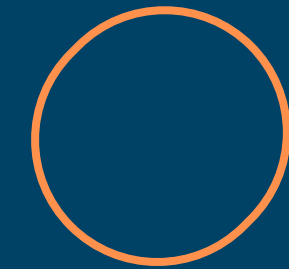




Session 1

# WELCOME

# CLASS OF 2026



ENTREPRENEURSHIP 101 - WHAT IT TAKES TO COMMERCIALIZE YOUR TECH

**SUNY Research Foundation's Office of Innovation and Partnerships provides programs and services that make SUNY the best place for innovators and entrepreneurs to accelerate the development of new technologies aimed at solving the world's most pressing problems.**

## **S4 GOALS**

- Provide the foundation of knowledge, learning, and networks that entrepreneurs and innovators need to be successful.
- Help new ventures secure the initial funding needed to de-risk technology, validate market opportunity, and build initial team.



THE TEAM



Nicholas Querques



Joy Goswami



Sara Goodman



Jessica Stanley-Updyke



Austin Winter



Patrick Nelson



Fiza Hashmi



Mahfuzur Miah



Jennifer Douglas



Karl-Heinz Schofalvi



Garrett Smith



Ben Clark



Dylan Marx



Peter Fallon



Doug Benel

# COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Course Title	Presenters
1	May 26, 2026	Entrepreneurship 101 – What It Takes To Commercialize Your Tech	Allison Yacci, DataCicada
2	Jun 2, 2026	Discover Customer Discovery	Olga Petrova, University at Buffalo Kathryn Cherney, Binghamton University
3	Jun 9, 2026	Evaluation of the Opportunity – Patentability and Marketability Basics	Joy Goswami, SUNY RF Peter Fallon, SUNY RF Garrett Smith, SUNY RF
4	Jun 16, 2026	How To Win Grants – Mastering Non-Dilutive Funding Sources	Kirk Macolini, InteliSpark
5	Jun 23, 2026	Mastering Startup Agreements & Exit Strategies	Rich Honen, Phillips Lytle
6	Jun 30, 2026	Team Chemistry – Leveling Up Your Company	Doug Benel, SUNY RF Ana-Maria Galeano, Galeano Law Firm
7	Jul 7, 2026	Strategies for Unstoppable Success	Arel Moodie, Reed Oak
8	Jul 14, 2026	Telling and Selling Your Story	Michael Lightman, Hate Your Deck
9	July 20- July 24	1:1 Meeting With SUNY Venture Advisors	
10	Jul 28, 2026	Demo Day and Graduation	You!

# COURSE SCHEDULE

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Recordings will be shared after each class, but we highly encourage you to attend live to take advantage of the full experience.
- During the course, we will provide valuable resources to help you get your bearings and learn about others in your cohort, including a class directory.
- We will also include some activities that will help you meet your classmates. Stay tuned for a prize!
- At the end of each live session, please answer a 1 question Zoom poll about this week's topic. Your feedback helps us improve the program.
- You will have an opportunity to provide feedback at the end of the course. If you have any questions, issues or ideas along the way, please don't hesitate to contact us.



# COURSE SCHEDULE

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- **May 26–July 14:** Instructional Zoom webinars will be held every Tuesday from 10:30–12:00 PM ET. Invites have been sent. Please keep an eye out for Zoom meeting invites.
- **June 29 – July 27:** Virtual I-Corps short regional course. We will provide more information and a registration link:  
<https://www.tfaforms.com/5217695>.
- **July 20 – July 24:** Office hours with Venture Advisors to apply what you are learning and prep for your Demo Day pitch.
- **July 28:** S4 culminates with a Demo Day and Graduation celebration where participants pitch their technology or venture for up to \$200k Technology Accelerator Fund Catalyst Investments. Demo Day and Graduation are scheduled to be in person at the University at Albany's ETEC Complex in Albany, NY on July 28.



