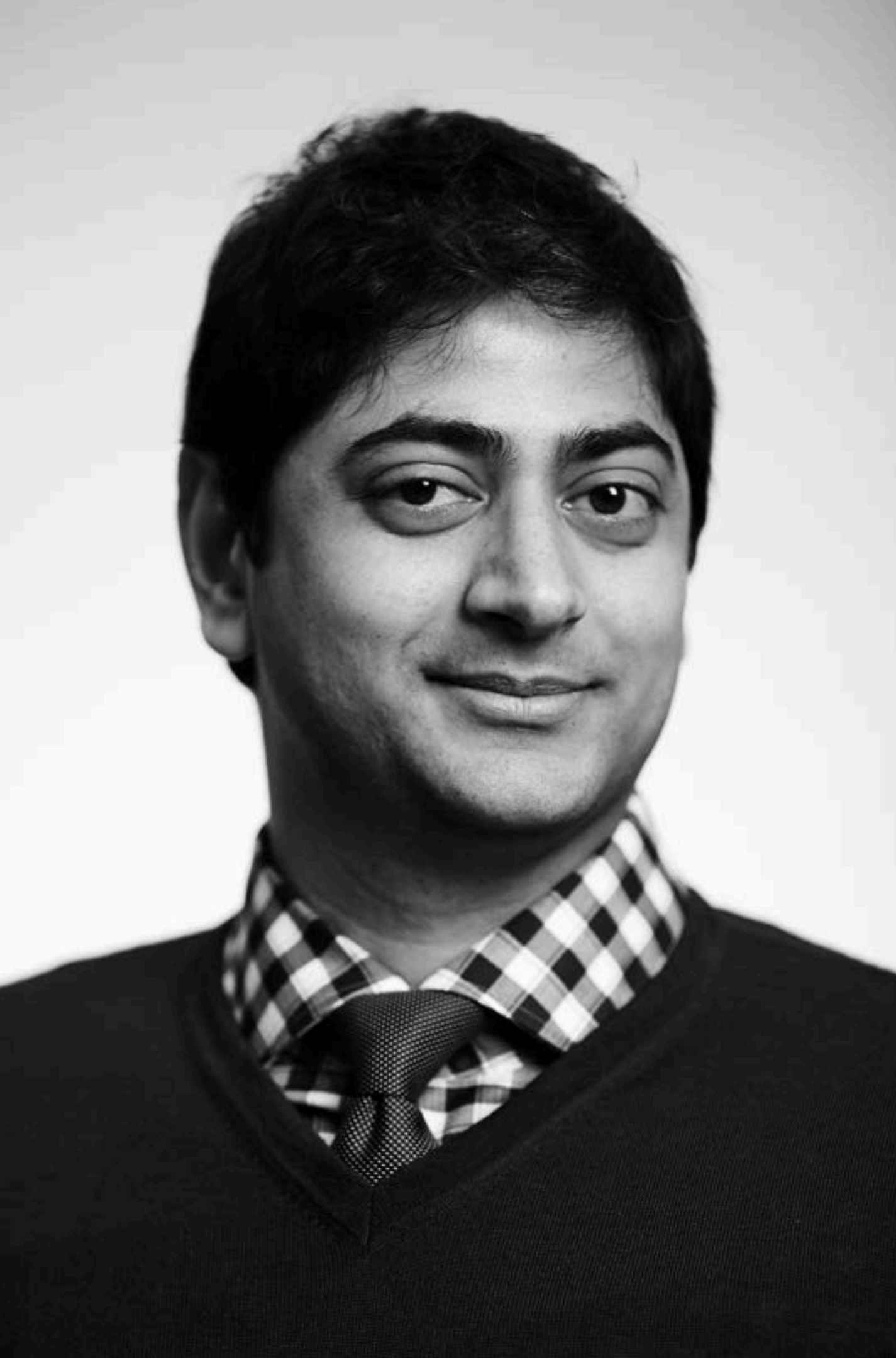


How to Raise VC Financing in Any Market

Sponsored by





Amar Varma

@avarma

Five-time founder, Angel,
LP, previously GP

- Co-founder @ Xtreme Labs
Acquired by Pivotal/VMWare
- Co-founder @ Hatch Labs
Acquired by IAC Interactive Corp
- Co-founder @ Autonomic
Acquired by Ford Motor Company
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David Stein

