START-UP UNICORNS!

The card game for future founders

Build your tech startup to an
exit valuation of a million dollars!

A game by **Steven de Salas**

2-5 · **10+** · **20min**

MISSION

The tech industry needs brilliant minds like yours to come up with the next big thing!

Assemble a **TOP TEAM** for your company and outsmart the competition in this fun game of company building and industrial sabotage!

Turn your start-up into a **UNICORN** before the competition!

CONTENTS

16x product cards

24x tech cards

18x marketing cards

12x investor cards

10x advantage cards

10x sabotage cards
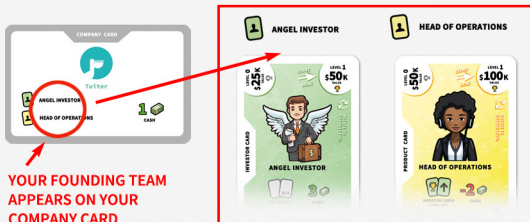
10x company cards

5x quick guide cards

1x instructions

INITIAL SET-UP

Give each player a **QUICK GUIDE** and two random **COMPANY CARDS**.
They must chose one **COMPANY CARD** and place it in front of them, facing up.

Check each **COMPANY CARD** and search the deck for 2 extra cards shown under the logo.
These are each players' **FOUNDING TEAM**.
Place them in front of each player, facing up and next to their company.

YOUR FOUNDING TEAM APPEARS ON YOUR COMPANY CARD

Remove all remaining **QUICK GUIDE** and **COMPANY CARDS** from the game, then shuffle the remaining cards. Place the shuffled deck face down in the middle of the table.
Each player then picks **4 CARDS** into their hand.

FOUNDING TEAM

These are the brave people your company starts with. Take some time to look at these cards. From them we can calculate your **CASH FLOW** and **COMPANY VALUE** as explained further along.

CASH FLOW

Cash, or cashflow, is basically how much money you have. Spend it carefuly, your business cannot grow without it.

To calculate how much is left, add up the numbers next to the cash icons (💵) on the cards facing up in front of you.
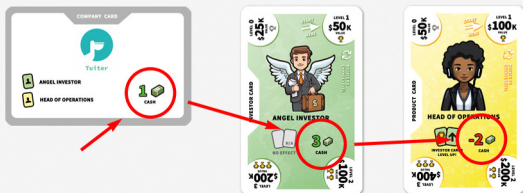
Company Cash + *Investor Cash* + *Employee Cost*

For example, with the founding team above you have **2 CASH LEFT** to spend (1 + 3 - 2 = 2).
Use this money wisely to grow your company!

As you hire more people, your remaining cash will run out, and you will need to find more investors!

⚠️ **IMPORTANT** You can **NEVER** have **NEGATIVE CASH!** If you find yourself with less than 0 (for example during **SABOTAGE**), you will have to **DISCARD** until you are even or positive.

COMPANY VALUE

This is how much you
can sell your company for.
It's also how you win the game!

LEVEL 1
$50K
VALUE
START HERE

Add up the numbers on the corners of your cards.
As you hire people ... company value will increase!
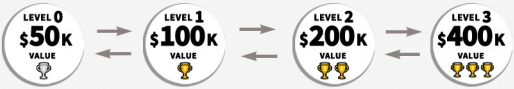The company with the **LOWEST VALUE GOES FIRST**

**TO SEE WHO GOES FIRST
CALCULATE YOUR INITIAL VALUE**
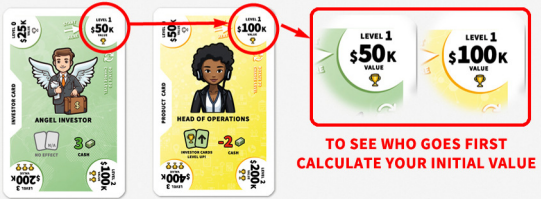
Cards always **START OFF AT LEVEL 1**.
So with the cards above, your starting
COMPANY VALUE is **$150,000**.

This value changes throughout the game.
Every time you play a card, it affects the other
cards you have put in play for your company:

**IF YOU PLAY THIS CARD: ALL THE YELLOW CARDS
YOU PLAYED BEFORE GO UP IN VALUE!**

PRODUCT CARDS
LEVEL UP!

LEVEL 1
$100K
VALUE

LEVEL 2
$200K
VALUE

Your must reach **$1million** in value to win the game!

TRACKING VALUE

LEVEL 0	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
$50K VALUE	$100K VALUE	$200K VALUE	$400K VALUE

Your employees level up and down as you play, which afects the value they bring to the company.