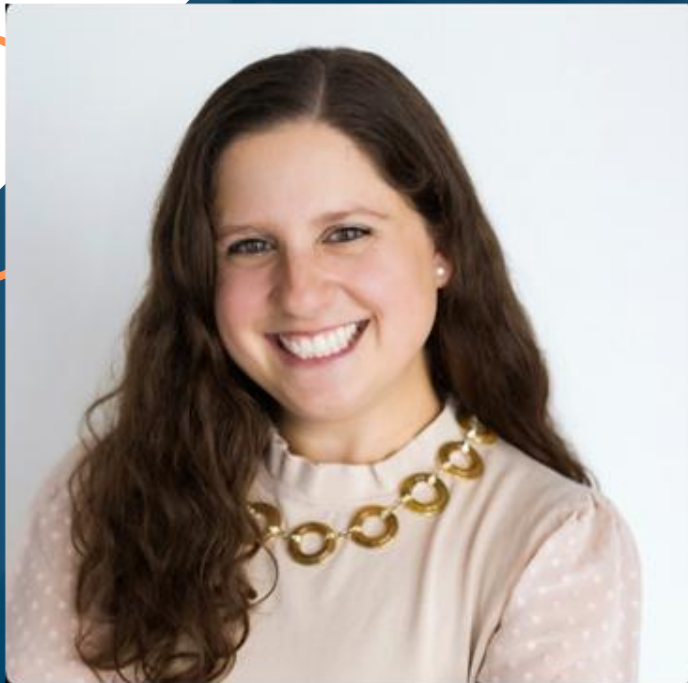


# SUNY TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATOR FUND (TAF) S4 CATALYST INVESTMENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a TAF S4 Catalyst Investment, teams and/or companies must meet **ALL** of the following requirements:

- Developing technology that is SUNY intellectual property;
- Enrolled in the S4 Class of 2026;
- Participate in the S4 Demo Day pitches on July 28, 2026;
- By December 31, 2026, complete the company formation process if a company has not already been formed; and
- By December 31, 2026, the company receiving the TAF S4 Catalyst Investment must demonstrate that it has an active license or option to the technology it plans to commercialize from a SUNY campus.

# MEET THE VENTURE ADVISORS!



Allison Yacci



Ana Galeano



Deborah Burks



Doug Buerkle



Elisa Miller-Out



Eric Gordon



Mark Sperry



Steve Festin

# JOIN LINKEDIN

We will have some activities that will help you meet your classmates. We will give out participation points for the below items.

1. Join the [SUNY Innovation and Entrepreneurship Network LinkedIn Group](#) (link included in this week's follow up email)
2. Comment on the "Welcome to the S4 class of 2026" post in this LinkedIn group to introduce yourself. Recommendations on what to include: campus affiliation, what you are working on, what you hope to get out of S4 and a fun fact about yourself.
3. Reply to a classmate's post to 'meet' them!





# QUESTIONS ABOUT S4?

Email Us at [S4@rfsuny.org](mailto:S4@rfsuny.org)

Let's jump into our first session!



**SUNY STARTUP**  
SUMMER SCHOOL

# Entrepreneurship 101

## What It Takes To Commercialize Your Tech



# Meet Your Presenter



**Allison Yacci**  
Founder & CEO  
DataCicada



# What best describes you?



# Why are you participating in S4?



# Where are you in your Entrepreneurship Journey?







# Entrepreneurship



# Business Planning



# The Business Model Canvas

Designed for:

Designed by:

Date:

Version:

