each role for the next opportunity?

**Understanding His Success & Decision-Making**

* Looking back, what do you think has been the key to your success across these different industries?
* How do you approach making big career decisions? Was there a framework you developed?
* What was your biggest career risk, and how did you think about taking it?
* You've worked with some legendary figures like Peter Thiel - what did you learn from him about thinking differently?
* What skills have been most transferable as you've moved between finance, tech, and investing?

**Learning About His Current World (AI/Deep Tech)**

What's the most exciting company you've invested in recently, and why? (in layman's terms)

**His Entrepreneurial Experience & Lessons**

* You founded several companies including one that got acquired by Twilio. What was that experience like?
* What did you learn about yourself as an entrepreneur that you didn't know before?
* How did going through Y Combinator change your perspective on startups?
* What was your biggest failure or setback, and what did it teach you?
* Now that you're on the other side as an investor, what do you wish you had known as a founder?

**Career Advice & Breaking Into Finance**

* I am currently playing professional baseball. I don’t know what I want to do after, but I know I’m mnost interested in Finance but have really become interested in the power of AI and how it will shape our future. Give your path amongnst these different spaces, what advice would you have?
* You've seen people succeed in trading, tech, and VC - what traits do the successful ones share?
* How important was your MBA versus your technical background from MIT?
* If someone doesn't have a technical background, where should they start?
  + What technical understanding or knowledge is absolutely necessary and is something I culd start learning today?
* What would you tell someone who's interested in eventually getting into venture capital?
* How do you build credibility when you're making a career transition?

**Understanding His Investing Approach**

* When you meet with entrepreneurs, what are you really looking for beyond the business idea?
* What's a common mistake you see founders make when pitching investors?
* Can you tell me about a time you passed on an investment you later regretted?
* What's your best investment so far, and why did you see something others missed?

**His Network & Relationships**

* You've worked at some incredible places - Goldman, with Peter Thiel, at Palantir. How did you build those relationships?
* What's your approach to networking? Any specific strategies that worked for you?
* How do you maintain relationships across all these different industries?
* Who has been your most important mentor, and what did they teach you?

**Learning & Staying Current**

* How do you keep up with all these rapidly changing technologies when you're not deeply technical?
* What do you read or who do you follow to stay informed?
* When you don't understand something technical, how do you get up to speed quickly?
* What's been the steepest learning curve in your career?

**Personal Philosophy & Thinking**

* You've made some big bets in your career - how do you think about risk versus reward?
* What's your contrarian view about business or investing that most people would disagree with?
* How do you evaluate opportunities when you don't have perfect information?
* What drives you? What gets you excited to work every day?

**Practical Advice for Someone Like Me**

* What would you do if you were in my shoes trying to break into finance today?
* Are there specific people I should try to meet or learn from?
* What skills should I be developing that will be valuable in the future?
* How do you recommend someone build a track record when they're starting from outside the industry?
* What are the biggest mistakes you see career changers make?

**Understanding the Industry**

* Where do you think finance, AI, and investing is heading over the next decade?
* Are there opportunities today that didn't exist when you were starting out?
* What would surprise me most about working in venture capital?

**Closing & Next Steps**

* What advice would you give to your younger self when you were just starting out?
* What's the most important lesson you've learned that you try to share with others?
* If I were to read one book or follow one person to better understand your world, what would you recommend?
* Would you be open to me reaching out again as I navigate this transition?
* Is there anyone else you'd recommend I speak with?

**Conversation Strategy:**

* **Be genuinely curious** - ask follow-up questions when you don't understand something
* **Admit what you don't know** - he'll respect your honesty and explain things better
* **Focus on the human story** - his journey is more interesting than technical details
* **Ask for specific examples** - when he mentions concepts, ask him to illustrate with real situations
* **Take detailed notes** - on names, companies, books, resources he mentions
* **Listen for patterns** - what themes come up repeatedly in his success story?

**Key Things to Remember:**

* He's been successful across multiple industries - focus on the transferable lessons
* He's made big career transitions - he'll understand your situation
* He's both technical and business-minded - he can bridge complex topics for you
* He's worked with legendary investors - he has access to high-level thinking
* He's been an entrepreneur - he understands risk-taking and building from scratch