

Entrepreneur First cofounders Alice Bentick and Matt Clifford publish ‘How to be a Founder’

The renowned pair, who also founded Code First: Girls, reveal the secrets to becoming a successful founder: from initial idea conception to finding your ‘Founder Edge’ and raising your first funds.

How to be a Founder aims to become an essential guide for the next generation of founders, looking to equip them with the mindset and tools they need to take the leap to become globally successful entrepreneurs. Featuring a foreword by Reid Hoffman, founder of LinkedIn, this handbook-style volume provides essential guidance and advice for people who are thinking seriously about wanting to create their own start-up and build a successful company.

It takes the reader from making the decision to plunge into entrepreneurship, through the process of choosing and developing an idea and team, all the way to raising capital and working with VCs and angel investors.

Over the last decade, Bentick and Clifford have worked with thousands of ambitious individuals across the world, supporting them to become founders through their company, *Entrepreneur First*. Those individuals have now built companies worth billions of dollars that are taking on some of the world’s biggest challenges, including finding hard-to-spot cancers, tackling climate change and building new financial platforms.

In *How to Be a Founder*, the authors share advice, insights and lessons from their experience working with individuals to become successful founders. The book covers your journey as a founder, and the steps to take to maximise your chances of building a high-growth, scalable company. You'll also hear advice from some of the world's best investors and entrepreneurs who have built some of most iconic technology companies of our time.

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Beyond their unique experience, other original aspects of the book are the way the authors sensitively debunk many of the myths that stop founders from succeeding, their concept of finding your founder 'Edge', and their discussion of the invaluable power in the often-overlooked process of discovering and developing strong co-founder relationships, all of which are strong chapters.

The book is of course timely: entrepreneurship is the go-to career path in today's society – 62% of Gen Zs plan to start or have already set up their own business – but knowing where to start, and how to succeed, is far from straightforward. Although entrepreneurial ambition is at an all-time high, therefore, it is also the case that less than 1% of UK companies become high-growth businesses, demonstrating the need for aspiring entrepreneurs to have guidance on how to found and grow a successful business.

Perhaps an early indicator of success for would-be-founders is which book they choose, or maybe their ability to read them all at once, using their 'founders edge'. Future founders need to exercise the judgement skills when choosing which ones to read, as many are not.

The book is adding to a now-established genre: the startup manual. This genre itself is part of the now-widespread proliferation of a kind of startup industry whose only clients are themselves startups; you could call it the 'professionalisation' of startups, but the point is the startup ecosystem is now selling to itself, and conceiving of itself as a unified whole.

This could be at odds with the disruptor logic that characterises startups, who tend to define themselves in opposition culturally and managerially from the corporate world: there is no one way of doing things, there are no peers, no established routes to success. The homogenising of this journey through books such as this arguably goes against the idea of ripping up the manual, and

starting from scratch.

Perhaps soon we'll have a union for startup workers.

Buy 'How to be a Founder'

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