Finanshels

CLARITY LIFE · WEBINAR SERIES

THE FOUNDER'S FIELD GUIDE

What Investors Really Expect Before You Raise

Straight-talk on financial readiness, reporting discipline and what actually earns institutional capital — from inside an AED 1 billion government-anchored fund.

IN CONVERSATION

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7 chapters of investor-ready advice · a 4-minute read

Think Finance. Think Finanshels.

Why this guide. Most founders treat fundraising as a finish line — get the money and move on. Dina Khair sees it from the other side of the table, where deals are validated, funded and monitored. Her message is simple: investor readiness is a habit you build long before you pitch. Here are the seven ideas she came back to most.

CHAPTER 01

Readiness is a state, not a stage

A clean data room is the clearest sign your house is in order — no matter how old or big you are.

Being investor-ready doesn't depend on your stage or size. A six-month-old company can be ready to raise while a five-year-old one is nowhere close. It comes down to whether you have a **solid financial foundation**, not how many years are behind you.

It's not about the folders or the structure. A clean, well-organised data room simply signals that you take your numbers seriously — and that you're ready for institutional capital.

CHAPTER 02

The raise is the start, not the finish

Funding isn't the finish line. It's day one of a long relationship with your investor.

Think of it in three parts. Your **story** gets you the money — that's the diligence and the close. Then your **consistency and reporting** get evaluated once you're in. That's what secures your follow-on round and a genuine relationship.

The fundraising admin — organising data, reconciling the cap table, KYC, reporting — isn't busywork you do once. It's the ongoing relationship, and it starts the day the money lands.

CHAPTER 03

Make the story and the numbers match

Impressive top-line growth means nothing if diligence uncovers a different story underneath.

Loose or "creative" definitions always surface. A headline revenue figure that turns out to be a single customer, or revenue booked on signed contracts instead of delivered work, breaks trust the moment it's found.

The deck, the reporting, the quantitative and the qualitative all have to tell the **same story**. Consistency is what keeps you credible after the pitch.

CHAPTER 04

Green flags and red flags

Investors buy the habit of disciplined reporting — not one perfect month.

GREEN FLAGS

+ Monthly reports that arrive **before** you ask for them
+ Lowlights shared as openly as highlights
+ A North Star metric everyone on the team knows

RED FLAGS

– Inconsistency between what you say and what you show
– Late reports and missed updates
– Problems left undisclosed until they're found

Sharing lowlights isn't weakness — it signals a founder who owns reality and knows the next step. It also lets investors do what they're there for: open doors and add value.

CHAPTER 05

Know your numbers, not just your spreadsheet

It's the conversation that wins every time — not the spreadsheet on its own.

No one expects a founder to know double-entry accounting or their balance sheet line by line — that's exactly why partners like Finanshels exist. What investors want is the **context behind the numbers**.

Every founder should be able to speak to the key drivers, the unit economics, the main cost buckets and a North Star metric — instantly, and consistent with the reporting.

> ***"Spreadsheets are important — we never undermine that. But it's the conversation and the story behind the numbers that matter most."***
>
> — Dina Khair, Head of Operations, DFDF

CHAPTER 06

What kills a deal, what only slows it

Three gaps, three very different consequences — know which is which.

Unit economics KILLS THE DEAL	If the economics don't work, there's no viable business to fund. This is what decides whether you're investable at all — it sits on top of everything else.
Bookkeeping SLOWS THE DEAL	A one- or two-month delay drains momentum — the single most important thing when closing a round. Messy books stall execution at the worst time.
Reporting KILLS FOLLOW-ON	The silent one. Weak reporting rarely kills the first raise — but it quietly kills your follow-on funding and your investor references.

CHAPTER 07

Start the habit from day one

It's never too early. It only gets harder and costlier to fix later.

Build a **monthly close** and a simple one-page report — KPIs, P&L, runway and a few lines of commentary — sent 20 to 30 days after each period, with a named owner so investors know who to ask. Don't over-engineer the format; never skip the habit.

Clean infrastructure isn't overhead. It compresses diligence, removes ambiguity, and hands you real pricing and negotiating leverage when you raise.

DINA'S RAPID-FIRE RULES

ONE NUMBER TO KNOW COLD

Your **unit economics** and **North Star metric** — answerable in ten seconds.

ONE HABIT TO START NOW

Monthly reporting, **from day one** — before the business gets complicated.

ONE PIECE OF ADVICE

Dress for the job you want. **Operate as if** you already have the investors you're chasing.

ON AUTOMATION — WHAT TO KEEP HUMAN

Automate the workflows worth automating; DFDF runs much of its operations with AI agents. But some things stay human on purpose — bookkeeping and fund administration act as independent, third-party validation that investors rely on. Identify which streams to automate; keep the ones that earn trust.

Not sure if you're investor-ready?

Finanshels keeps the books clean and the reporting investor-grade for 7,000+ GCC businesses — so when the time comes to raise, you're already dressed for it.

Book a readiness check →