

VEISSMAN GROUP

FROM CHAOS TO CONTROL

A Founder's Guide
to Being In Control
of Business
Operations

A VEISSMAN GROUP PUBLICATION

Who This Book Is For

This book is written for founders, C-Levels, entrepreneurs, or high performance managers, and team leaders who:

- Feel like the business collapses when they step away
- Are the bottleneck for decisions, approvals, and fixes
- Want consulting-grade systems without consulting-grade complexity

Think of this as McKinsey-level rigor translated into startup OS language. We keep the depth. We remove the fluff.

The operating logic of this book follows a simple but powerful flow:

**DIAGNOSE → STANDARDIZE → TOOL →
DELEGATE → SCALE**

Each chapter produces a tangible output you can immediately use.

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Introduction

Why This Guide Exists

Most founders don't lose control of their business overnight. They lose it slowly—one approval, one exception, one "I'll just fix it this time" at a time.

What starts as care becomes dependency.
What starts as leadership becomes bottleneck.
And before they realize it, the business only works when they're present.

This guide exists to solve that specific problem.

Not with motivation.
Not with mindset.
But with systems.

The ideas inside come from consulting logic normally reserved for large organizations—process audits, operating models, delegation structures—translated into tools founders can actually use without slowing down growth.

You won't find theory here.
You'll find mechanisms.

Each chapter produces something tangible:

- A list
- A decision
- A document
- A dashboard

By the end, control will no longer mean doing everything yourself. It will mean knowing that the work runs—especially when you step away.

Chapter 1: The Process Audit

Diagnosing the Chaos Before You Prescribe the Cure

Most founders try to fix operations the same way they fix bugs at 2 a.m. by reacting to whatever is currently on fire. A missed deadline triggers a new hire. A customer complaint triggers a new tool. A team meltdown triggers another meeting.

That approach feels productive, but it quietly guarantees one thing: you will solve the wrong problems first.

Professional consulting engagements never start with solutions. They start with diagnosis. Not because consultants love frameworks, but because systems only work when they're applied to the right constraint.

Think of your company like a production system, or if you prefer startup language, a backend architecture. If latency is coming from the database, optimizing the frontend won't help. In operations, the same logic applies: if delivery is broken, fixing sales creates more damage, not growth.

This chapter gives you a founder-usable diagnostic system to identify where chaos is actually costing you time, money, and momentum.

By the end of this chapter, you will know clearly and unemotionally, which five processes deserve your attention and which ones should be ignored for now.

Example: Fixing the wrong problem

A startup saw growth slow and assumed sales was the problem.

They hired another salesperson.

Deals increased. Chaos followed.

Onboarding broke. Timelines slipped. The founder was pulled into delivery issues daily. Cash flow tightened.

Sales wasn't the constraint. Delivery was.

Fixing sales increased load on a broken system.

Once onboarding was standardized, growth resumed.

Lesson: Scale the constraint—or amplify the chaos.