<h3>Key Partners</h3> <p>Who are our key partners? Why are our key partners? Which key resources are we acquiring from partners? What key activities do partners perform?</p> <p><b>Channels to consider:</b> Partnerships and alliances Resellers or sales channels Acquisition of partners, resources and assets</p>	<h3>Key Activities</h3> <p>What key activities do our Value Propositions require? Our Distribution Channel? Customer Relationship? Revenue stream?</p> <p><b>Channels:</b> Production Procurement Logistics Infrastructure</p>	<h3>Value Propositions</h3> <p>What value do we deliver to the customer? Which one of your customers' problems are we helping to solve? What bundles of products and services are we offering to each Customer Segment? Which Customer Needs are we satisfying?</p> <p><b>Channels:</b> Direct Partnerships Customer-owned Selling via partners Retail Wholesaler Mail Self-Service Pop-Up Retailer Affiliate Commission-based</p>	<h3>Customer Relationships</h3> <p>What type of relationship does each of our Customer Segments expect us to establish and maintain with them? Which ones have an expectation? How are they integrated with the rest of our business model? How costly are they?</p> <p><b>Channels:</b> Direct channels Indirect channels Self-Service Personalized Services Communities Co-creation</p>	<h3>Customer Segments</h3> <p>To whom are we creating value? Who are our most important customers?</p> <p><b>How to reach:</b> Direct channel Indirect channel Reseller/Partner</p>
<h3>Key Resources</h3> <p>What Key Resources do our Value Propositions require? Our Distribution Channel? Customer Relationship? Revenue Stream?</p> <p><b>Channels to consider:</b> Physical Intellectual Human Financial Social</p>	<h3>Key Resources</h3> <p>What Key Resources do our Value Propositions require? Our Distribution Channel? Customer Relationship? Revenue Stream?</p> <p><b>Channels to consider:</b> Physical Intellectual Human Financial Social</p>		<h3>Channels</h3> <p>Through which Channels do our Customer Segments want to be reached? How are we reaching them best? How are our Channels integrated? Which ones work best? Which ones are most cost-efficient? How are we integrating them with customer touchpoints?</p> <p><b>Channels to consider:</b> 1. Direct 2. Indirect 3. Self-Service 4. Retail 5. Wholesale 6. Mail 7. Pop-Up 8. Affiliate 9. Commission-based 10. Other</p>	<h3>Channels</h3> <p>Through which Channels do our Customer Segments want to be reached? How are we reaching them best? How are our Channels integrated? Which ones work best? Which ones are most cost-efficient? How are we integrating them with customer touchpoints?</p> <p><b>Channels to consider:</b> 1. Direct 2. Indirect 3. Self-Service 4. Retail 5. Wholesale 6. Mail 7. Pop-Up 8. Affiliate 9. Commission-based 10. Other</p>
<h3>Cost Structure</h3> <p>What are the most important costs inherent in our business model? Which Key Resources are most expensive? Which Key Activities are most expensive?</p> <p><b>Cost Structure:</b> Cost of Goods Sold Variable Costs Fixed Costs Selling, General &amp; Administrative Research &amp; Development Infrastructure Human Resources Financial Costs Risk Costs Compliance Costs</p>		<h3>Revenue Streams</h3> <p>For what value are our customers really willing to pay? Do they pay currently? How are they currently paying? How would they prefer to pay? How much does each Revenue Stream contribute to overall revenues?</p> <p><b>Channels:</b> Direct Indirect Self-Service Retail Wholesale Mail Pop-Up Affiliate Commission-based Other</p> <p><b>Revenue Streams:</b> Product Sales Usage Fees Licensing Subscription Advertising Transaction Fees Commissions Royalties Other</p>		



DESIGNED BY: Business Model Foundry AD  
The makers of Business Model Generation and Strategyzer

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# How important is technology?

