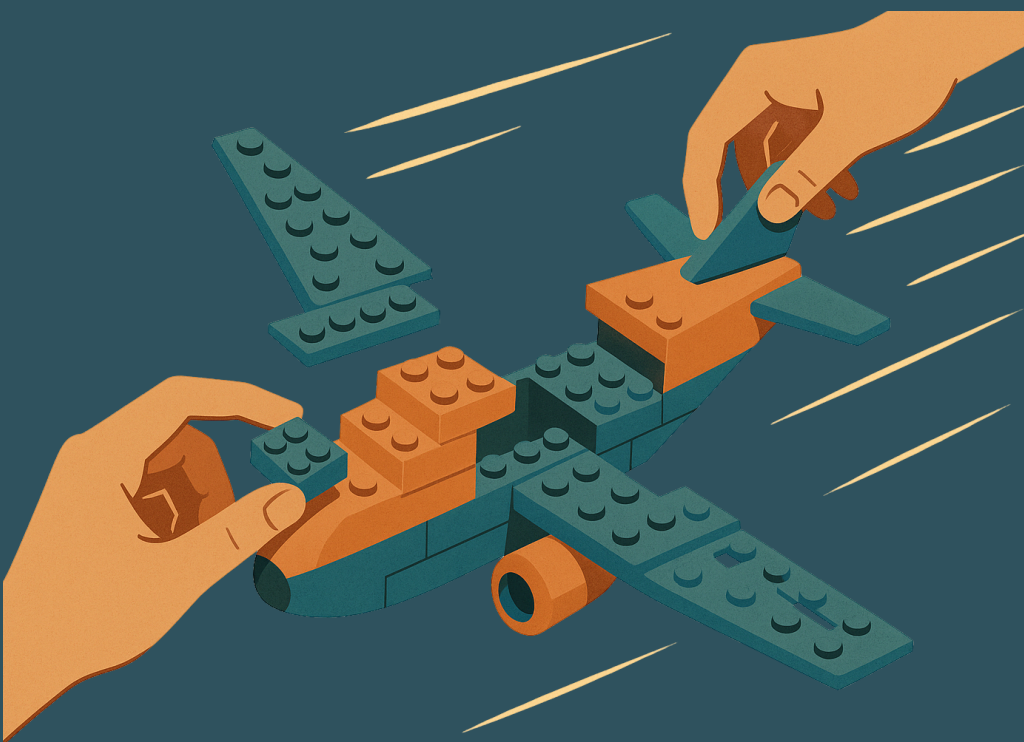


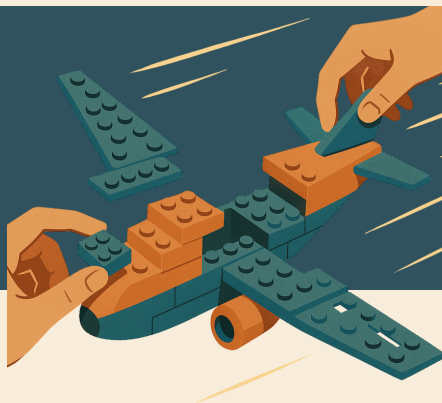
Building A Plane While Flying It

LESSONS FROM A 20-YEAR CAREER JOURNEY
ACROSS BORDERS, TECH, AND TRANSFORMATION



By Louise Radoor Larsen

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WELCOME!

Foreword

If you've ever wondered what it takes to grow a global career in tech, lead teams through chaos, and build businesses across borders, you're in the right place.

I've spent over 20 years navigating business from the inside. From traditional industries like logistics and hospitality to high-growth tech scaleups and global conglomerates, I've been in the room as ideas were formed, teams were built, markets were cracked, and entire companies were transformed. I've learned how to build from zero, how to scale fast, and how to stay steady when things move faster than anyone's ready for.

This isn't a polished list of dos and don'ts. It's a collection of lessons—some hard-won, others full of joy—about what it means to build while flying. I've worked across more than 35 countries, sat in boardrooms with global infrastructure leaders, and hired people across continents. And I've also sold everything to live abroad, started again in new places, and kept building a life that feels aligned with who I am and how I want to exist.

This story is part business, part mindset, part personal journey. If you're a founder, a team leader, a builder, a dreamer, or someone just figuring out what comes next, I hope there's something here that resonates with you. And if there is, reach out. I always enjoy a good conversation.

Let's dive in.