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Three-time founder, VC

- Co-founder @ Workbrain
Acquired by Infor
- Co-founder @ Rypple
Acquired by Salesforce
- Co-founder @ Leaders Fund

DRATA

 MANTLE

 **matia**

 **ada**

Upwind

CallRail

TOP HAT

 **FLASHPOINT**

 **360insights**

01

Market Reality Check

The Funding Landscape in 2025

Verdi

Seed

\$6.5M

Hyperlume

Seed

\$12.5M

Grey Matter

Seed

\$14.0M

Gumloop

Series A

\$17.0M

Unblocked

Series A

\$20.0M

Optable

Series A

\$20.0M

Blumind

Series A

\$20.0M

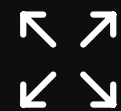


Investors are hyperfocused
on the fundamentals.

What matters more than ever



Focus &
Clarity



Market
Size



Early
Success



Efficiency &
Sustainability

The founder perspective

- Raising now vs. raising in previous cycles
- The one metric that got attention in every market condition
- It's harder now, but not impossible. The bar is higher and clarity matters more than ever

02

What gets a
pitch meeting

What gets a pitch meeting

Secure a referral

if you want a
serious look

Get clear on:

- What you do
- Who you serve
- Your experience
- Why now
- Showcasing traction



If you can't explain
what you do in 2
minutes, you don't
have a clear story.

How to get VCs excited

Show us how a big vision becomes a big outcome.

01

Credible vision to be the #1 company in the space

02

Demonstrate rapid, efficient growth

03

Realistic path to successful exit or IPO

The filter every pitch goes through

This filter separates potential from noise.

 Team

 Timing

 Traction

 TAM

 Spot

DRATA

 ask-ai

 360 insights

Red flags that kill a deal

Your pitch should build conviction, not confusion

- Inability to explain what you do and why you win
- A limited market opportunity
- Unrealistic hockey-stick projections
- Weak grip on metrics and margins
- Unrealistic valuation expectations

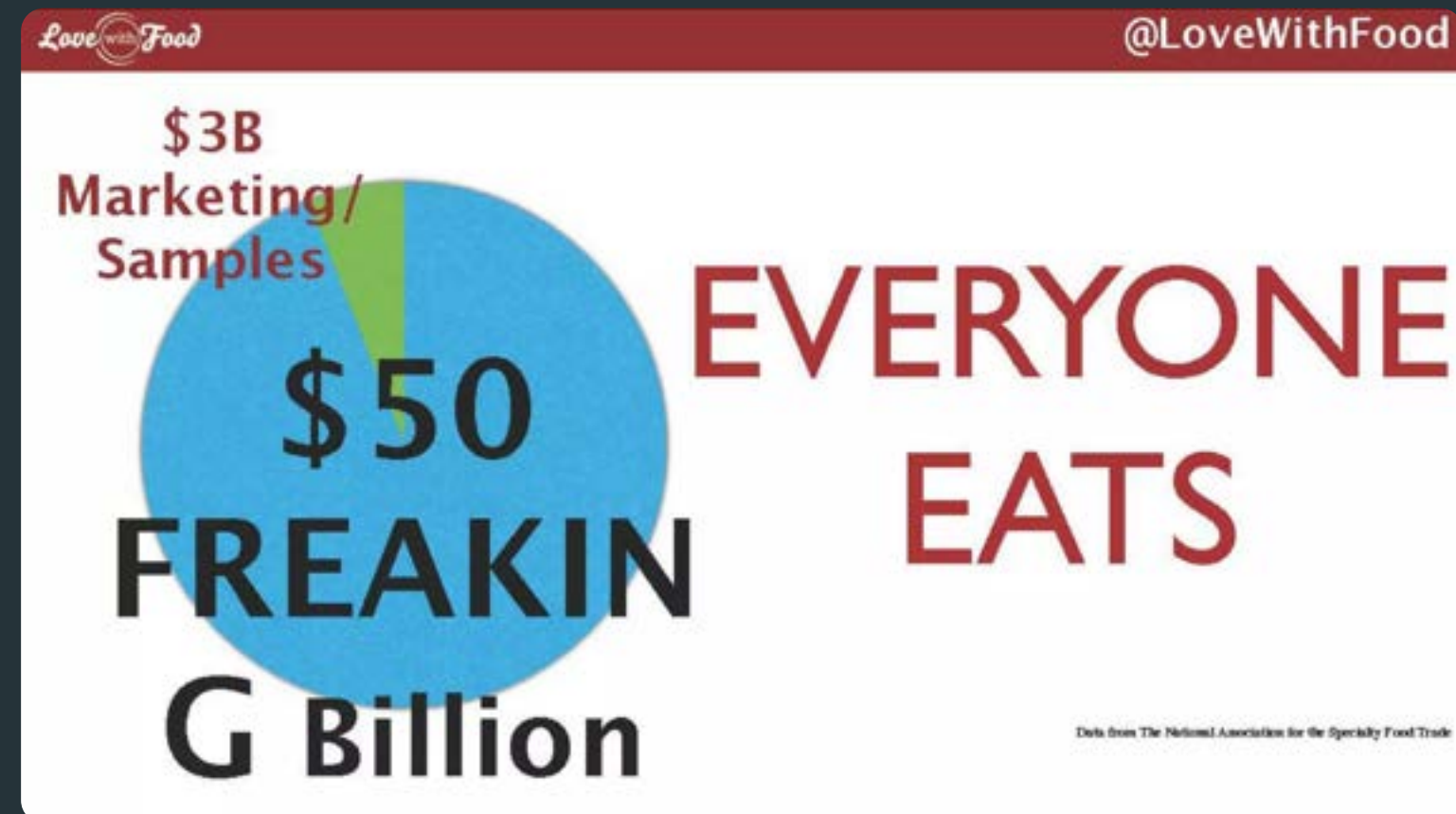
Deconstruction of a pitch
that didn't nail it

