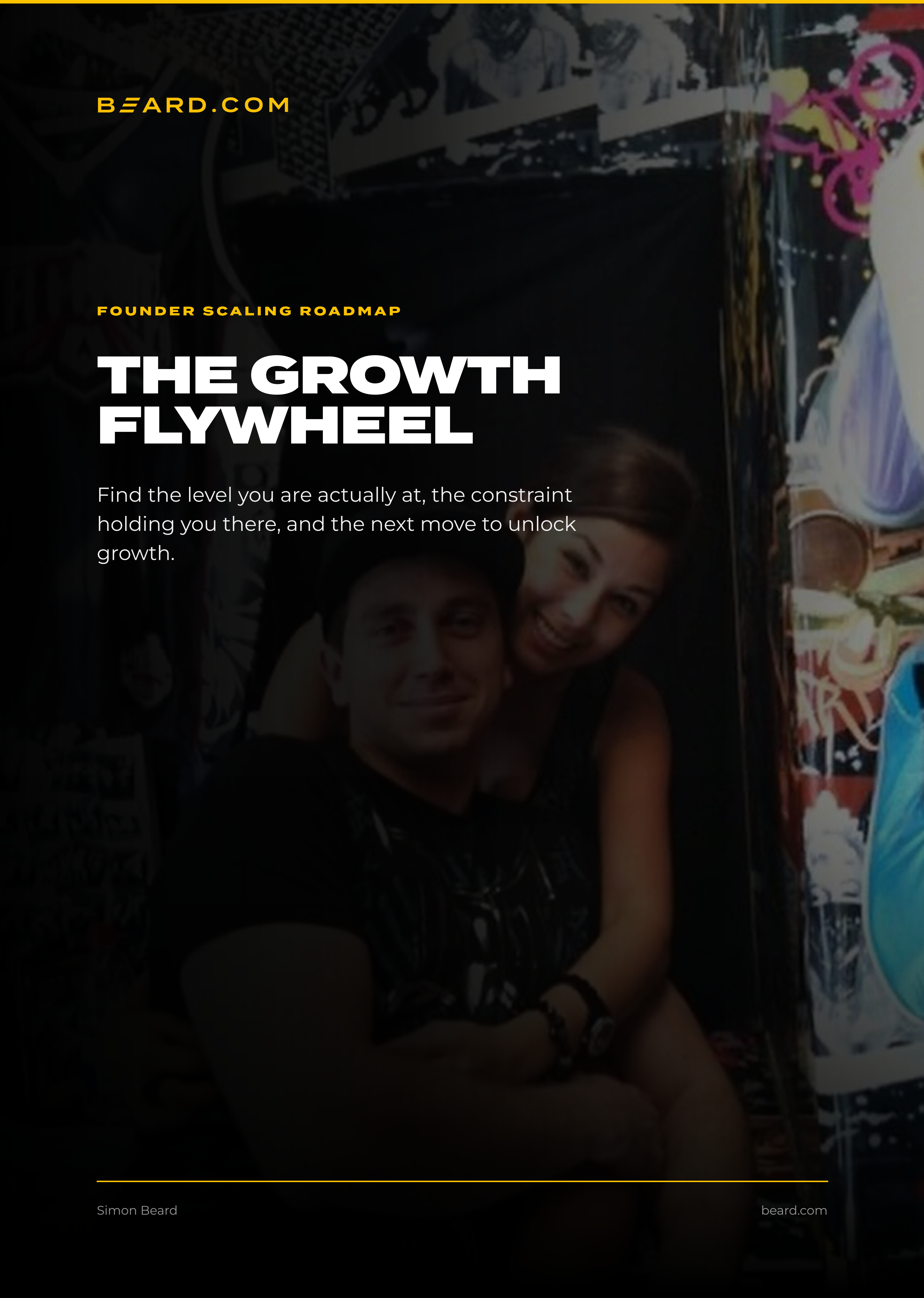

BEARD.COM

FOUNDER SCALING ROADMAP

THE GROWTH FLYWHEEL

Find the level you are actually at, the constraint holding you there, and the next move to unlock growth.