— Louise
Radloor Larsen



CHAPTER ONE

The Making of a Builder

Looking back, I can trace a lot of who I've become to two simple forces: curiosity and ambition. Those two things have taken me through every chapter of my life. Not just in business, but in how I connect with people, how I move through the world, and how I learn.

I was the kind of kid who always wanted to know *why*. Why things worked, why people behaved a certain way, and why one path felt more natural than another. I've always been drawn to puzzles, whether that was through books (the murder mystery kind), debunking the myths of 'it can't be done', or building something from the ground up. That curiosity for life and adventure never left me. It's still what gets me up in the morning.

One of the earliest places I learned about strategy and trust was through horseback riding. Sounds unrelated, but stay with me. When you're doing horse jumping, your brain has to think three steps ahead.

While you're mid-air on one jump, you're already planning how you're going to land to make the next one a success.

It's this beautiful mix of connection, intuition, and planning—much like when building a business. You're partnering with something bigger than yourself, responding in real time, and trying to land right so the next move fits right. Horses also teach you humility. You're small, they're huge, and it's only by earning trust that you move forward together.

CHAPTER ONE: THE MAKING OF A BUILDER

That sense of strategic foresight stayed with me. It taught me how to prepare for what's ahead without losing focus on what's right in front of me. It helped me learn to see around corners, a skill that has served me especially well in fast-moving business environments where the ability to anticipate can be a superpower.

There's also something to be said for birth order, as funny as it sounds. I'm a firstborn, and I absolutely recognize how that shaped me. There's a kind of pressure you feel as the eldest. You take responsibility early. You want to figure things out on your own. You carry expectations that may not be spoken, but they're there. That built a kind of independence in me that became one of my greatest assets.

And then there's the family story. I come from a line of entrepreneurs. My mom's a powerhouse, and so were her parents. I grew up surrounded by people who didn't wait for permission. If something needed to get done, you did it. If you didn't know how, you figured it out. It was normal to work hard, to try things, to build.

*That mindset became part of me. Can do.
Want to. Will do. No idea how yet, but
I'll figure it out.*

As I gained more experience, I started combining that entrepreneurial spirit with real business strategy. I wanted to understand not just how to work hard, but how to work smart. How to build something sustainable. How to grow with purpose.

And that's really where this story begins.



CHAPTER TWO

Before Tech – The Foundation Years

Before I ever worked in tech, I spent more than a decade working in the trenches in more so-called traditional industries. Logistics, hospitality, and manufacturing; businesses that run on tight margins, where performance is measured by what you deliver on the ground. It wasn't glamorous, but it was foundational. It taught me how business actually works.

While I had my very first job at the ripe age of 10, plucking strawberries in the field, my first adult job was in freight forwarding, of all things. International shipping and logistics.

As I graduated from business college, I received an email with an open position for a trainee position as a freight forwarder. The only thing I understood on the job description was 'international'. But that was enough for me to decide that that was a fit for me.

It gave me my first glimpse into how goods move around the world, how processes are built and optimized, and how global trade functions.

I learned quickly that deadlines aren't optional when you're shipping something halfway across the world. You either meet them or lose the profit. That builds a certain kind of discipline that is still with me today.

From there, I pivoted into hospitality and then into manufacturing. Both industries taught me how to deal with people, how to navigate pressure, and how to identify what really drives performance. None of it was theory. It was KPIs, cost structures, workflows, customers, operations, real budgets, and real consequences. I was learning how the pieces of a business fit together, what it takes to create value, and the many pitfalls that can prevent you from reaching your goals.

What's interesting is that during those years, I started to feel a gap. I was learning by doing, and that was powerful, but I wanted the *why* behind the *what*. I wanted to understand the frameworks, models, decision-making logic, and how leaders think, not just how teams execute.

Louise Radoor Larsen

CHAPTER TWO: BEFORE TECH - THE FOUNDATION YEARS

So, I went back to university part-time and studied international leadership and business organization. Four years, alongside full-time work. That graduate diploma program changed everything for me. It gave me the vocabulary and structure for things I'd already been doing instinctively.

You see, it is one thing to understand what moves a business, but it is entirely another to learn and understand the language of business. This is where education of any kind helps you build your presence, confidence, and impact, simply through learning and understanding the language that is being spoken.

It helped me see the deeper patterns in why strategies succeed or fail. It showed me how to lead, not just manage. And it gave me the confidence to trust my ability to scale things beyond where I'd already been.