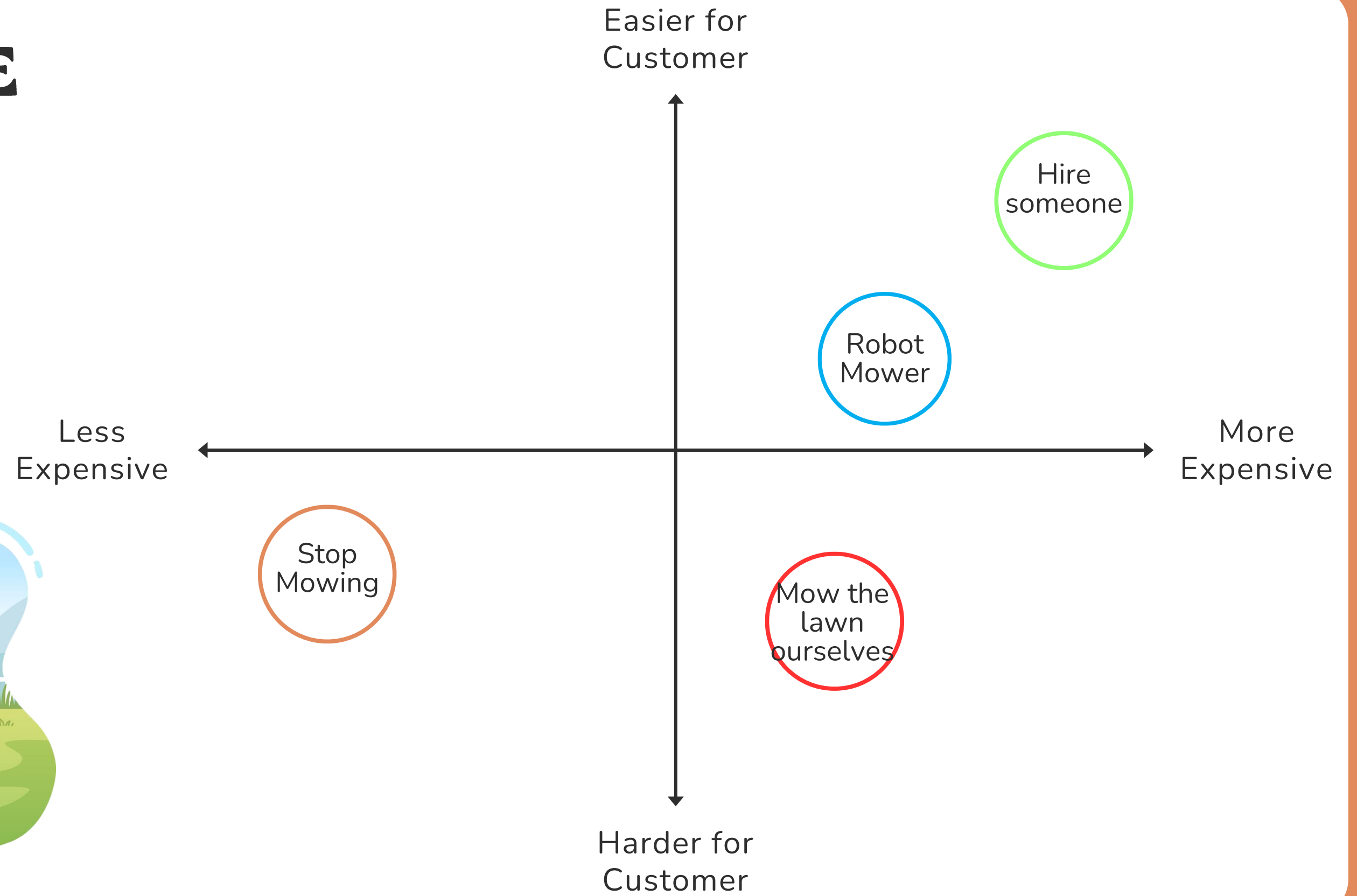


# Why do people buy things?





# COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS



# Key Considerations



01

## Can I afford it?

Is this a good financial decision? What is the real price? How long will it last? What parts need frequent replacement? How do you maintain this? Are subscriptions required? Electric bill?

02

## Does it work for my needs?

Hills, acres, type of grass/field, fence or fenceless, pets, battery life, AI, privacy, type of sensors, type of blades.

03

## What happens if it breaks?

Customer service, ability to get new parts, ability to troubleshoot and fix it.

04

## Do I know anyone that has it?

Brand reputation, personal referrals, other's experiences

# Things Not Considered

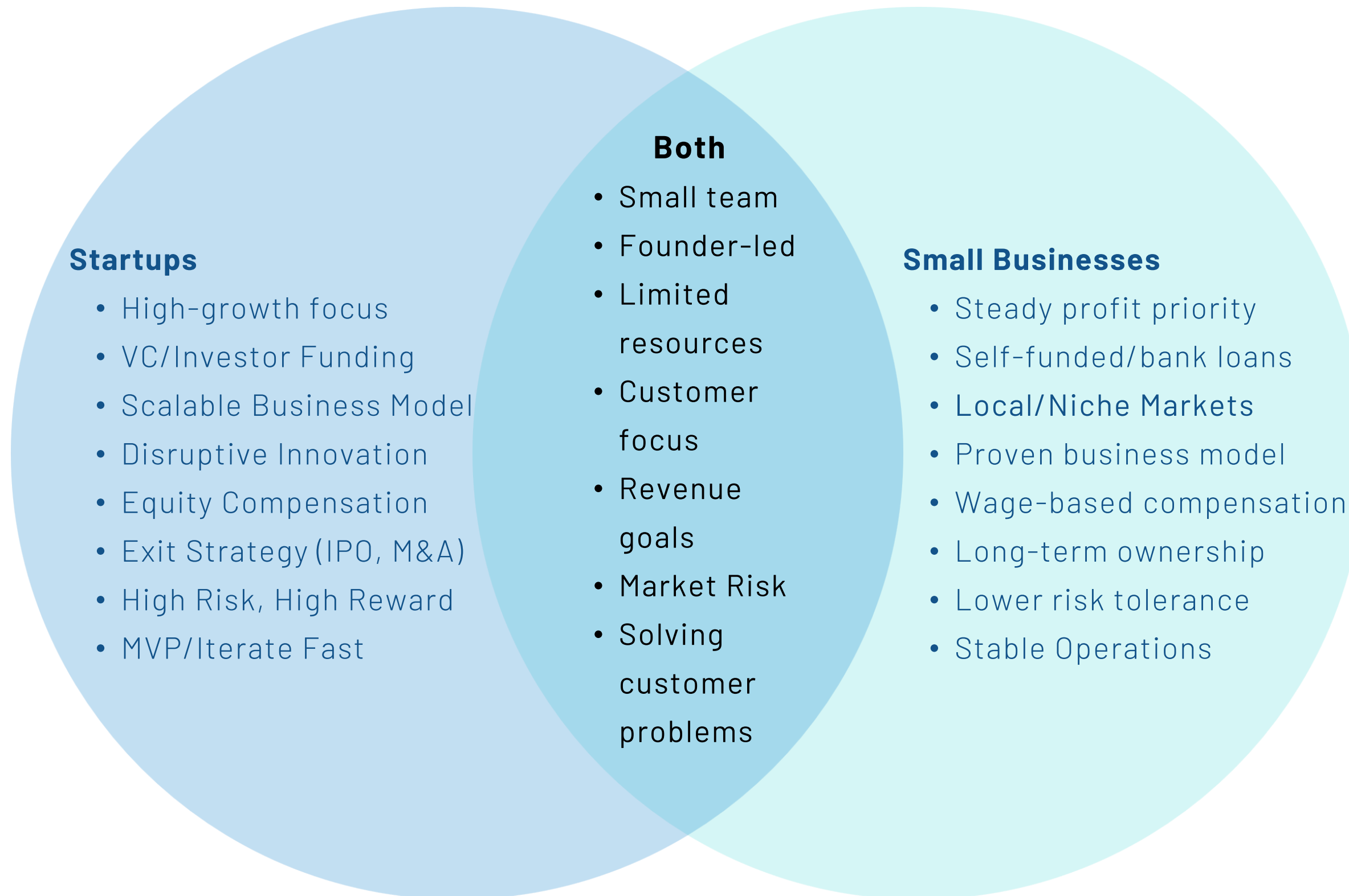
- Scientific papers
- Patent protection
- Who licensed the different technological components and from who?
- How are the AI models different?
- What does the ROC curve look like?



