

The Solo Founder Round Table

Stop carrying the whole business on your own shoulders.

Use this when another week has gone by and you haven't talked about the work with anyone.

THE THREE WHO SHARPEN THE WORK

- ☐ **Someone who's done it.** Choose them by whether their advice changes your next move, because someone who was great at the job isn't always great at explaining how they did it.
- ☐ **Finding your truth-teller.** Ask directly, since people say yes more than you expect. Bring one decision and two numbers: 'What would you do, and what would change your mind?'
- ☐ **Someone at your stage.** Young firms put into monthly peer groups grew revenue about 8% more than firms left alone. Leave out direct competitors, so people share freely.
- ☐ **Finding your peers.** Show up at one fixed slot where peers gather, like a trade group or weekly industry call. Post your work and numbers so people at your level reply.
- ☐ **Paid to be blunt.** Buy a short weekly check-in from someone who knows your kind of business. Coaching works best when it comes from someone inside your field, so keep it a plain talk about your real work.
- ☐ **Finding the blunt one.** Try someone who already works with founders like you. Pay them to review one month of your real numbers, and ask who actually does the work.

THE THREE WHO KEEP YOU WHOLE

- ☐ **Someone outside the work.** Being fully switched off from work is the strongest guard against exhaustion, and outsiders hear things your circle never will. Ask them something real.
- ☐ **Finding the outsider.** Join a class, club or team with a fixed weekly time, unrelated to business. Seeing the same faces on a fixed slot is how adults make friends.
- ☐ **One person you're helping.** Help someone six to twelve months behind you. Giving help makes you feel less alone, and it lands best when you treat them as a near equal, so share what you're stuck on too.
- ☐ **Finding who to help.** Run a free monthly session at a business club, school or charity. You walk in with a job to do, so there's no awkward mingling.
- ☐ **Someone who knew you before.** Going solo usually squeezes money and hours at home. Tell them both numbers out loud and keep a weekly hour together.
- ☐ **Finding them.** They already exist: an old colleague, a friend from before your career, a sibling or an old coach. Keep business out of it. They'll tell you when you've changed.

THE MONDAY MESSAGE

- ☐ **Make it automatic.** Write: 'After I sit down with Monday's coffee, I send one message to one name.' Linking it to a cue beats picking a time.
- ☐ **Keep the list on paper.** Progress you physically write down and report to someone gets reached more often. Tick off each name you message.
- ☐ **Ask each seat differently.** Peers and mentors get your decision and two numbers. Ask the outsider something with feeling, ask your helper where they're stuck, and skip 'how's it going.'

- ☐ **A good two-line reply.** Line one names one thing to try, and line two names the number or date to check. Point to the moment, but leave the fix to them.

ONCE A MONTH

- ☐ **Check your list for thirty minutes.** Ask whether each name is still the right person for the seat, or just the easiest to text. Count what got tried and what it produced.
- ☐ **Two warning signs.** Swap anyone silent for three weeks, and any seat that only gives encouragement. If every name is a work contact, rebuild the outside seats.
- ☐ **Write what each knows.** Beside each name, note the question they answer best, with a recent example. Job titles are a poor map of who can actually help.

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