If I had to sum up what I took from that era, it's this: *businesses succeed when they understand both the system and the people inside it.* You can't just optimize for cost or revenue.

You need to understand value creation at every level, from the shop floor to the boardroom.

I also learned that in every business, people are trying to do their best within the systems they're given. Sometimes the systems are broken. Sometimes the goals are unclear.

Sometimes you have great people delivering poor results simply because no one has connected the dots for them. That's when I realized I could be the dot connector. I could be the one who stepped up and asked, "What's actually going on here? What do we *really* want to achieve?"

And that's how I got introduced to and slightly obsessed with KPIs, not just as metrics, but as stories about where a business is headed.

That obsession? It would become a defining theme in me choosing my career path.

CHAPTER THREE

Sales, Marketing, and the Power of Focus

For most of my career, sales and marketing have been my core business functions. Not because I set out to become an expert in them, but because I learned, over time, that no matter how brilliant your product is, none of it matters if you can't connect that value to the right people in a way that compels them to act.

Sales and marketing are where strategy meets execution. They're how you take an idea and bring it to life in the market. I've seen too many businesses, especially in the startup world, spend all their energy perfecting their product while giving very little thought to who it's actually for, how to reach those people, and what message will resonate with them. The result? Confusion, wasted resources, and sadly a lot of disappointment.

One of the most important lessons I've learned is this:

*If you try to sell to everyone,
you end up selling to no one.*

It sounds obvious, but you'd be amazed at how many companies fall into this trap. They cast a wide net, hoping something will stick, and they end up with diluted messaging, scattered results, and a GTM (go-to-market) strategy that lacks precision.

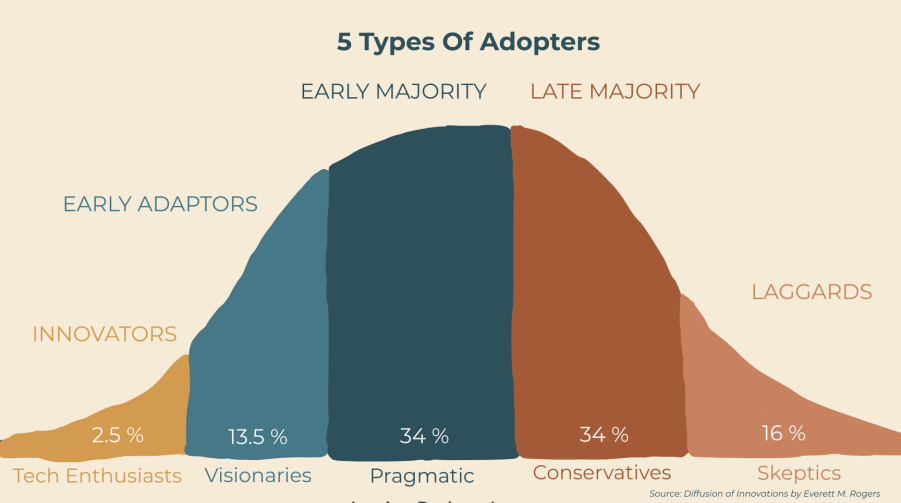
CHAPTER THREE: SALES, MARKETING,
AND THE POWER OF FOCUS

Instead, I always recommend starting narrow. Go deep before you go wide. Identify your core audience, whether that's by industry, job title, problem statement, or company size, and get to know them *intimately*. What do they wake up worried about? What's keeping them from achieving their goals? What's their version of success? And perhaps most importantly, how do *they* talk about it?

That last one matters more than people realize. If your sales and marketing messaging doesn't sound like your customer, they're going to scroll past it, or simply not engage in conversation at all. You have to enter the conversation already happening in their minds. That's where true resonance starts.

This is where psychographics come into play. While many teams spend their time segmenting based on demographics—industry, company size, geography—I encourage them to look at what drives behavior instead. What mindset does your ideal customer have? Are they innovative and risk-taking? Conservative and skeptical? Do they want to be seen as market leaders, or are they trying to protect and stabilize what they've already built?

Psychographics help you understand why people buy, not just who they are on paper. And once you have that insight, your messaging, positioning, and sales approach become significantly more effective. I found a lot of enlightenment on that topic in professor Everett M. Roger's model:



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Leaning into scholarly knowledge like this will help you understand your buyer's motivations and give you the foresight to plan for the next growth stage of your business. Each stage of growth requires something uniquely different from your business structure, people, customers, partners, etc. Being mindful of this from the start and at every stage of your growth journey is a key to long-term success, in my experience.