1.1 Diagnosing the Chaos Before You Prescribe the Cure

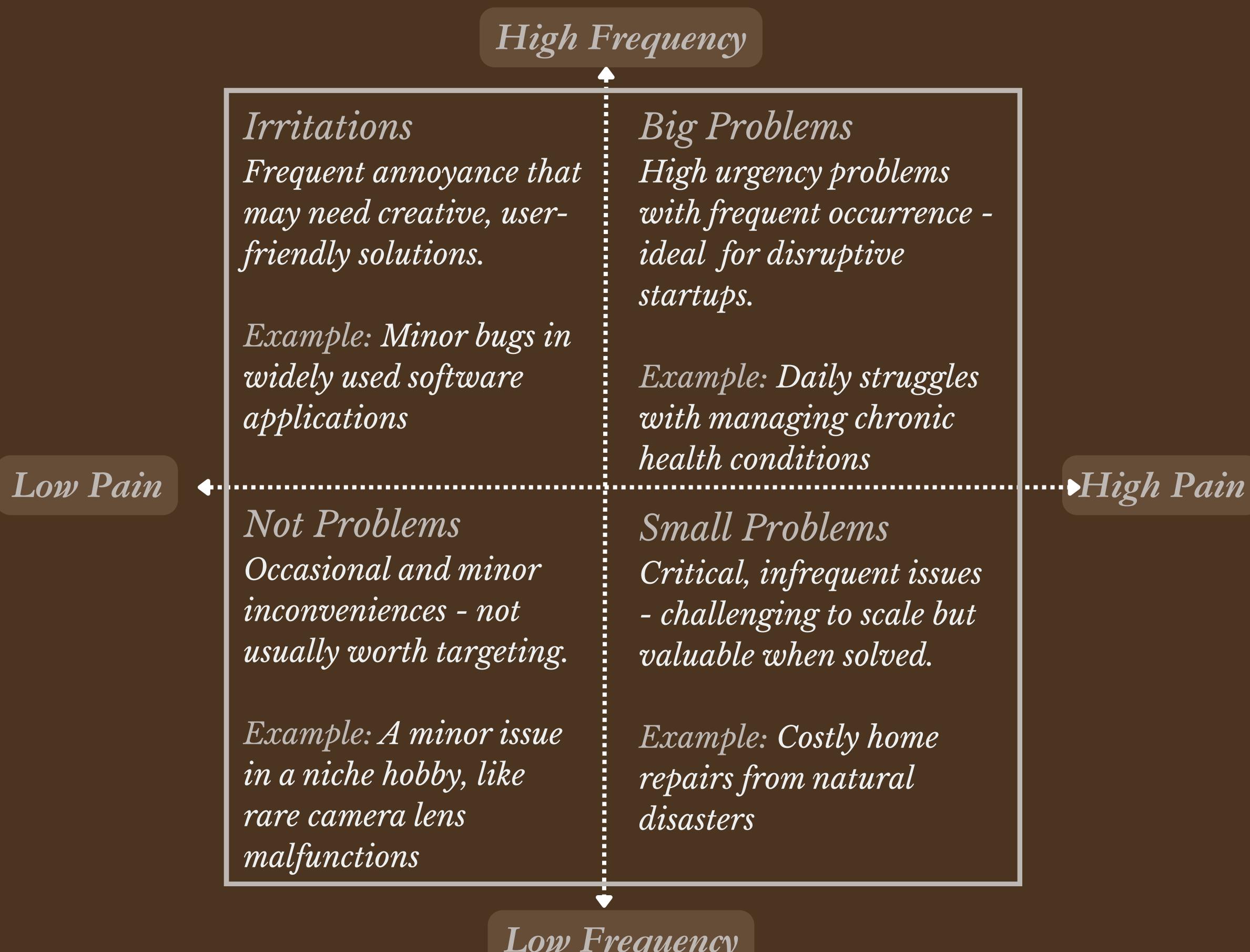
The Pain Point Matrix is a simplified version of what consulting firms use to prioritize transformation work. It combines two dimensions that matter in the real world:

- Frequency: How often does this problem show up?
- Impact: How painful is it when it does?

Founders tend to overreact to high-emotion problems and underreact to high-cost ones. This matrix corrects that bias.

Imagine each process in your business as a background service. Some crash once a quarter but take the whole system down. Others glitch daily but only slow things slightly. The ones you fix first are not the loudest, they're the ones quietly draining your runway.

What Is the Pain Frequency Matrix?





Step 1: Map Your Core Operating Processes

Start by listing the recurring processes that keep your business running. Not departments—**processes**. These are things that happen repeatedly, regardless of who is doing them.

Examples include client onboarding, lead follow-up, invoicing, hiring, inventory reordering, customer support escalation, content publishing, or monthly reporting.

Most early-stage startups have between eight and twelve core processes. If you list more than fifteen, you’re probably being too granular.

Step 2: Score Frequency and Impact

For each process, assign a score from 1 to 5 for frequency and impact.

Frequency asks: How often does this go wrong or create friction?
Impact asks: When it goes wrong, how badly does it hurt revenue, customer trust, or team morale?

Multiply nothing. Add nothing fancy. Just add the two numbers. What you’re looking for are the top five combined scores. These are your operational bottlenecks.

This exercise does something powerful: it replaces intuition with prioritization. You are no longer fixing problems because they annoy you—you are fixing them because they are expensive.