Simon Beard

READ THIS FIRST

Most founders do not have a growth problem. They have a level problem.

They are using a playbook from the wrong stage. A founder with no demand is trying to hire operators. A founder with a sales problem is changing the logo. A founder with a brand moat is still acting like every sale comes from paid ads. A post-exit founder is still measuring life with the old business scoreboard.

This roadmap is built to stop that.

The job is simple: find the level you are actually at, name the constraint blocking the next stage, then make the next move.

> Revenue can lie. Bottlenecks tell the truth.

This is not a generic scaling ladder. It comes from the actual path: Carrara Markets, sales reps, Culture Kings, demand creation, brand moat, exit, and capital allocation.

THE SEVEN LEVELS

The level is not a trophy. It is a diagnosis. You are not trying to look advanced. You are trying to find the constraint that is actually costing you growth.

0	**SKILL STACK**	Build the alpha skills before you try to scale.	Not enough reps in the core growth skills.
1	**FOUNDER FORCE**	You are the business. Everything moves when you move.	No repeatable demand loop.
2	**DEMAND BUILDER**	The business works, but not enough people know it exists.	Demand is inconsistent and founder dependent.
3	**SALES MULTIPLIER**	Demand exists, but too much trust still sits with the founder.	Sales process and trust transfer.
4	**OPERATOR BOTTLENECK**	The business is growing, but the founder is still the operating system.	People, systems, AI, and decision rights.
5	**BRAND MOAT**	Word of mouth and organic momentum are now doing work you cannot fully measure.	Protecting the moat while making the business more sellable.
6	**CAPITAL ALLOCATOR**	You are not just allocating capital. You are allocating life.	Highest and best use of capital, time, energy, reputation, and relationships.

THE GROWTH FLYWHEEL

Growth compounds when six forces work together. When one breaks, the founder becomes the bottleneck.

DEMAND

Does the market know, trust, and remember you?

OFFER

Is the promise clear enough to create action?

SALES

Can trust transfer without founder rescue?

DELIVERY

Does the product or service create proof?

PEOPLE

Can operators make decisions close to the work?

FOUNDER OS

Does the founder set rhythm, standards, and direction?

> The founder's job changes at every level. At the bottom, the founder is the machine. At the top, the founder designs the machine.

LEVEL 0

SKILL STACK

Build the alpha skills before you try to scale.

> Can you sell, create content, read customers, understand offers, and execute without being spoon-fed?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE Pre-founder, early operator, side hustle, or founder without enough reps.	**FOUNDER ROLE** Apprentice, operator, creator, marketer, early founder.
CONSTRAINT Not enough reps in the core growth skills.	**METRIC** Weekly reps: sales conversations, content created, creative reviewed, feedback received.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- You want to build a business, but you do not know which skill gives you leverage.
- You consume more content than you create.
- You cannot confidently explain why a customer buys.
- You rely on specialists because you do not understand the work.
- You want the founder title before you have the founder skill stack.

At Carrara Markets, Simon did not start with a brand machine. He started by selling face-to-face, getting rejected, learning what made people stop, and turning that skill into a system other people could use.

NEXT MOVE

> You skip into business-building and get trapped by weak offers, weak content, weak sales, and expensive specialists.

BUILD THIS

- Sales psychology
- Short-form video
- Offer and customer psychology
- Creative reading
- Media buying basics
- Pattern recognition

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. Write the four skills you need first: sales, content, marketing, media buying.
2. Film three short videos selling or explaining one idea.
3. Review ten winning ads and mark hook, promise, proof, CTA.
4. Sell one idea or offer to five real people.
5. Open one ad account or case study and identify spend, CPM, CTR, CPC, CPA, ROAS.
6. Rewrite one weak hook ten different ways.
7. Create a weekly scorecard for reps, feedback, lessons, and improvements.