I've also learned that your first set of customers will shape your business more than you realize. Especially in tech, where early adopters are often not just buyers; they're unofficial advisors, beta testers, and feedback loops all rolled into one. That's why I advise founders and marketers alike to

*choose your first customers as carefully
as they choose you.*

These are the people who will help you refine your positioning, challenge your assumptions, and shape your product-market fit in real time.

Now, let's talk about the relationship between sales and marketing. In theory, they're separate disciplines. In practice, they're deeply intertwined. Marketing sets the stage, creating awareness, nurturing trust, and generating demand. Sales carries the relationship over the finish line, turning interest into action, and conversation into a contract. Marketing opens, Sales closes. When those two functions aren't aligned, you end up with leads that don't convert, messaging that confuses instead of compels, and a team that blames each other instead of solving the problem together.

Having had my early career in sales, it was a fast-track education that taught me so much about what real conversations sound like; What questions people ask, what objections they raise, what hesitations they carry. And I learned that any real conversation wins over the perfect pitch, every time.

Later, when I added marketing to my toolkit, I realized that most good marketing is just sales at scale. It's your best sales rep in written form.

CHAPTER THREE: SALES, MARKETING, AND THE POWER OF FOCUS

That's why I always approach marketing through the lens of what actually helps a prospect, a customer, or a person give an easy yes.

I'll also share something slightly out of the ordinary here: I've always been afraid of the phone and cold calls. I really dislike the idea of picking up the phone and interrupting someone's day. But as you have a job to keep and targets to hit, you find a way. I stopped thinking about it as an interruption and started thinking about it as an opportunity to offer help. My job wasn't to pressure anyone into buying something; it was to make sure they had access to information that could help them solve a real problem.

Becoming a bridge builder between knowledge of how to solve a problem and a person working hard to find a solution to a problem, that's where the true value is unlocked for both parties.

That mindset shift opened the door for me to fully embrace social selling. I started connecting with people through every channel possible, sharing useful content, and opening conversations based on shared interests and business goals. No pitch decks. No pressure. Just value, consistently delivered. And it works really well.

There's a stat I always come back to:

*only 5% of your total
addressable market is in active
buying mode at any given time.*

That means 95% of the people you're targeting aren't ready to purchase just yet*. But if you build a relationship, if you stay top of mind and consistently add value, when they are ready, you're the first person they'll think of. If you have mind share, you have wallet share. This is where brand matters. Not just your visual identity, but how you show up, how consistently you show up, and whether people associate your name with trust, clarity, and usefulness.