Founder Work Session: The 20-Minute Chaos Sort

Time needed: 20 minutes

Tools: Paper, Notes app, or Google Doc

Step 1 — List (10 minutes)

Write down 8–12 recurring processes that keep your business running.

Use verbs, not departments.

Example: Client onboarding, invoicing, lead follow-up.

Step 2 — Score (5 minutes)

For each process, give two scores (1–5):

- *Frequency: How often does this cause friction?*
- *Impact: How costly is it when it breaks?*

Add the two numbers.

Step 3 — Circle the Top 3 (5 minutes)

Circle the three highest scores.

These are your real operational bottlenecks—not the loudest problems, but the most expensive ones.

 *Rule: Do not fix anything yet.*

Just identify one process you will systemize first.



Applying a Consultant's Lens: SIPOC Without the Jargon

Once you've identified your top two pain points, it's time to zoom in. This is where many founders skip steps and jump straight to documentation. Don't.

Before you design a system, you must define its boundaries. In consulting, this is done using a framework called SIPOC—Suppliers, Inputs, Process, Outputs, Customers.

For founders, here's the translation.

Think of SIPOC as defining the API contract for a process.

- **Supplier:** What or who triggers the process? (A signed contract, a customer ticket, a low inventory alert)
- **Input:** What information or materials are required to start?
- **Process:** What actually happens, step by step?
- **Output:** What is produced at the end?
- **Customer:** Who relies on this output being correct?

Most operational chaos comes from unclear inputs and undefined outputs. People argue about steps because no one agreed on what “done” actually means.

When you clarify SIPOC, you remove ambiguity before it becomes conflict.

Quick SIPOC Check

For one critical process, answer in one sentence each:

- *What starts it?*
- *What's needed to start?*
- *What actually happens?*
- *What does “done” mean?*
- *Who suffers if this fails?*

If any answer is fuzzy, that's where the chaos is coming from.

1.2 The Founder Reality Check: Where You Are the System

At this stage, one uncomfortable truth usually appears: you are the glue holding broken processes together.

If a task only works when you're personally involved—answering questions, fixing mistakes, approving exceptions—then you don't have a process. You have heroics.

This is where the process audit connects directly to founder time leverage.

Every high-frequency, high-impact process that depends on you is a scaling ceiling. It limits growth not because your team isn't capable, but because the system isn't explicit.

Example: When The Founder is The Process

A founder believed client delivery worked fine.

Projects shipped. Customers stayed. Revenue grew.

But only when she was involved.

She approved every proposal tweak. Clarified every scope question. Fixed every last-minute issue. When she took a week off, delivery slowed and mistakes increased.

The team wasn't failing.

The system didn't exist.

The founder wasn't leading the process—she was the process.

Once delivery steps and decision rules were documented, the same team delivered consistently without her presence.

Lesson: If your absence breaks the process, you don't have a team problem. You have a system gap.

1.3 Quick Win vs Long-Term Fix

Not every process needs a perfect system immediately.

- Quick Win: A checklist, a template, or a clear owner can reduce chaos by 30–40% within days.
- Long-Term Fix: Full SOPs, automation, and KPIs turn that process into infrastructure.

The goal of this chapter is not to fix anything yet. It's to decide what deserves fixing first.

Decision Exercise: Quick Win or Infrastructure?

Pick one process from your top pain points.

Answer these three questions:

1. *Is this process breaking daily or weekly?*
2. *Is the cost of mistakes visible right now (delays, rework, customer friction)?*
3. *Do different people handle it inconsistently?*

If you answered YES to 1 or 2

→ Apply a Quick Win

Create a checklist, assign a clear owner, and move on.

If you answered YES to 2 and 3

→ Plan a Long-Term Fix

This process deserves full documentation, automation, and metrics.

Rule:

Do not build infrastructure for a process that hasn't proven it's expensive.

1.4 Case Snapshot: The Hidden Cost of the Wrong Fix

A 15-person service startup in Kuala Lumpur believed sales was their bottleneck. Leads were coming in, but revenue wasn't growing fast enough.

The process audit told a different story.

Client onboarding scored high on both frequency and impact. Every new client required founder intervention, timelines slipped, and early churn was creeping up.

Instead of hiring another salesperson, the founder spent two weeks documenting and standardizing onboarding.

