

Getting Into Tech: Software Startups to Big Tech

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KNOW YOUR PACE
PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Agenda

- Speaker Introduction
- Is Tech Right For You?
- Focus considerations
- Firms by size and maturity
- Employee Experience
- Hiring in Tech
- Takeaways: Book & Podcast Recommendations
- Q&A



Jason Bell

- 16+ years of experience: UK and US across technology businesses (12+ years) and management consultancy (4 years)
- Completed an MBA at Oxford's Saïd Business School
- Led big teams, managed large P&Ls and served on a senior Board of Directors
- Tech commercial leadership roles at Amazon and three startups (one of which was acquired by Google)
- Qualified Amazon Hiring Bar Raiser (objective third party with a hiring veto) for 4+ years; conducted 500+ Amazon interviews
- Current: Director of Know Your Pace, Personal & Professional Development



Is Tech Right for You?

- Minimum Viable Product (MVP) mindset
 - Do you enjoy fast paced work and iteration?
 - Are you motivated to innovate?

- Future ambiguity
 - Are you excited by an ever-changing business landscape?
 - Are you excited by potential industry disruption?



Focus Considerations: Customer Type

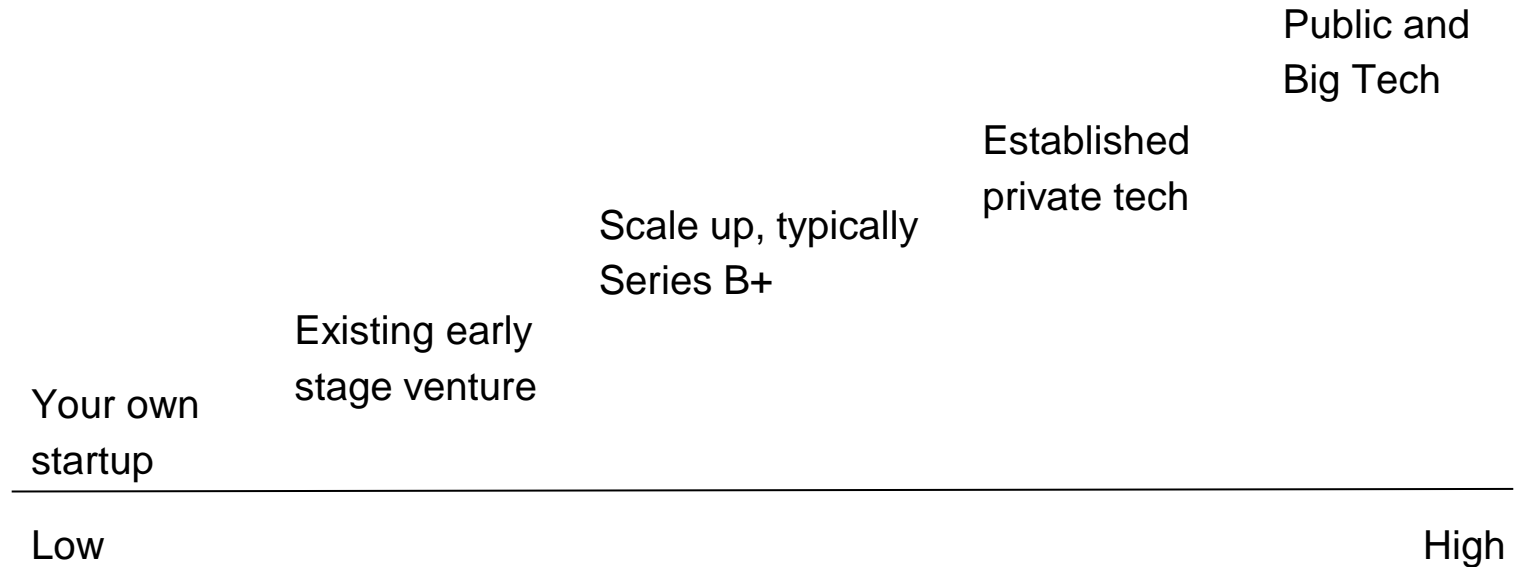
What type of problems would you like to solve?