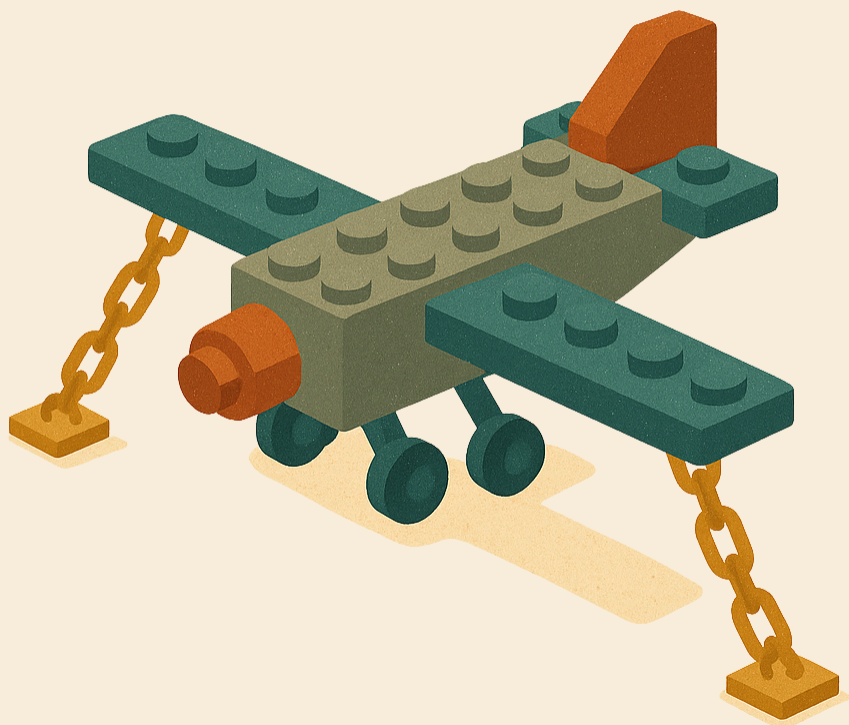
Louise Radoor Larsen

*Source: The 95:5 Rule, John Dawes, Ehrenberg-Bass Institute, 2021

CHAPTER THREE: SALES, MARKETING, AND THE POWER OF FOCUS

A lot of founders ask me, “But how do I know if our sales and marketing are working?” And my answer is this: you’ll know when people start repeating your message back to you. When they say, “We read that article and it sounded exactly like our situation,” or “You really get what we’re going through,” you’ve nailed it. Until then, keep refining. Keep testing. Keep listening.

At the end of the day, sales and marketing are how you breathe life into your business. They’re not just about revenue generation; they’re about connection, positioning, and creating momentum. Get them right, and they become your engine. Get them wrong, and everything else—no matter how brilliant—struggles to take flight.



CHAPTER FOUR

Understanding KPIs and Business Outcomes

Let's talk storytelling with KPIs. Not the kind that live in spreadsheets for the sake of checking boxes, but the kind that drive your business forward.

In every company I've worked with, from startups to global enterprises, KPIs are always a hot topic. And for good reason. They're how we measure progress. How do we know whether the work we're doing is making an impact? Yet, here's the thing I've learned:

Any KPI can help you, and any KPI can hurt you. It all depends on what goal you're aligning it with.

Early in my career, I landed in a situation where a sales and marketing team was about to get made redundant. Budget cuts were looming, and from the outside, it looked like the team wasn't delivering value. The leadership couldn't see the connection between what this team was doing and how it affected the bottom line. And honestly? The KPIs they were tracking didn't help their case.

CHAPTER FOUR: UNDERSTANDING KPIS AND BUSINESS OUTCOMES

But I knew the value was there. It just wasn't being translated into the right language for the business. So, I sat down with the finance team and asked, "What is the average value of a sale. Just give me an estimate number." Then I looked at what the team was doing—optimizing logistics, improving upsell rates, streamlining processes—and I mapped those efforts back to that average sale value and built a visual story around how their work was contributing measurable impact.

And just like that, the narrative changed. Leadership didn't just keep the team. They doubled down, gave it more room to grow what already worked so well, and expanded the strategy to other business units. All because we reframed the way success was being tracked, and told.

That experience stuck with me. KPIs aren't just numbers; they're tools of communication. They should tell a story. If your KPIs don't match your actual business goals, you'll either miss the win or chase the wrong one entirely.

So, how do you know which KPIs to track? The answer isn't one-size-fits-all. It's a process.

You start by asking:

- What's the goal of the business right now? Not the long-term dream, but what are we trying to achieve in the next 6 to 12 months?

Then:

- What skills do we already have in-house?
- Where are the quick wins?
- And what long-term momentum do we need to build towards?

From there, the right KPIs almost reveal themselves. They're not pulled from a template; they're designed in conversation with your strategy.

For me personally, a lot of the KPI frameworks I've built have come from a place of defiance.

I've had plenty of moments where someone informed me, "That's just how we've always done it," or "That can't be measured," or "There's no way to prove that." That's my kryptonite.

CHAPTER FOUR: UNDERSTANDING KPIS AND BUSINESS OUTCOMES

I don't accept business as usual. There are *a/ways* ways to uncover value; you just have to be intentional about how you track it and courageous enough to say, "Let's try a different way."

And here's another thing that is often overlooked:

Every KPI is a trade-off. When you focus on one thing, you're saying no to something else.

You better be crystal clear about what matters most right now, and what you're willing to deprioritize. That level of clarity only comes through honest conversations, collaborations, and strategic alignment across your team.

Whether you're a solo founder talking to yourself in a mirror or you're in a boardroom with ten departments fighting for airtime, the job is the same: get aligned. Then measure what matters.

Because when you get KPIs right, they don't just show your performance. They shape your potential.

CHAPTER FOUR: UNDERSTANDING KPIS AND BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Quick KPI Reset: A Cheat Sheet for Leaders Who Want Clarity

Use this checklist when your KPIs feel disconnected from business outcomes, or when your team is “busy,” but results aren’t moving. This isn’t just about measurement. It’s about alignment, focus, and smart execution.



Anchor to Strategy

- What is the primary business goal for the next 6–12 months? (*e.g. grow revenue, improve retention, expand into new markets*)
- What outcomes actually matter to leadership/board/investors right now?
- Are your current KPIs directly supporting this goal?