Unprofessional presentation

Sources

<https://www.pitchdeckhunt.com/pitch-decks/love-with-food>

<https://bestpitchdeck.com/up-all-night>



Lack of clarity of your purpose

Sources

<https://techcrunch.com/2024/05/10/sample-series-a-pitch-deck-cloudsmith/>

PROBLEM - CAUSE

Modern software is exploding in complexity, and almost all of it is *not controlled by you*.

Developers need to deliver value, faster and further. The only way to achieve this is to depend on developers, software and services outside of your control.

Distributing software at-scale compounds the complexity, and difficulty, and the push to focus on *speed* of delivery is often at the sacrifice of *quality and safety*.

The average number of indirect dependencies per project is 500+; at 5+ contributors per dependency, that is 2,500+ *outsider developers* you don't know.

91% of projects have exploitable, out-of-date or unmaintained dependencies; also, 7 out of 10 lines of source code comes from external sources.

By 2023, 40% of orgs will ship code daily, vs. 3% in 2019. Orgs are shifting to Cloud and DevOps, turning this into a large-scale distribution problem.



Delivering software at-speed without safety, is like *racing in the dark with no seat belt*.

Software delivered without controls is likely to be exploitable, opening it to *supply-chain attacks* on you or others.

Without traceability or visibility, you may not even know it has happened. The impact may be a *total loss of assets or trust*.

Ultimately, the software supply chain is completely broken.

A supply-chain attack on SolarWinds resulted in companies like FireEye being critically compromised by the SUNBURST trojan horse.

Monday.com disclosed that their intellectual property was stolen via a CodeCov supply-chain attack that has affected countless companies.

Everything is distributed; your infrastructure, teams, access & security. Software distribution bottlenecks create software delivery bottlenecks.



SOLUTION - CLOUDSMITH

Cloudsmith is solving the *future of logistics* by evolving the *Package Management* of today.

Today, we are *mission critical*; securely delivering from software supply-chains at-scale and at-speed. The last line of defense.

Tomorrow, we're building a deep understanding of the fabric of all software and dependencies, known as *The Mesh*.


Offering insights and control into *all interconnected supply chains* beyond yours; a worldview of the global Software Bill of Materials.

OBSERVABILITY
A tight feedback loop of supply-chain knowing.

CONTROL
Delivering at-speed with maximum safety/quality.

PERFORMANCE
Highly available, performant, secured & compliant.