ROUTE

Creator Army Bootcamp style nurture.

NEXT LEVEL

Level 1: Founder Force.

LEVEL 1

FOUNDER FORCE

You are the business. Everything moves when you move.

> Does revenue move only when your energy, posting, calls, and follow up move?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE

$0 to $500K, or a new offer still powered mostly by the founder.

FOUNDER ROLE

Seller, creator, operator, customer support, firefighter.

CONSTRAINT

No repeatable demand loop.

METRIC

Content shipped, qualified conversations created, sales calls booked.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Revenue comes from referrals, old relationships, or random spikes.
- Content is inconsistent.
- No clear weekly scoreboard.
- Every customer feels custom.
- The business stops when the founder stops.

This is the market-stall phase. The founder is close enough to the customer to feel the truth directly. That is painful, but it is also where the first real signal comes from.

NEXT MOVE

> You hide behind planning, websites, funnels, and product tweaks while the market still does not understand why it should care.

BUILD THIS

- One clear customer
- One clear offer
- One weekly content rhythm
- One follow up rhythm
- One proof loop

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. Write the customer in one sentence.
2. Write the offer in one sentence.
3. List twenty painful customer problems.
4. Film three short videos answering those problems.
5. Message twenty warm contacts with the clearest problem statement.
6. Create one proof post from a real lesson or result.
7. Track content, conversations, calls, and sales for seven days.

ROUTE

Free content, Bootcamp, or first demand-loop work.

NEXT LEVEL

Level 2: Demand Builder.

LEVEL 2

DEMAND BUILDER

The business works, but not enough people know it exists.

> Can you create demand before the customer is already looking?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE

$500K to $2M, or proven offer with lumpy pipeline.

FOUNDER ROLE

Rainmaker, closer, content bottleneck, quality control.

CONSTRAINT

Demand is inconsistent and founder dependent.

METRIC

Winning angles, repeatable content output, inbound conversations, pipeline consistency.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Happy customers, but weak market pull.
- Ads only work when one angle hits.
- Founder content is sporadic.
- Competitors with weaker products seem louder.
- The founder says, 'We just need more leads.'

Culture Kings did not grow by waiting for existing demand. It shaped what customers wanted to believe, wear, follow, and talk about.

NEXT MOVE

> You become addicted to demand capture and keep harvesting the small slice of buyers already in-market.

BUILD THIS

- Founder IP extraction
- Angle testing
- Short-form engine
- Creative review rhythm
- Proof library
- Weekly demand scorecard

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. List ten beliefs your market needs before they buy.
2. Turn each belief into a content angle.
3. Film five founder videos from those angles.
4. Pull five proof points from customer wins.
5. Turn the strongest angle into an ad concept.
6. Build a weekly scoreboard for content, comments, DMs, leads, and sales.
7. Review sales calls and DMs for the language customers actually use.

ROUTE

Growth Audit if revenue and urgency are real.
Creator Army if content is the constraint.

NEXT LEVEL

Level 3: Sales Multiplier.

LEVEL 3

SALES MULTIPLIER

Demand exists, but too much trust still sits with the founder.

> Can the business transfer trust without the founder rescuing every important deal?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE

$2M to $5M, or solid lead flow with founder-led closing.

FOUNDER ROLE

Closer, deal rescuer, relationship owner.

CONSTRAINT

Sales process and trust transfer.

METRIC

Close rate by source, speed to lead, follow up completion, founder rescue rate.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Good lead flow, inconsistent close rates.
- Founder still joins the important calls.
- Follow-up is weak.
- CRM hygiene is not trusted.
- Deals stall because no one owns the next step.

Market-stall selling became powerful when Simon could teach someone else to sell at 60 percent of his level. That was the shift from skill in the body to skill in the system.

NEXT MOVE

> You mistake charisma for architecture and keep carrying belief transfer personally.

