WHAT MAKES YOU TICK?

A founder assessment that goes beyond “I’m creative” and “I’m ambitious.”

12 REAL-WORLD DILEMMAS • 12 ARCHETYPES • YOUR INSTINCTIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE

THIS IS NOT A “PICK YOUR FAVOURITE ADJECTIVE” TEST.

You’ll face situations founders actually deal with: pressure, conflict, money, risk, people, growth and the decisions nobody can make for you. Choose the response closest to what you would **really do first**—not what sounds most impressive.

YOUR NAME		**BUSINESS**	
DATE		**BUSINESS STAGE**	

01 / READ THE SITUATION
Imagine it is happening in your business right now.

02 / PICK ONE
Choose the response closest to your first instinct.

03 / NO SECOND-GUESSING
Don’t choose what a “good founder” should pick.

THE RULE: Pick the closest response, even if none is perfect. One choice per situation.

THE FOUNDER REALITY CHECK

Choose one option per scenario. Think about what you would actually do first.

01 / THE RUNWAY SHRINKS

Revenue has dipped. You have six months of runway, the team is anxious, and a major decision cannot wait. What is your first instinct?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Strip the plan back to what is essential, communicate honestly and protect the business from panic.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Set a hard recovery target, rally everyone around it and push through with disciplined execution.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Talk to the people closest to the work and customers; understand what is breaking before making cuts.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

First protect people from unnecessary harm; make changes transparently and support those affected.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

02 / THE STAR PERFORMER

Your highest performer delivers exceptional results but damages trust, dismisses colleagues and ignores agreed ways of working. What do you do?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Ask whether this person is in the right role or environment; explore a different fit rather than forcing conformity.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Challenge the culture that allows a star performer to operate above the rules.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Address the disrespect directly; the way people feel at work matters as much as the output.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Redesign incentives and team practices so collaboration is rewarded alongside individual results.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

THE FOUNDER REALITY CHECK

Choose one option per scenario. Think about what you would actually do first.

03 / THE COMPETITOR COPIES YOU

A competitor copies your offer, undercuts your price and starts winning customers. What is your strongest response?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Study why customers are switching. Find the evidence behind the competitor's appeal.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Create a step-change in the experience or offer that makes the copied version feel yesterday's news.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Make the brand more memorable and engaging so customers have a reason to choose you beyond price.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Clarify positioning, protect margins and direct resources toward the most defensible advantage.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

04 / THE BIG, RISKY OPPORTUNITY

An opportunity could double the business, but the evidence is incomplete and failure would be expensive. How do you decide?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Set a bold target, define the risks and commit if the team can execute.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Consider how the move affects customers, employees and partners who depend on the business.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Consider the human cost of failure and build protections for those carrying the risk.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Choose the path that preserves what is already working and avoids compromising core values.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

THE FOUNDER REALITY CHECK

Choose one option per scenario. Think about what you would actually do first.

05 / THE CUSTOMER YOU SHOULD FIRE

A large client pays well but repeatedly disrespects your team, pushes unreasonable demands and threatens your standards. What wins?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Refuse to let a powerful customer dictate unhealthy terms; challenge the power imbalance.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Protect the quality and pride of the work; a lucrative relationship should not cheapen it.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Change the service model or scope so the relationship can work without draining the team.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Recognise the account may not fit where the business is going; make room for better-aligned work.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

06 / THE BUSINESS IS STUCK

Your business has become successful, but growth has plateaued. The old playbook no longer creates momentum. What do you reach for?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Imagine a different future for the business and work backwards to make the shift possible.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Bring fresh energy, experimentation and a sense of play back into the work.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Restructure priorities, leadership ownership and operating systems for the next stage.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Diagnose the plateau. Find the constraint using data, customer insight and clear thinking.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

THE FOUNDER REALITY CHECK

Choose one option per scenario. Think about what you would actually do first.

07 / THE HARD FEEDBACK

A trusted colleague tells you that your leadership style is becoming the bottleneck. Your first internal reaction is:

A / YOUR INSTINCT

I need to understand how my behaviour is landing on the people around me.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

If my leadership is hurting people, I have a responsibility to change it.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

I need to make sure I have been fair, clear and true to the values I set.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

I need to own the gap and raise my leadership game.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

08 / THE ETHICAL GREY AREA

A shortcut could increase revenue quickly. It is legal, competitors use it, but it feels misleading to customers. What guides you?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Trust and the relationship with customers matter more than a quick commercial win.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

I would create a more original offer that earns revenue without relying on the shortcut.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

I would rather find another route than get trapped in a practice that limits future choices.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

I will challenge the industry practice instead of accepting that everyone does it.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

THE FOUNDER REALITY CHECK

Choose one option per scenario. Think about what you would actually do first.