CORE ATTRIBUTES OF PACKAGE MANAGEMENT



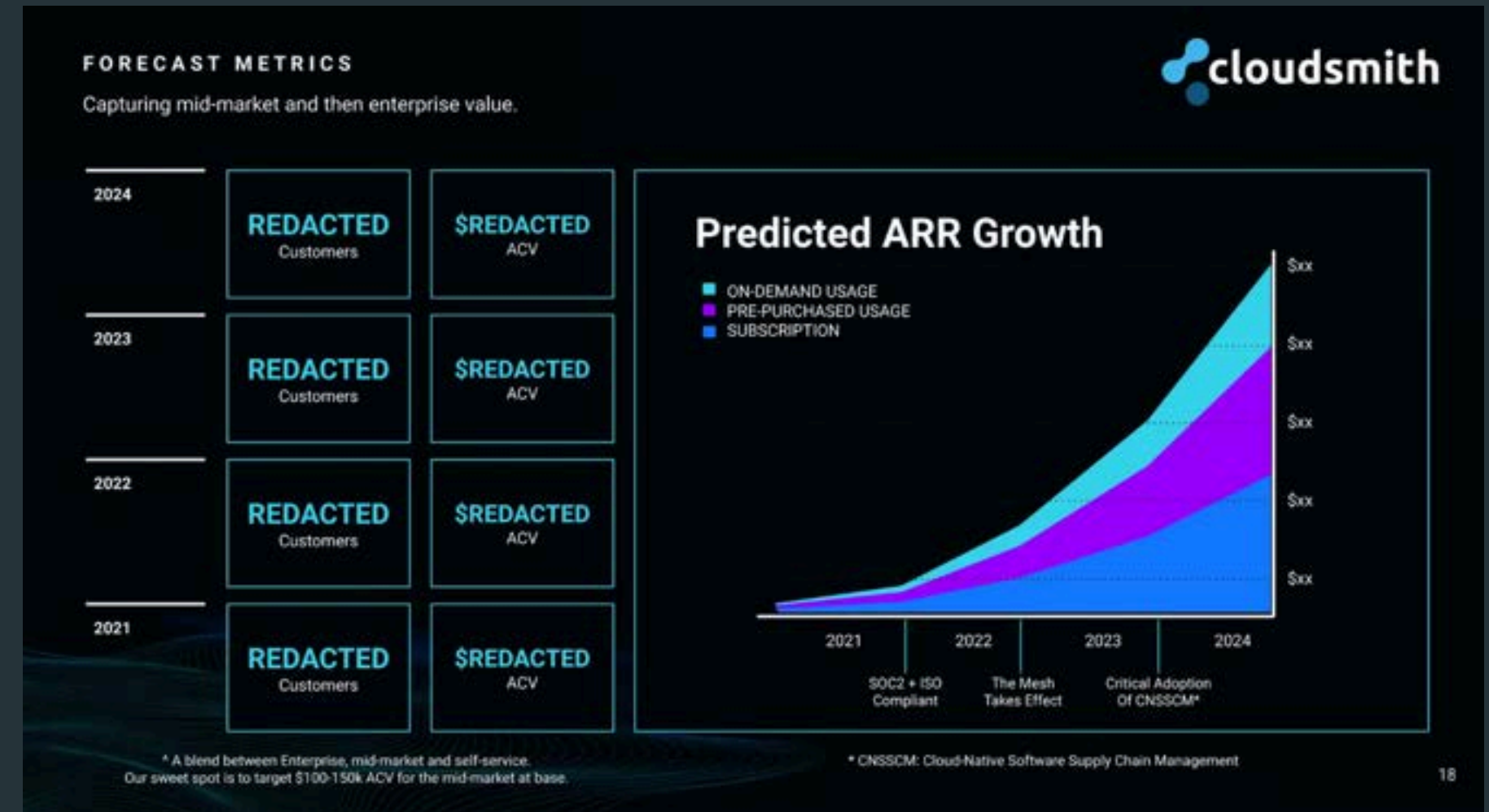
Limited familiarity with your industry, business, and competitors