The result: onboarding time dropped by 35%, early churn fell, and the same sales volume generated more usable revenue—without adding headcount.

The lesson is simple: fixing the right process beats scaling the wrong one.

What To Do Next

Before moving to Chapter 2, complete these actions:

- 1. Finalize your top five chaotic processes using the Pain Point Matrix*
- 2. Select one process to systemize first*
- 3. Define its SIPOC on a single page*

That one-page definition becomes the foundation for documentation.

In the next chapter, you'll turn that clarity into something tangible: a Standard Operating Procedure your team can actually use.

Chapter 2 : Documentation 101

Turning Tribal Knowledge into Transferable Systems

Founders don't hate documentation because they're lazy. They hate it because they associate it with bureaucracy, binders, and long documents no one reads.

In their minds, documentation means slowing down.

In reality, lack of documentation is what slows everything down.

Every time someone asks you a question you've already answered before.

Every time a task gets done "almost right."

Every time something breaks the moment you step away.

That's not a people problem. That's undocumented work.

Good documentation doesn't try to capture everything. It captures just enough so work can happen without you.

Think of SOPs the way engineers think of runbooks.

Not textbooks. Not theory. Just clear instructions that work under pressure.

If someone new can follow it at 10 a.m. on a Monday—or at 10 p.m. when something breaks—then it's a good SOP.

Work Session: Identify One Piece of Tribal Knowledge

Time: 10 minutes

Goal: Select one task worth documenting

Answer silently:

- *What task breaks or slows down when I'm unavailable?*
- *What task do people ask me about more than once?*

Write down one task name only.

No steps. No fixes. No improvements.

If you can't name it clearly, it's not ready to scale.

2.1 The W5 SOP Framework

(Consulting-Grade, Founder-Friendly)

Most SOPs fail for one simple reason: they start with steps before context.

People don't fail because they don't know how to do something.

They fail because they don't know who owns it, when to act, or what "done" actually means.

This is why consultants start with structure.

Every usable SOP must answer five questions—no more, no less.

Who owns this?

Not "the team." One role. One accountable owner.

What is done?

The actual task, described plainly.

When is it triggered?

What event starts this process? A sale? A ticket? A deadline?

Where does it happen?

The exact tool, system, or folder. Ambiguity here creates chaos.

Why does this matter?

The business reason. This is what creates buy-in and judgment.

If an SOP cannot answer these five questions in under a minute, it's not operational.

It might be informative—but it won't scale.

2.2 Creating an SOP in 45 Minutes (Without Overthinking It)

This is where founders usually stall. They think they need to design the perfect process.

You don't.

You just need to capture reality once, then clean it up.

Step 1: Record First, Write Later

- Open Loom or Zoom.
- Record yourself doing the task exactly as you do it today.
- Don't explain. Don't optimize. Just do the work.
- This avoids the biggest documentation trap: writing how things should work instead of how they actually work.
- One recording. One task. Done.

Step 2: Extract the Steps

- Now convert that recording into a checklist.
- Short bullet points. No paragraphs. No explanations.
- If a step takes more than one sentence, it's probably two steps.
- This checklist is the backbone of the SOP.

Step 3: Apply the W5 Structure

- Wrap your checklist with the five answers: Who, What, When, Where, Why.
- This is what turns a list of actions into a system someone else can run.
- Context prevents mistakes.
- Clarity prevents dependency.

Step 4: Store It Where Work Happens

- SOPs don't belong in dusty folders called "Operations."
- They belong inside the tools people already use.
- CRM notes. Notion pages linked to tasks. Google Docs linked inside Slack.
- If people have to go look for an SOP, they won't use it.
- Documentation only works when it shows up at the moment of execution.

Example: Client Welcome & Onboarding SOP.

Here's what a functional SOP actually looks like.

SOP Name: Client Welcome & Onboarding

WHO: Client Success Manager

WHEN: Immediately after contract is signed

WHERE: Zoho CRM, Google Drive, Slack

WHY: Ensure a consistent client experience and eliminate onboarding delays

STEPS:

- *Move deal to Closed Won in Zoho CRM*
- *Trigger onboarding automation (project + folders)*
- *Send Welcome Email (Template CW-01)*
- *Schedule kickoff call within 48 hours*
- *Share onboarding questionnaire*
- *Confirm access to shared tools*

That's it.