09 / THE HIRING DECISION

You can hire one person: a brilliant specialist who works alone, a steady team-builder, or an unconventional high-potential learner. What do you prioritise?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Someone who brings energy, humour and resilience to the everyday.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

A disciplined owner who raises standards and can be trusted with responsibility.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Deep expertise and the ability to think clearly about complex problems.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

A person who sees possibilities and can help others imagine a different future.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

10 / THE MOMENT OF SUCCESS

The business reaches a milestone you once thought was impossible. What feels most rewarding?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Knowing the success has created opportunities and security for the people around us.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Knowing we achieved it without losing our integrity or making things needlessly complicated.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Proving to ourselves that we could do something difficult and deliver.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Celebrating with the people who made it happen and feeling that we belong to something.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

THE FOUNDER REALITY CHECK

Choose one option per scenario. Think about what you would actually do first.

11 / THE LEGACY QUESTION

Imagine someone describing your impact ten years from now. Which statement would matter most to hear?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

They created things that inspired others to make their own mark.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

They showed people there was always another path to take.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

They changed the rules and made the industry rethink itself.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

They made people feel something—and created work with lasting beauty and meaning.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

12 / THE PRESSURE TEST

When everything is moving at once and you are stretched thin, which behaviour are you most likely to fall back on?

A / YOUR INSTINCT

Tighten control, make the calls and bring order to the chaos.

B / YOUR INSTINCT

Analyse, research and make sense of the moving pieces before acting.

C / YOUR INSTINCT

Think in big leaps and search for the breakthrough that changes everything.

D / YOUR INSTINCT

Use humour or optimism to keep the pressure from taking over the room.

MY PICK: A / B / C / D (Circle one)

THE SCOREBOARD

No adding ratings. Just tally the archetype behind each answer you chose.

STEP 1 — FIND YOUR ANSWER For each question, find the letter you circled in this key. Add one tally to that archetype.

Q	A	B	C	D
Q01	Innocent	Hero	Everyman	Caregiver
Q02	Explorer	Outlaw	Lover	Creator
Q03	Sage	Magician	Jester	Ruler
Q04	Hero	Everyman	Caregiver	Innocent
Q05	Outlaw	Lover	Creator	Explorer
Q06	Magician	Jester	Ruler	Sage
Q07	Everyman	Caregiver	Innocent	Hero
Q08	Lover	Creator	Explorer	Outlaw
Q09	Jester	Ruler	Sage	Magician
Q10	Caregiver	Innocent	Hero	Everyman
Q11	Creator	Explorer	Outlaw	Lover
Q12	Ruler	Sage	Magician	Jester

STEP 2 — COUNT YOUR TALLIES Every archetype appears in four scenarios. Your score is out of 4.

ARCHETYPE	TALLY	SCORE /4
Innocent Optimism • integrity • simplicity	_____	_____
Explorer Freedom • independence • discovery	_____	_____
Sage Truth • knowledge • clear thinking	_____	_____
Hero Courage • achievement • mastery	_____	_____
Outlaw Disruption • liberation • challenge	_____	_____
Magician Vision • transformation • possibility	_____	_____
Everyman Belonging • realism • connection	_____	_____
Lover Passion • relationships • beauty	_____	_____
Jester Play • humour • enjoyment	_____	_____
Caregiver Service • protection • nurturing	_____	_____
Creator Originality • imagination • making	_____	_____

Ruler Order • responsibility • excellence	_____	_____

SO, WHO ARE YOU AS A FOUNDER?

Your highest scores point to the instincts you reach for most often. Rank your top three.

01 / PRIMARY ARCHETYPE Your strongest instinct under pressure.	
02 / SECONDARY ARCHETYPE The instinct that adds another layer.	
03 / SUPPORTING ARCHETYPE A further pattern in how you lead.	

WHAT YOUR ARCHETYPE POINTS TO

Innocent	Optimism • integrity • simplicity	**Explorer**	Freedom • independence • discovery
Sage	Truth • knowledge • clear thinking	**Hero**	Courage • achievement • mastery
Outlaw	Disruption • liberation • challenge	**Magician**	Vision • transformation • possibility
Everyman	Belonging • realism • connection	**Lover**	Passion • relationships • beauty
Jester	Play • humour • enjoyment	**Caregiver**	Service • protection • nurturing
Creator	Originality • imagination • making	**Ruler**	Order • responsibility • excellence

A TIE IS NOT A FAILED RESULT. It may mean you draw on two different instincts in equal measure. Look back at the scenarios where each showed up.

THE PART THAT MATTERS MOST.

Your result is a mirror, not a box. Use these prompts to turn the score into something useful.

01	**Which scenario was hardest to answer—and what made it difficult?**
02	**Which answer felt most instinctive, even before you finished reading?**
03	**What do people experience when your strongest instinct is at its best?**
04	**What can go wrong when you overuse that same instinct?**
05	**Which part of your leadership would your team describe differently?**
06	**What is one behaviour you want to keep, and one you want to work on?**

NOTE: Inspired by the 12-archetype framework and its brand application by Margaret Mark and Carol S. Pearson. This is a reflective tool, not an officially validated psychometric assessment.

Now that you've discovered your Founder Archetype,
it's time to uncover your **Brand's Archetype!**

Let's discover the personality that **defines** your brand
and **build** an identity that truly resonates.

Ready to unlock your Brand's true potential?
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