AN OPERATIONS & PROBLEM-SOLVING STUDY FOR GROWING BUSINESSES

The Problems That Keep Founders Up at Night

REAL PROBLEMS | PRACTICAL THINKING | OPERATIONAL SOLUTIONS

BY GANNA KAMEL

When the Founder Becomes the Approval System

Every decision comes back to the founder: Pricing, discounts, refunds, difficult clients, exceptions, team decisions and more
Not necessarily because the team is incapable. Often, they simply don’t know where their authority starts and stops.

The fix?

Build the system and policy early.

- What can the team decide?
- What needs escalation?
- What requires founder approval?

Example:
Within policy → Team decides
Small exception → Team handles within threshold
Beyond the threshold → Escalate
Major commercial impact → Founder decides
The founder stays in control - without becoming the control system.

I Delegated It. So Why Am I Still Doing It?

The task was delegated but the decision wasn't.

So people still ask: “Should I do this?”, “Can I send this?”, “What do you think?”, “Can we make an exception?”, “How to do?”...etc

The fix?

When all critical knowledge or decisions sit with one person, the business becomes vulnerable. If they leave,burn out or get overwhelmed, everything stalls. NEVER let the company rely on one person.
Build the answer once, then make it usable by the team.

SOPs for recurring work, policies for recurring decisions, checklists for quality control, decision guides for common situations, examples for context, escalation paths for exceptions.. etc

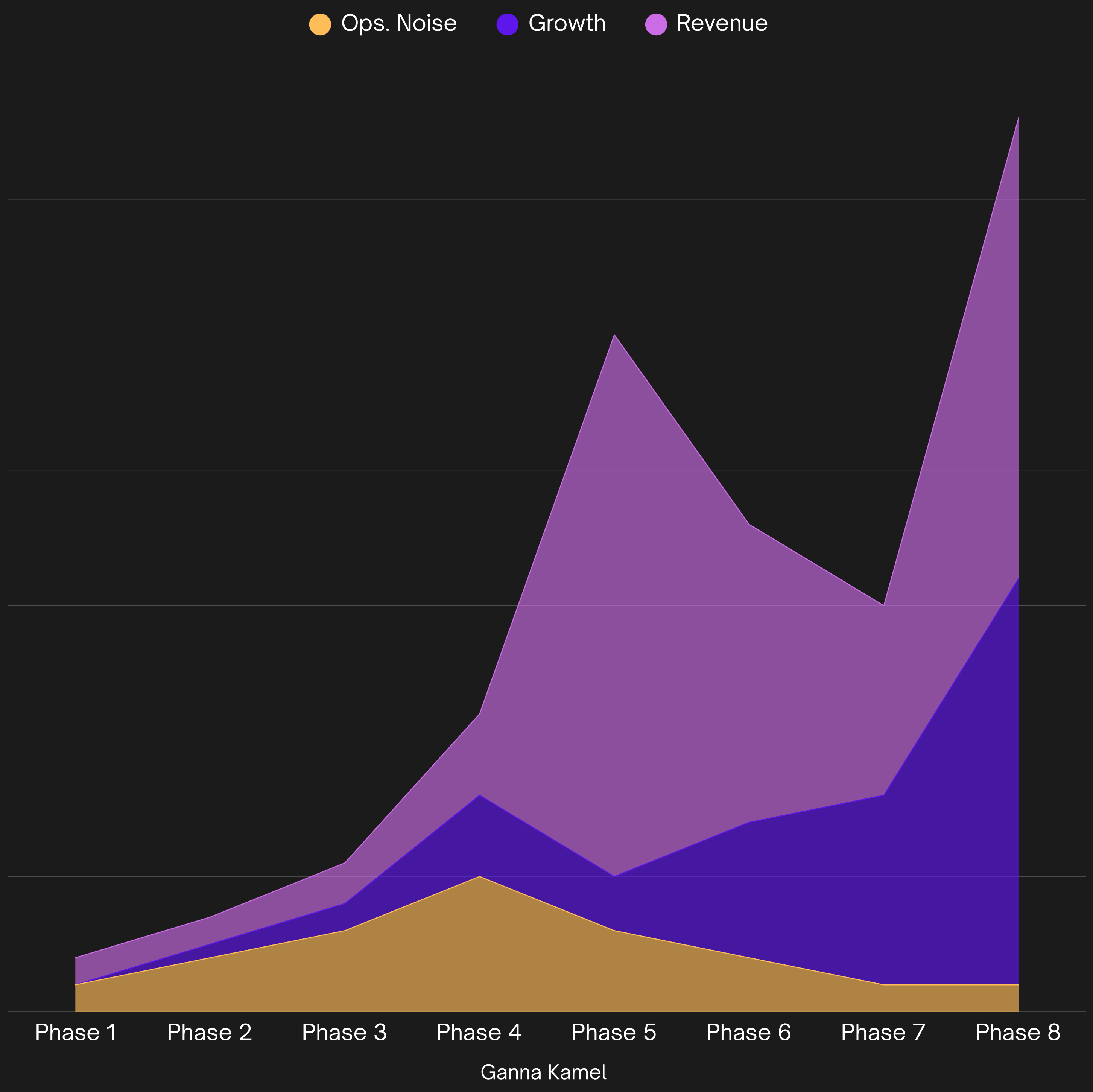
The important part is not just documenting what to do.
It is documenting:

- What good looks like.
- What the team can decide.
- What requires escalation.

Turn knowledge into a company asset instead of keeping it inside someone's head.

I Don't Know What's Going On Until Something Breaks.

The founder doesn't want to micromanage.
But without visibility, they end up checking everything anyway.



The fix?

- **Weekly scorecard:** What is on track?
- **Exception reporting:** What needs attention?
- **Clear KPI ownership:** Who owns the result?
- **Escalation rules:** What actually reaches the founder?

As a founder, you don't need to know everything. You need to know what matters

We’re Growing. Why Does Everything Feel Harder?

The pattern is simple: more clients, more people and more work - but the same processes.

What worked with 5 people starts breaking with 15.
More handoffs, more mistakes, more volume, more exceptions and eventually, a toxic environment.
And the founder starts solving problems that didn’t exist when the company was smaller.

The fix?

I call it “Spider web”
Don't scale the workload before you scale the operating structure.

Look at: Capacity, Ownership, Process, Controls, Communication and performance
Then get the full picture out of it

Then ask yourself before adding more volume:
“If we doubled the business tomorrow, what would break first?”
“What can we do to make the process faster and reduce mistakes?”

The Problems I Keep Coming Back To

Why Did a Small Problem Cost Us So Much?

A refund? A chargeback? A missed follow-up? A pricing exception? A customer complaint? A payment issue? A compensation?

Individually, they look like small incidents. But repeated incidents become revenue leakage.

The fix?

Don't just solve the case. Trace the case.

- What happened?
- Where did it enter the process?
- Why wasn't it caught?
- What information or control was missing?
- Who owns the prevention?
- What changes next time?

Solving the incident is temporary. Solving the reason behind it is operational improvement

If the founder stopped solving the problem personally, what would need to change in the operation?

- Sometimes the answer is a new person.
- Sometimes it's a better process.
- Sometimes it's a clear policy.
- Sometimes it's better information.
- Sometimes it's simply giving someone the authority to decide.

The point is NOT to remove the founder, the point is to stop making the founder the solution to every operational problem.

What Happens If I Disappear for 30 Days?

Employees can take leave when they burn out. But what happens when the founder has to step away?

Can my team work without me? What would stop? Would approvals stop? Would clients wait? Would someone know what to do? Would important decisions be delayed? Would someone know where the critical information is?

Would the operation continue or simply wait for the founder to come back? If too many answers are "NO"

Your business may have grown but the operating system hasn't grown with it.

The fix?

Identify the founder-dependent activities and convert them into:

Ownership| Authority| Process| Documentation| Escalation

Then direct them into trusted people at the company: Co-Founder, COO, Directors, HODs or other trusted leaders.

The real goal of delegation isn't absence, it's continuity

Why I Made This?

I started noticing how many operational problems repeat across different companies, industries, teams, founders and more

And I started asking myself:

- Why is this happening?
- Where is the gap?
- And what would actually fix it?

Over time, I figured out that the patterns are often surprisingly similar.

I would hear about a company struggling with communication, approvals, customer issues, team accountability, processes, or simply the **founder carrying too much of the business themselves.**

So I started writing them down, researching them, looking at how they show up in real businesses, and thinking about what I would change operationally.

This is not meant to be a rulebook or a guide for how every founder should run a company.

It is simply how I think when I see a business problem: here is the problem I keep seeing, here is what I think is causing it, and here is how I would approach fixing it.

- Ganna Kamel