No fluff. No explanations buried in paragraphs.

This single page replaces memory, reminders, and follow-ups with reliability.

2.3 Consulting Insight: RACI Embedded Inside SOPs

Most delegation fails not because people are incapable, but because ownership and communication are unclear.

Every SOP should make four things unmistakably clear:

- Responsible (R): Who executes the work
- Accountable (A): Who owns the outcome and gives final approval
- Consulted (C): Who must be consulted before decisions are made
- Informed (I): Who must be kept updated after decisions are made

In early-stage companies, founders often default to being Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed for everything.

This is understandable — and unsustainable.

When RACI is not explicitly defined:

- Decisions stall
- Work loops back to leadership
- Feedback becomes chaotic
- Ownership erodes

Clear RACI roles turn documentation into delegation.

Task: Remove Yourself as the Bottleneck

Time: 5 minutes

Goal: Expose hidden founder dependency

Pick one SOP you just identified or created.

Answer these four questions honestly:

- *Who is Responsible for executing this today?*
- *Who is Accountable for approving the outcome?*
- *Who is Consulted before key decisions are made?*
- *Who is Informed once the work is complete?*

If you appear in all four roles, delegation has not happened.

Chapter 3: The Essential Tech Stack

Tools That Support Systems — Not Replace Them

As established in Chapter 2, documentation exists to replace memory - not judgment.

In founders' minds, documentation means slowing down.

In reality, lack of documentation is what slows everything down.

Every time someone asks you a question you've already answered before.

Every time a task gets done “almost right.”

Every time something breaks the moment you step away.

That's not a people problem. That's undocumented work.

Good documentation doesn't try to capture everything.
It captures just enough so work can happen without you.

Think of SOPs the way engineers think of runbooks.

Not textbooks. Not theory. Just clear instructions that work under pressure.

If someone new can follow it at 10 a.m. on a Monday—or at 10 p.m. when something breaks—then it's a good SOP.



3.1 Project Management: Your System Backbone

Every company needs one place where work lives.

Not multiple tools. Not “whatever the team prefers.” One system where priorities are visible, ownership is clear, and nothing important depends on memory. This is the backbone of your operating system.

For most early- to mid-stage teams, simplicity wins.

Trello works because it’s visual and intuitive. People use it without training.

Asana adds structure, dependencies, and reporting—useful once complexity increases.

The mistake founders make here isn’t choosing the “wrong” tool. It’s choosing more than one.

When tasks live in email, chat, spreadsheets, and a project tool, none of them are real. They’re suggestions.

One source of truth forces alignment. It also reveals bottlenecks you couldn’t see before.

Task: One Source of Truth Check

Time: 10 minutes

List all the places tasks currently live (Slack, WhatsApp, email, notebooks, tools).

*Circle one tool you will treat as the system of record.
Everything else becomes input—not execution.*

If work isn’t visible there, it doesn’t exist.

3.2 CRM: Customer Memory, Not Sales Theater

Most founders use CRMs like filing cabinets. Information goes in, but nothing meaningful comes out.

A CRM is not a reporting tool. It's not just for salespeople. It's your company's memory of customer relationships.

Zoho CRM works well for many Malaysian and SEA-based companies because it's affordable, customizable, and supported locally. But the brand matters less than the usage.

A functioning CRM does three things:

- It tracks deals without relying on the founder
- It triggers what happens after the sale
- It ensures customers don't disappear when someone leaves

When onboarding, follow-ups, or renewals live in someone's head, growth becomes fragile. The CRM's real job is to make customer-related work boring, predictable, and repeatable.

Activity: Founder Dependency Test

Time: 5 minutes

Ask yourself:

“If I disappeared for two weeks, would new customers still be onboarded correctly?”

If the answer is no, your CRM is incomplete—not broken.

Write down one post-sale action that should trigger automatically.



3.3 Accounting: Seeing the Business While It's Still Alive

Founders don't avoid accounting because it's unimportant. They avoid it because it feels backward-looking.

But financial clarity isn't about history. It's about control.