ROTATE THE CARDS as their level changes. So that everyone can figure out what each card is worth at a glance.

Rotate your cards as they level up so the correct value is facing up
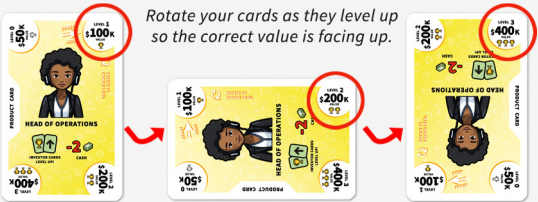
⚠️ **IMPORTANT** The level of a card **CANNOT GO ABOVE OR BELOW** what you see on the corners.

KICKING OFF

The company with the **LOWEST VALUE** starts the game. If there is more than one, pick the one with the **YOUNGEST PLAYER**.

Each player has a turn with 3 phases:

PLAY A CARD	→	DISCARD A CARD	→	DRAW TWO CARDS

EACH TURN

1. PLAY A CARD. Place it face-up in front of you (or another player if its a **SABOTAGE CARD**).

APPLY CHANGES shown on this card to the company that receives it. Normally, some of your cards will level up, increasing their value. If it is a **SABOTAGE CARD**, follow the instructions on it.

2. DISCARD A CARD. Take it from your hand, put it face up on the discard pile, next to the main deck.

3. DRAW TWO CARDS. If the main deck runs out, shuffle the discard pile and make a new deck for drawing.
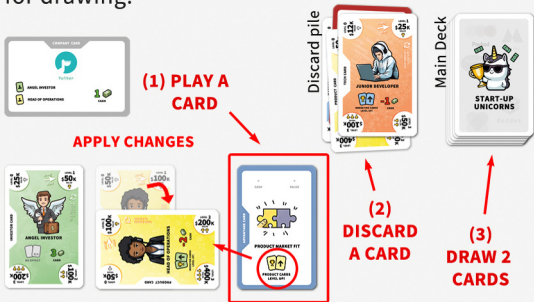
Phase 1 (**PLAY A CARD**) is **OPTIONAL**. Players can skip it if they don't want to play anything, or don't have enough cash, in that case they **DISCARD AN EXTRA CARD**.

At the end of each turn each player should always have **FOUR CARDS IN THEIR HAND**. The turn passes clockwise to the left.

FAQ

IF I LOSE A CARD THAT I PLAYED, DOES IT MAKE MY OTHER CARDS LEVEL DOWN?

No. When you lose a card in play, it DOES NOT AFFECT other cards you levelled up earlier.

CAN I GET RID OF CARDS ALREADY IN PLAY?

Yes. But only if you PLAY A CARD (ie, you hire another person) without the cash to support it. You will then be forced to discard one of your cards already in play.

Note that you cannot get rid of SABOTAGE cards. You are stuck with them permanently.

THE CARDS THAT I HAVE ALREADY PLAYED, DO THEY LEVEL UP OTHER CARDS AS I PLAY THEM?

No. When you play a new card, you only level up existing cards in play for your company, not the other way around.

IF I PLAY A CARD THAT LEVELS UP ITS OWN COLOR, DOES IT LEVEL ITSELF TOO?

No. It still comes into play at LEVEL 1.

IF I STEAL AN OPPONENT'S CARD, CAN I KEEP IT AT ITS EXISTING LEVEL?

No, the card comes into play at LEVEL 1. You do however level up other cards in your company because of it.

SPECIAL CARDS EXPLAINED

HEADHUNTER

This card allows you to **STEAL AND PLAY** a team member from another company **ONCE** (tech, product or marketing cards only). You can't steal an investor, or an advantage or sabotage card.

Add the **HEADHUNTER** to your opponent's company and the stolen team member to yours, but **USING ITS STARTING VALUE** (ie at **LEVEL 1**). If you do not have enough cash to support it you'll need to discard enough cards until you do.

TAX AUDIT

Your opponent will have to discard their best investor, this will force them to **DISCARD OTHER CARDS** if they no longer have enough cash.

The target player being sabotaged choses what to discard until they reach zero or positive cash.

Careful, this is probably one of the most **DEVASTATING** cards in the game. Play it wisely to avoid upsetting your friends.

WINNING THE GAME

The first player that meets all these conditions wins the game:

1) Has **$1 MILLION COMPANY VALUE**.

2) Has **1 EMPLOYEE OF EACH COLOR**

3) Shouts '**UNICORN!**' during their turn.

MAY THE MOST AWESOME START-UP WIN THE GAME!

CREDITS

Game designed with ❤ by **Steven de Salas**

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