# How important is technology?



# Startup vs Small Business



# What gives you purpose?



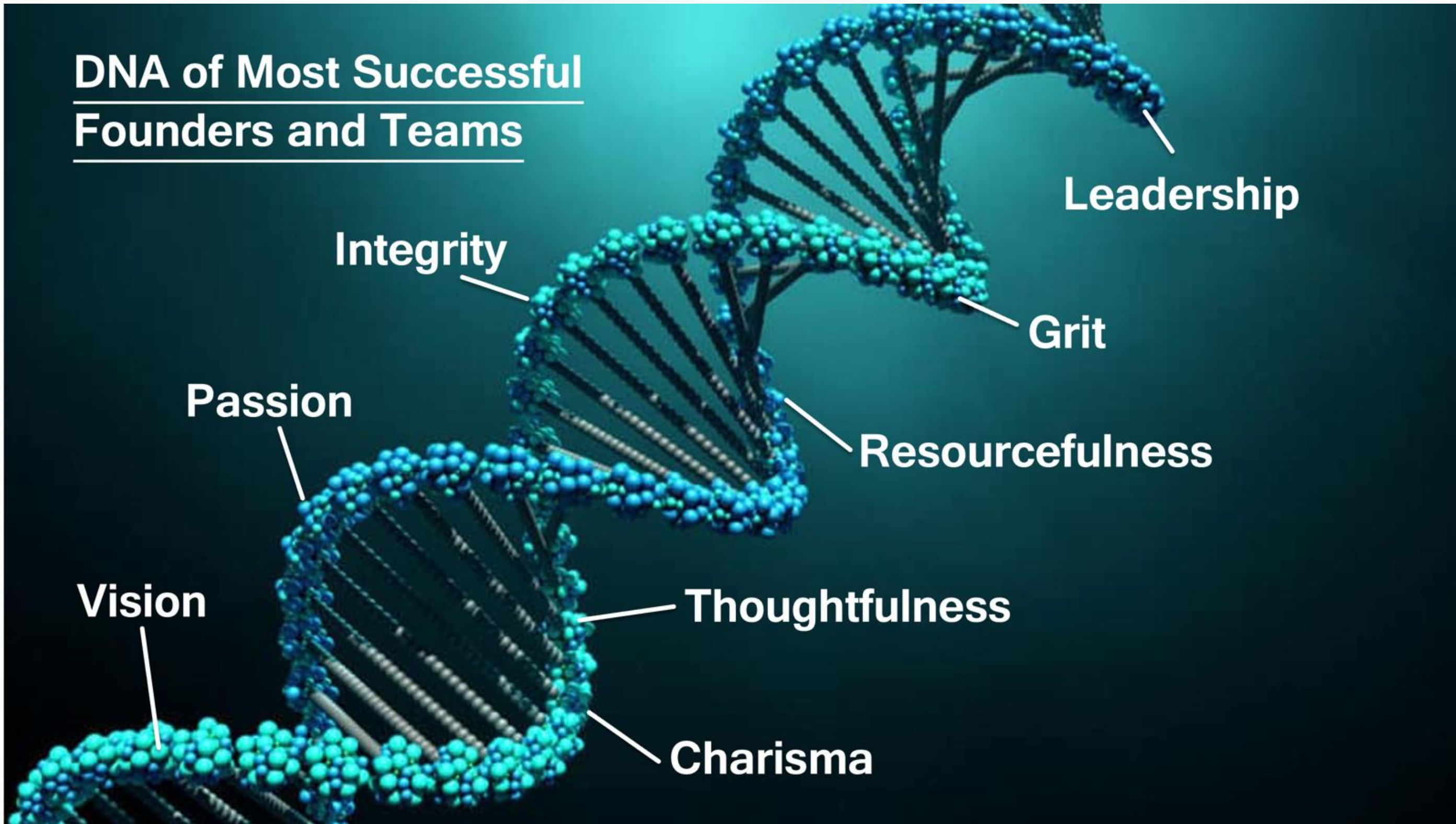
# Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS)