Tools like QuickBooks Online matter not because they generate reports, but because they let you see cash flow in real time. Weekly visibility beats perfect quarterly statements every time.

When founders only look at finances during tax season, decisions get delayed, risks go unnoticed, and growth feels scarier than it needs to be.

You don't need to become a finance expert. You just need a regular signal.

Activity: The Weekly Money Habit

Time: 5 minutes

Schedule a 10-minute recurring calendar block once a week.

Your only questions:

- *How much cash came in?*
- *How much went out?*
- *How many weeks of runway do we have?*

No analysis. Just visibility.

3.4 Communication: Reduce Noise Before You Add Speed

Most teams don't have a communication problem. They have a decision storage problem.

Slack, Telegram, and similar tools are excellent for coordination—but terrible as systems of record. When decisions live in DMs, context disappears and accountability erodes.

The rule is simple:

Conversation can happen anywhere. Decisions must live in systems.

This isn't about control. It's about reducing rework.

When people can't find decisions, they remake them.

When decisions aren't visible, alignment becomes guesswork.

Activity: Decision Audit

Time: 10 minutes

Scroll through yesterday's messages.

Find one decision that matters.

Move it into the relevant system (task, doc, CRM note).

Do this once a day for a week. Noise drops fast.



3.5 Choosing Tools with Consulting Logic

The most disciplined companies don't ask, "Is this a good tool?" They ask, "Does this earn its place in the stack?"

Before adopting anything new, apply three filters:

Does it support an existing process—or create a new one?

Can a junior hire use it without explanation?

Can it integrate with what we already run?

If the answer to any of these is no, the tool isn't a solution. It's a distraction.

More software feels like progress. Fewer, better-integrated tools create it.

Activity: Tool Pruning Sprint

Time: 15 minutes

List every tool you currently pay for.

For each, answer one question:

"What breaks if we remove this?"

If nothing breaks, plan its exit.

Chapter 4: The Delegation Dashboard

Remove Yourself Without Losing Control

Most founders don't struggle with delegation because they're bad leaders. They struggle because delegation is often attempted without a system.

When founders delegate outcomes—"handle onboarding," "own invoicing," "run sales demos"—but leave the underlying work undocumented, unstructured, and unreviewed, the result is predictable. Work slows down. Quality varies. Decisions loop back to the founder.

The founder steps back in. Not out of ego, but out of necessity.

Delegation didn't fail.

Delegation was never properly designed.

In consulting, delegation is never treated as a soft skill. It's treated as an operating mechanism. Work is either reliable without senior involvement, or it isn't. And reliability doesn't come from trust alone—it comes from structure.

This chapter gives you that structure.

Example : Control Without Presence

A founder stopped attending the weekly delivery meeting.

Not as an experiment. As a test.

The agenda stayed the same. Decisions were still made. Follow-ups were logged. When an edge case appeared, the team resolved it using documented rules instead of asking for approval.

The founder reviewed outcomes on Friday—on time, on track, no surprises.

Nothing escalated. Nothing broke.

And nothing required intervention.

That's when the founder realized something important: control didn't come from being in the room. It came from how the work was designed.

4.1 Why Delegation Breaks at Scale

Every repeatable task in your business sits on a spectrum.

On one end: tasks that only work when you're involved.

On the other: tasks that run predictably without you.

The founder's goal is not to disappear from the business, but to **move as much work as possible toward the reliable end of that spectrum.**

What prevents that shift is usually not people. It's ambiguity.

- Ambiguous steps
- Ambiguous ownership
- Ambiguous review

When these exist, the founder becomes the default escalation point—the glue holding things together. Over time, this creates a silent ceiling on growth. Not because the team can't scale, but because the system can't operate independently.

Before delegation can succeed, the work itself must be stabilized.

Example: The Escalation Trap

A founder delegated client onboarding to an operations lead.

The steps were never fully defined. Ownership was assumed. Reviews happened only when something went wrong.

Most weeks, things worked—until they didn't.

A missing document. A confused client. A delayed kickoff.

Each issue escalated back to the founder, who “just fixed it” to keep things moving.

Over time, onboarding became dependent on the founder's availability—not because the team lacked skill, but because the process lacked clarity.

Result: Growth slowed, not due to capacity, but because the system couldn't run without its human patch.

