

What Founders Should Ask VCs In Fundraising Meetings?

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Top-performing founders know a key secret: when meeting with VCs, don't just focus on securing their money — focus on learning from them.



Power of AI.. :)

Most VC meetings won't end with a check, but that doesn't mean they're a waste of time. Each meeting is a chance to build your company using the insights you gain from the VC, not just the funding you might receive.

Remember, investors have seen countless startups, invested in many, and have a broad view of the market. That experience is incredibly valuable, and it's right there in front of you. They hear and see things that you might not. This wealth of knowledge is yours to tap into — you just need to ask the right questions.

Yet, many founders make the mistake of only asking, "How long will it take to get a response?"

I've noticed that some founders approach VC meetings as if the investors are above them, rushing through the meeting like it's a rapid-fire round. Don't do that. Approach the meeting with the right mindset: come in as an equal, ready to collaborate and engage in meaningful discussion.

Here are a few of my suggestions for making the most of your VC meetings:

Spend the first part of the meeting explaining what you know about your business — focus on sharing insights, not just pitching. The majority of the time should be used to ask the VC questions and engage in a collaborative dialogue.

Aim for a ratio like this: If you have 10 minutes, explain for 4 and discuss for 6. If you have 30 minutes, explain for 8 and discuss for 22. If you have an hour, explain for 12 minutes and discuss for the rest. Keep a large appendix in your deck for reference during the discussion.

To help founders get into the right mindset, I've pulled (Shared by GP) together a few questions that have been seen in pitch meetings. These are questions every founder should consider asking when meeting with VCs. We're sharing them to encourage founders to start real conversations and build genuine relationships with investors — from the very first meeting. Remember, these relationships could last decades, even if the VC doesn't invest this time.

More than just asking these questions, it's crucial to approach meetings with a mindset focused on learning and finding the right fit between the founder and the VC.

How you phrase things can make a difference. Try asking from the perspective of "this company I've shown you," as that's how the VC views it.

Understanding How Your Company Is Perceived

1. You have a busy schedule and many meetings. What made you want to take this one? What were you hoping to learn?
2. Does my deck accurately reflect the business as I've described it today?
3. How would you describe this business to your partners?
4. What concerns might your partners have when they review this business?
5. How does this company fit within your current portfolio?
6. Is there anything you think I'm underestimating or being overly optimistic about?
7. What are the main risks or barriers to success you see? Any concerns that might lead you not to invest?
8. Based on what I've shared, do you see any patterns (good or bad) from similar businesses?
9. How many companies have you seen targeting the same sector?
10. Have you seen similar businesses succeed or fail recently?
11. How common is this idea? Have you encountered anything like it before?
12. Does this startup remind you of any successful companies? Any analogies that come to mind?
13. Are there companies this startup could naturally partner with now or soon?
14. Is anything in this business aligning with trends you're seeing elsewhere?
15. Now that you've heard more about the business, what sectors would you place it in?
16. Does our TAM (Total Addressable Market) calculation make sense to you?
17. Here's how we calculated TAM — do you see another way to approach it?
18. Could we redefine our market to make it larger, like Airbnb going from home rentals to hotels?
19. What do you think of the niche we're targeting? Is there a sub-segment where you see strong potential?
20. Do you think this could be a billion-dollar company? Why or why not?

21. I'm considering adding a few smaller checks from angels and advisors to this round. Can you think of anyone who would be valuable to advise me, even if you don't invest? (I'm not asking for an introduction.)
22. Besides your firm, who do you think would be the ideal investor for this type of business? Does anyone specific come to mind? (Again, not asking for an introduction.)
23. If you had someone else help you evaluate this company, whose opinion would you trust?
24. I know the chances of you investing are slim, but out of curiosity, who else do you think I should be talking to?
25. What's the main metric that would prove this is a solid business?
26. What traction metrics would make investing a no-brainer? Where do we stand on the proof ladder based on what you know?
27. What's your experience with companies using the distribution channels I'm planning to use? What lessons have you learned from them?
28. If this company is worth \$2B in the future, what path do you think it would have taken to get there?
29. On a scale of 1 to 10, how strong do you think our founder-market or founder-product fit is?
30. Based on our meeting, do I seem like the kind of person who can make this business succeed?
31. How does my team compare to other teams you've invested in?
32. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the team I've built so far?
33. Who would you recommend adding to this team within the next year?
34. What cultural traits do you think are essential for this company's success? Should we be aggressive, careful, highly compliant, rule-breaking, sales-driven, or tech-driven?

The best meetings VCs have with founders are collaborative, not one-sided pitches. They feel like conversations between equals, setting the stage for a potential 7–10-year partnership to build something great.

When you ask VCs about your company, listen to their feedback without becoming defensive. Embracing criticism and overcoming the fear of rejection can make the fundraising process far more valuable.

Consider using some of the questions from this list that resonate with you and will help you gain deeper insights into your business from the VC's perspective.

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