



# The Founder's Mentality: How to Overcome the Predictable Crises of Growth

*Chris Zook, James Allen*

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Why is profitable growth so hard to achieve and sustain? Most executives manage their companies as if the solution to that problem lies in the external environment--find an attractive market, formulate the right strategy, win new customers.

But when Bain & Company's Chris Zook and James Allen (authors of the bestselling *Profit from the Core*) researched this question, they found that when companies fail to achieve their growth targets, 90% of the time the root causes are internal, not external--increasing distance from the front lines, loss of accountability, proliferating processes and bureaucracy, to name only a few. What's more, companies experience a set of predictable internal crises, at predictable stages, as they grow. Even for healthy companies, these crises, if not managed properly, stifle the ability to grow further--and can actively lead to decline.

The key insight from Zook and Allen's research is that managing these choke points requires a "founder's mentality"-- behaviors typically embodied by a bold, ambitious founder--to restore the speed, focus, and connection to customers, all of which are lost as companies grow:

- An insurgent's clear mission and purpose
- An unambiguous owner mindset
- A relentless obsession with the front line

Based on the authors' decade-long study of companies in more than 40 countries, *The Founder's Mentality* demonstrates the strong relationship between these three traits in companies of all kinds--not just start-ups--and their ability to sustain performance. Through rich analysis and inspiring examples, this book shows how any leader--not only a founder--can instill and leverage a founder's mentality throughout their organization, and find lasting, profitable growth.

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