4.2 The DARE Model: Structured Delegation for Founders

To make delegation operational instead of aspirational, we use a simple model: DARE. It's intentionally practical, built for founders who need leverage, not theory.

- D - Document.

The task must exist outside your head. This is not about perfection. A usable SOP—built using the method from Chapter 2—is enough.

- A - Assign.

One clear owner runs the process. Not a team. Not a department. One role. This is the “Runner” in consulting terms.

- R - Review.

Quality control happens on a cadence, not through constant interruption. Weekly for high-risk work. Bi-weekly for stable processes.

- E - Empower.

Once the above are in place, you remove yourself from execution. No fixing. No stepping in “just this once.” Only review.

This mirrors the logic of ADKAR (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement) but translated into something founders can actually execute inside operations.

Activity: Apply DARE Once

Time: 10 minutes

Pick one recurring task you're still involved in.

Write four short lines:

- *Is it documented?*
- *Who is the Runner?*
- *When is it reviewed?*
- *What will I stop doing?*

If you can't answer all four, delegation hasn't happened yet

4.3 The Delegation Dashboard: Visibility Without Micromanagement

Founders often stay involved because they lack visibility.

When you can't see what's happening, you check everything.
When you can see clearly, you intervene selectively.

The Delegation Dashboard exists to give you that visibility.

This is not a complex system. A simple Google Sheet is enough.

Each row represents a **repeatable process**, not a person. Each column answers a leadership question: who owns this, is it documented, and am I still involved?

Over time, this dashboard becomes a mirror. Anywhere founder involvement persists, it signals either a system gap or a process that isn't ready yet.

Your objective is not perfection.

It's progress: founder involvement trending toward zero for repeatable work.

Activity: Build the First Dashboard

Time: 15 minutes

Create a simple table with four columns:

Process | Owner | SOP Exists | Founder Involved?

List five recurring processes only.

Do not fix anything yet. Just make it visible.

Visibility precedes control.

4.4 What Structured Delegation Buys You

A 30-person services company tracked founder time across operations.

Before structured delegation:

- Founder spent ~20 hours/week reviewing and fixing work
- Client delivery delays averaged 3–4 days

After applying DARE and installing a simple delegation dashboard:

- Founder involvement dropped to under 6 hours/week in 8 weeks
- Delivery cycle time improved by 18%
- No new hires required

Nothing changed culturally.

The work simply became reliable.

Example : Stepping Away Without Things Breaking

A founder finally took a full week off for the first time in years.

Client onboarding continued. Invoices went out. Sales demos happened without last-minute approvals. No urgent messages. No “just checking” calls.

Nothing remarkable happened—and that was the point.

The work ran because it no longer depended on the founder’s presence. The steps were clear, ownership was explicit, and reviews happened on schedule.

The business didn’t slow down when the founder stepped away. It proved it could move forward without them.



Consultancy & Services We Provide

1. The Bottleneck Audit

A deep look at your operations to find where you're the single point of failure. We deliver a clear report and a 90-day plan to fix it.

2. System Implementation Sprints

We work alongside your team for 6-8 weeks to build and launch your core systems:

a) Delegation & Role Clarity

b) Approval & Decision Frameworks

c) Key Metric Dashboards

3. Embedded Operating Partner

We join your team 1-2 days a week for 3-6 months to run meetings, coach managers, and install rhythms—explicitly to work yourself out of a job.

4. Manager Training Workshops

Practical training for your leaders on how to delegate clearly, make decisions, and run teams without constant oversight.

5. The "Stepping Away" Test

We prepare your team, you step offline for a planned week, and we serve as the backup. Then we debrief and strengthen whatever broke. The final proof your systems work.



About This Guide

This guide was created by the Veissman Group based on extensive research addressing the silent crisis of founder-led scaling: the slow shift from being essential to becoming a bottleneck.

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If this guide helped you, please consider sharing it with your team or colleague who might need it. Your support helps us empower more young professionals.

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This is a living document. If you have suggestions for improvement or topics you'd like to see covered, please reach out. Your feedback is invaluable.

Free 15-Minute Consultancy

If you would like a follow up 1-1 consultancy please book our team at discover@veissmangroup.com