- Business-to-Consumer (B2C)
 - Focus on consumer needs and wants
 - Lower prices at higher volumes
 - Transactional relationships





- Business-to-Business (B2B)
 - Focus on needs of an organisation
 - Recurring revenue focus
 - Longer sales cycles



Firms by size and maturity



Understanding firms by size

	Early Stage Startups	Scaleups	Established Private Tech	Big Tech
Example				
Employee Range	50 or fewer	50-250	250+	Thousands+
Representative Funding Levels (high variance)	\$100k - \$20MM	\$20MM - \$100MM	\$100MM+	High variance: \$1B - \$2.75T
Sources of Capital	Bootstrapped, Friends/Family, Angels, VC, Crowdfunding, Accel/Incub.	VC, Venture Debt	VC, Private Equity, Other Institutional Investors	Public Markets



Employee Experience

	Early Stage & Scaleups	Established & Big Tech
Connectedness to Vision	High	Medium
Training investment	Varies	High
Progression opportunities	Individual Driven	Individual Driven
Sense of 'Roller Coaster'	High	Low



Hiring in Tech

	Early Stage & Scaleups	Established & Big Tech
Process Predictability	Low	High
Use of Tasks / Tests	Medium	High
Examines Soft Skills	Medium	High
Behavioural Interviews	High	High
Technical Interviews	High	High



Hiring in Tech - Latest News

- The balance of power has shifted back to tech employers
- While a minority of experiences, watch out for software engineering interview processes that feel like a multiple-day work assignment
- For challenging technical interviews, prepare with:
 - [LeetCode](#)
 - [HackerRank](#)



Tech Job Interviews Are Out of Control

Tech companies are famous for coddling their workers, but after mass layoffs the industry's culture has shifted. Engineers say that getting hired can require days of work on unpaid assignments.



Hiring in Tech - Close Look at Amazon

- “For the third straight year, Amazon ranked first on LinkedIn’s Top Companies list”
- What is Amazon looking for?
- What is the Amazon interview process like?



Hiring in Tech - What Amazon Looks For

Amazon hires and regularly evaluates its people with its 16 Leadership Principles in mind:

- Customer Obsession
- Ownership
- Invent and Simplify
- Are Right, A Lot
- Learn and Be Curious
- Hire and Develop the Best
- Insist on the Highest Standards
- Think Big
- Bias for Action
- Frugality
- Earn Trust
- Dive Deep
- Have Backbone; Disagree and Commit
- Deliver Results
- Strive to be Earth's Best Employer
- Success and Scale Bring Broad Responsibility



Hiring in Tech - Amazon Interview Process

- Phone screen: 1 or 2 separate interviews
 - Hiring manager is typically involved in one of the phone screens to confirm a full 'loop' is warranted
- Tests (vary by role, department, geography)
 - Writing sample, as written documents are key to succeeding at Amazon
 - Cognitive assessment
- 'Loop' interviews with 4-5 interviewers (similar process for on-campus process)
 - In-person loops will take place on the same day
 - Hiring manager and others from that department typically involved
 - 'Bar Raiser' from another department is involved to ensure high bar for talent is maintained



Book & Podcast Recommendations

Books

- The Lean Startup (Eric Ries)
- Power Law: Venture Capital and the Art of Disruption (Sebastian Mallaby)
- The Everything Store (Brad Stone)
- Alibaba: The House That Jack Ma Built (Duncan Clark)
- Ahead in the Cloud: The Future of Enterprise IT (Stephen Orban)
- How Google Works (Eric Schmidt)
- Steve Jobs, The Exclusive Biography (Walter Isaacson)

Podcasts

- Daily & Weekly News
 - WSJ Tech News Briefing
 - FT: Tech Tonic
 - Economist: Babbage
- Topical
 - 20VC (The Twenty Minute VC)
 - How I Built This (Guy Raz of NPR)



Q&A



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