BUILD THIS

- Qualification rules
- Sales call scorecard
- Objection library
- Proof assets
- Follow-up cadence
- Weekly pipeline review

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. Pull the last twenty lost deals and categorise why they died.
2. Write the top ten objections and the founder's best answers.
3. Create one proof asset for each major objection.
4. Audit every lead with no next step.
5. Record and review one sales call.
6. Create a scorecard for call quality.
7. Run a weekly pipeline meeting that does not get moved.

ROUTE

Growth Audit or One Life Club if sales architecture is the ceiling.

NEXT LEVEL

Level 4: Operator Bottleneck.

LEVEL 4

OPERATOR BOTTLENECK

The business is growing, but the founder is still the operating system.

> Would the business slow down if the founder stopped approving, explaining, and rescuing?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE

$5M to $15M, or any business where every important decision comes back to the founder.

FOUNDER ROLE

Approver, firefighter, strategy holder, culture carrier.

CONSTRAINT

People, systems, AI, and decision rights.

METRIC

Founder approvals, repeated escalations, owner scorecards, decisions made close to the work.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Managers escalate too much.
- Meetings multiply.
- SOPs exist, but ownership is weak.
- Hiring creates more complexity, not less.
- AI tools exist, but the operating system has not changed.

The founder's standards, taste, and decision-making have to move from their head into the operating rhythm. Otherwise hiring just creates more management load.

NEXT MOVE

> You hire more people into a broken operating rhythm and create a heavier business.

BUILD THIS

- Decision rights
- Owner scorecards
- Operating cadence
- AI context capture
- Exception routing
- Founder principle library

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. List every decision that came to the founder this week.
2. Categorise each as delete, delegate, automate, or keep.
3. Pick one department and define its weekly scoreboard.
4. Record the founder explaining one repeated decision.
5. Turn that recording into a playbook.
6. Add AI to one workflow where context gets lost.
7. Run a thirty-minute operator review with owners and numbers.

ROUTE

Growth Audit, CAO Partners, OLC, or Experience Day depending on depth.

NEXT LEVEL

Level 5: Brand Moat.

LEVEL 5

BRAND MOAT

Word of mouth and organic momentum are now doing work you cannot fully measure.

> Is the brand creating trust before the customer sees an ad?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE

$15M to $50M plus, or a brand with real direct demand.

FOUNDER ROLE

Moat protector, system builder, owner, capital allocator in training.

CONSTRAINT

Protecting the moat while making the business more sellable.

METRIC

Branded search, direct traffic, repeat purchase, referrals, organic revenue, clean EBITDA.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Customers refer without being pushed.
- Direct traffic and branded search increase.
- The experience creates stories people repeat.
- Paid ads still work, but they are not the only engine.
- Exit or dividend options start to become real.

Culture Kings became bigger than a store because the product, experience, content, and community created market gravity. That is the point where brand becomes an asset, not a logo.

NEXT MOVE

> You milk the brand before you understand the brand, then damage the moat chasing short-term revenue.

BUILD THIS

- Product standards
- Experience standards
- Story and proof library
- Organic demand measurement
- Founder independence
- Sellable EBITDA rhythm

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. Map demand from the last ninety days by paid, organic, referral, branded search, direct, and repeat customers.
2. Identify the five customer moments that create word of mouth.
3. Pull the strongest customer stories, reviews, referrals, and repeat purchase signals.
4. Audit what would damage the moat if the founder stepped back for thirty days.
5. Review gross margin, contribution margin, and EBITDA quality.
6. Write the operating standards that protect product and experience.
7. Choose the path: dividends, professional management, partial sale, full exit, or next game.

ROUTE

Experience Day, private advisory, OLC, or Beard Capital conversation.

NEXT LEVEL

Level 6: Capital Allocator.

LEVEL 6

CAPITAL ALLOCATOR

You are not just allocating capital. You are allocating life.

> Does the next dollar still change the life you are actually trying to build?

DIAGNOSIS

STAGE

High-dividend founder, post-exit founder, portfolio owner, or portfolio builder.