Traction - by Gino Wickman



## DNA of Most Successful Founders and Teams



# Top 40: How co-founders met

Company	Co-founder connection
 Stripe	 Family Brothers
 Airbnb	 Classmates Studied at Rhode Island School of Design
 Coinbase	 Colleagues Worked together at Airbnb
 Figma	 Classmates Studied at Brown University together
 OpenAI	 Friend of a friend A group of entrepreneurs and researchers focused on AGI
 Brex	 Classmates Studied at university
 Facebook	 Classmates Studied together at Harvard University
 Notion	 Friend of a friend Introduced to each other by mutual friends
 Plaid	 Hackathon Met each other during a Hackathon
 Ramp	 Classmates Studied together at Harvard University
 Benchling	 Classmates Studied together at Harvard University
 Anthropic	 Family Siblings
 Databricks	 Classmates Studied together at University of California, Berkeley
 Revolut	 Colleagues Worked together at Credit Suisse
 Wiz	 Colleagues Met while at the IDF
 Canva	 Classmates Studied together at University of Perth
 Chime	 Friend of a friend Introduced through a recruiter
 Miro	 Colleagues Worked together at Vitamin Group
 Klarna	 Hackathon Hackathon at Stockholm University
 Anduril	 Friend of a friend Met through Founders Fund
 Scale AI	 Colleagues Worked together at Quora
 Rippling	 Colleagues Worked together at Zenefits
 Grammarly	 Classmates Studied together at University in Ukraine
 Deel	 Classmates Studied at MIT together
 Airtable	 Classmates Studied at Duke together
 Gusto	 Classmates Studied at Stanford together
 Perplexity	 Friend of a friend Connected over common research interest and areas
 Lovable	 Colleagues Worked at Depict together
 Navan	 Colleagues Worked at Mercury interactive
 Discord	 Colleagues Worked at OpenFeint together
 Harvey	 Friend of a friend Roommates
 Cursor	 Classmates Studied at MIT together
 Sierra	 Colleagues Worked at Google together
 Synthesia	 Colleagues Worked at Founders together
 ElevenLabs	 Classmates Studied together in high-school
 Mercor	 Classmates Studied together in high-school
 Clay	 Colleagues Worked at Microsoft together

Fazlur Shah, Venture Partner at Quartus Capital Partners (NYC), LinkedIn Post, May 20, 2026



# What is Pitching?

- > Pitching is not the beginning of the end – it is a continuous work in progress
- > Use visuals and don't be too wordy – less is more
- > You need to know your audience (customer) and your market inside and out
- > Practice, practice, practice



# Example Pitch Video



# You Do Not Want To Hear This After Your Pitch

- > What problem are you solving?
- > What are you selling?
- > Who is your customer?
- > Is there a big market?
- > Tell me about your team?
- > How do you make money?



# THANK YOU

Please answer the Zoom poll question

Recording will be sent within 24 hours

Don't forget to connect with us on [LinkedIn](#)

Reach out with any questions, issues or ideas

Scan to register

for

I-Corps



SEE YOU NEXT  
WEEK FOR

DISCOVER CUSTOMER DISCOVERY