Sources

<https://techcrunch.com/2024/05/10/sample-series-a-pitch-deck-cloudsmith/>



Limited traction and unrealistic projections






Sources

<https://techcrunch.com/2024/05/10/sample-series-a-pitch-deck-cloudsmith/>

03

The founder perspective

Key ingredients of a successful fundraiser

		
Narrative Clarity	Metrics	Relationship Buiding

Managing the Process

How to run a fundraising process

How to handle investor pushback

Common Missteps

1

Raising too early
or too late

2

Targeting the
wrong investor

3

Weak unit
economics

4

Poor
communication

5

Too optimistic

04

Tactical playbooks

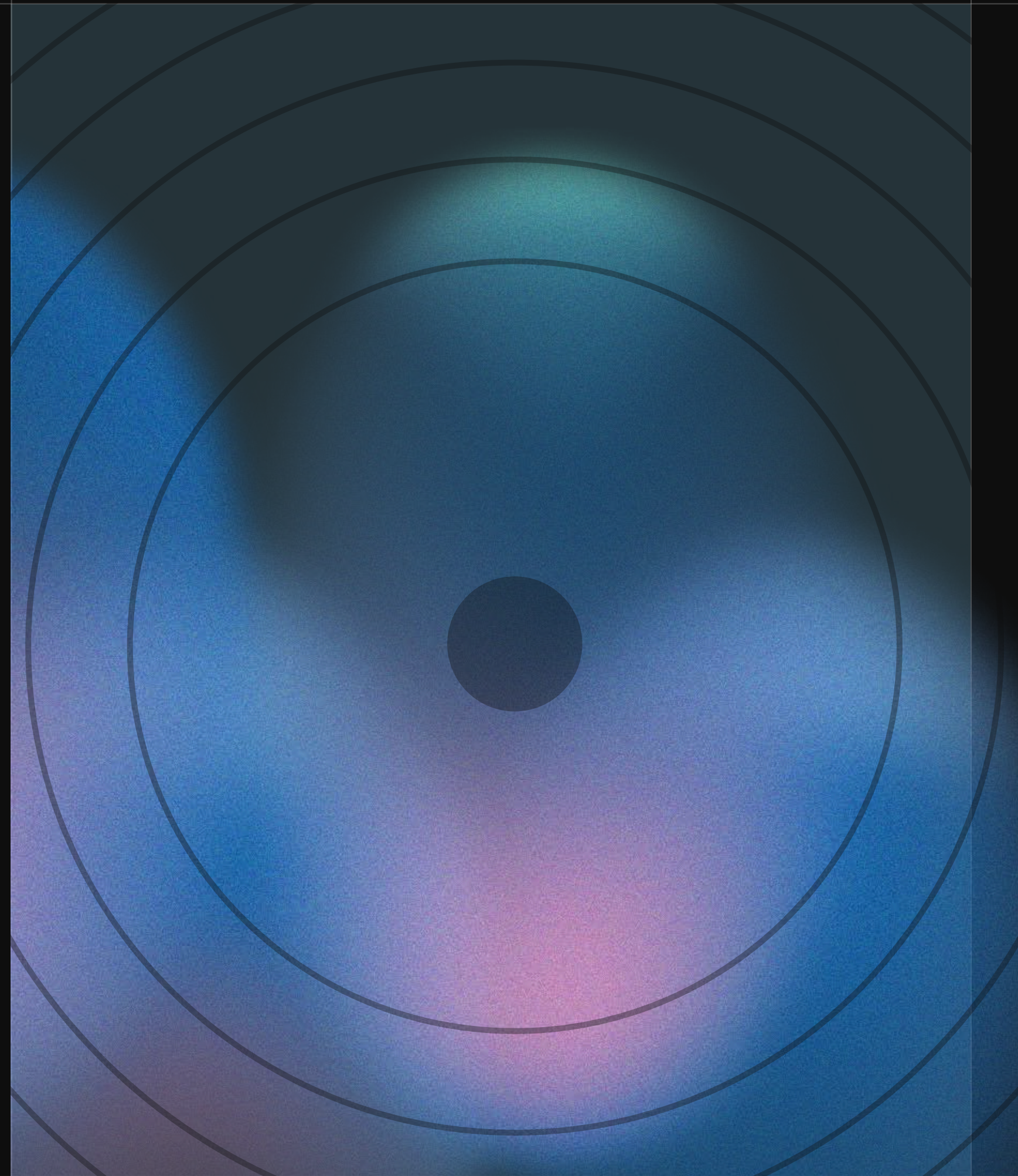
The pre-fundraise checklist

- 1 Stress test the financial model for worst case scenarios
- 2 Prepare references
- 3 Organize your data room
- 4 Demonstrate traction with real numbers



Nailing the meeting

- Get clear on your story
- Focus on this one slide that matters most
- What to focus on during negotiations



Q&A

Thanks for Joining Us

Catch us next time

**Behind the Deal: Everything Founders
Need to Know (But Are Afraid to Ask)**

July 17 (8-10 AM) @ Highline Beta