FOUNDER ROLE

Owner, investor, mentor, builder of builders, life designer.

CONSTRAINT

Highest and best use of capital, time, energy, reputation, and relationships.

METRIC

Return on capital, return on energy, memory dividends, relationship impact, timing fit.

WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- More money no longer changes daily quality of life much.
- Opportunities keep appearing because reputation has compounded.
- The founder says yes because they can, not because they should.
- Family, health, travel, and purpose compete with deal flow.
- Freedom exists on paper, but calendar inertia still runs the day.

After a liquidity event, the old business scorecard is not enough. The decision is not just what creates more money. It is what uses money well while you still have the health, relationships, and time to enjoy it.

NEXT MOVE

> You keep optimising for the next dollar by default and accidentally spend the years the money was meant to buy back.

BUILD THIS

- Capital allocation rules
- Calendar rules
- Experience timing map
- Relationship investments
- Deal filters
- Life energy scorecard

SEVEN-DAY MOVE

1. List every business, investment, idea, obligation, and opportunity.
2. Score each by upside, energy, strategic fit, relationship value, and life energy cost.
3. List experiences with a timing window: kids' ages, health, family, travel, relationships.
4. Write what the next dollar actually changes.
5. Identify one profitable opportunity to say no to.
6. Move one experience or relationship investment forward now.
7. Rebuild the next ninety days around capital, health, relationships, experiences, and the highest-value business decisions.

ROUTE

Experience Day, private advisory, OLC, or Beard Capital conversation if there is fit.

NEXT LEVEL

There is no Level 7. Design the next game.

SCORE YOURSELF

Do not score by ego. Score by the thing that breaks when you try to grow.

0	**SKILL STACK**	Can you sell, create content, read customers, understand offers, and execute without being spoon-fed?	Weekly reps: sales conversations, content created, creative reviewed, feedback received.
1	**FOUNDER FORCE**	Does revenue move only when your energy, posting, calls, and follow up move?	Content shipped, qualified conversations created, sales calls booked.
2	**DEMAND BUILDER**	Can you create demand before the customer is already looking?	Winning angles, repeatable content output, inbound conversations, pipeline consistency.
3	**SALES MULTIPLIER**	Can the business transfer trust without the founder rescuing every important deal?	Close rate by source, speed to lead, follow up completion, founder rescue rate.
4	**OPERATOR BOTTLENECK**	Would the business slow down if the founder stopped approving, explaining, and rescuing?	Founder approvals, repeated escalations, owner scorecards, decisions made close to the work.
5	**BRAND MOAT**	Is the brand creating trust before the customer sees an ad?	Branded search, direct traffic, repeat purchase, referrals, organic revenue, clean EBITDA.
6	**CAPITAL ALLOCATOR**	Does the next dollar still change the life you are actually trying to build?	Return on capital, return on energy, memory dividends, relationship impact, timing fit.

WHERE THIS ROUTES

The free roadmap should not sell one thing to everyone. It should route the founder based on the level they are actually in.

LEVELS 0 AND 1

Build the skill stack and first demand loop. Free content, Bootcamp-style nurture, and founder training.

LEVEL 2

Build the content and angle engine. Creator Army or Growth Audit depending on revenue and urgency.

LEVELS 3 AND 4

Book the Growth Audit. This is where constraint diagnosis has immediate commercial value.

LEVELS 5 AND 6

Experience Day, OLC, advisory, or Beard Capital conversation if there is genuine fit.

> The point is not to give them more ideas. The point is to show them the right problem.

THE FINAL CHECK

If this felt uncomfortably accurate, do not collect another PDF. Run the diagnostic.

Find the level

+

Name the constraint

+

Make the next move

The Growth Audit goes deeper. We go inside the numbers, find where growth is leaking, and give you the highest-upside move to make next.

START THE GROWTH AUDIT

Built from the Gold Coast. Carrara Markets to Culture Kings to the next game.