Map Activities to Impact

- What key activities or initiatives drive this goal forward?
- Have you defined success for each activity clearly?
- Do your KPIs track impact (results) or just output (effort)?



Spot the Noise

- Which KPIs are being tracked “just because”?
- Are there metrics that look good but don’t move the business forward?
- What reporting could be cut or simplified without losing clarity?



Know the Trade-Offs

- What are you saying yes to—and what are you saying no to?
- Are your KPIs encouraging the right behaviors? Or creating misalignment?
- Where are you over-optimizing one metric at the cost of another?



Test for Buy-In

- Does everyone on your team understand what success looks like?
- Can each person see how their work contributes to key results?
- Do your KPIs tell a story your stakeholders care about?

Final Gut Check: If your team hit every KPI this quarter, would it actually move the business forward? If not, it’s time to recalibrate.

CHAPTER FIVE

International Expansion and the Pace of Tech

There's a before and after in most careers. For me, one of those moments was moving from Denmark to Amsterdam, NL, becoming an expat, and eventually joining a high-growth tech company that was expanding globally. That decision didn't just change the trajectory of my work; it changed how I thought about speed, scale, and what's possible when you fully commit to building your own momentum.

The company was growing fast across international markets, and they needed people who could keep pace, people who understood business, structure, teams, and how to turn complexity into clarity. I wasn't being brought in to build a market from zero, but rather to *contribute meaningfully* to a business already in motion. It was an opportunity to plug into a company with big ambitions, global operations, and a team of incredibly talented people. And I was ready.

That first year was a masterclass in what it means to work at a rocket ship. Everything moved fast. The stakes were high. The leadership team was sharp, and the culture was built around velocity and ownership. I found myself in rooms where decisions were made quickly, and I had to not only keep up but also contribute with clarity and confidence. We weren't just talking about hypergrowth; we were living it.

I loved it.

There's something incredibly energizing about being in an environment where the bar is high and the pace is relentless. You're constantly learning. Constantly stretching. Constantly adapting. And yet, the real magic happens when you realize that even amid the chaos, you can still lead with clarity and purpose.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION AND THE PACE OF TECH

One of the biggest challenges and privileges of that career sprint was hiring and building international teams. We weren't just opening offices; we were laying foundations for future growth in entirely new markets around the world. That meant recruiting people in different time zones, with different cultural contexts, different work expectations, and different ways of communicating. And we had to get it right, fast.

The thing about international expansion is that it forces you to confront your own assumptions. What works in one market won't necessarily work in another. Sales cycles are different. Buyer behavior changes. The way people make decisions, negotiate deals, or even interpret your brand messaging can vary wildly from country to country.

But that's also what makes it exciting.

If you're open to learning, if you come in with curiosity instead of control, international work will make you a better strategist and a better human.

I learned to listen more. To ask better questions. To appreciate nuance. And to adapt not by lowering standards, but by recalibrating how success is defined in different contexts.

One of the more defining moments for me in hiring came when I was reviewing a round of CVs that had somehow already been rejected by the recruiting team. The role was a critical one with global scope and high visibility, and we were building a team that needed to hit the ground running across Asia-Pacific and beyond.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION AND THE PACE OF TECH

The system had already marked the candidate in question as a "no." In fact, the recruiter had formally sent out a rejection notice. On paper, it didn't look like a match for what we'd outlined. But I had a gut feeling that something right was there. I remember thinking, "There's something here. I don't know what it is yet, but I need to talk to this person."

So I dug into the rejected pile of CVs, found the CV, and overrode the initial decision. When I finally spoke to this person, it became immediately clear that this was exactly the kind of mindset I wanted on the team. Strategic. Self-aware. Capable of seeing beyond the job description. And more than anything, someone who could build and grow something real and fast.

That person went on to not only thrive in the company but also played a leading role in building out the entire Asia-Pacific and Japan region. He became a key global player, and he's still with the company today. That hire alone validated so many of my instincts about talent: you have to look beyond the surface. A résumé can't always show you someone's past or present trajectory. But an honest conversation? That can reveal everything.

This experience reinforced something I've always believed, which is;

Great hiring isn't just about matching checkboxes. It's about seeing potential, aligning on values, and trusting your judgment when the system says no, but your gut says yes.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION AND THE PACE OF TECH

Working in a high-growth tech environment also sharpened my thinking around structure and scalability. Startups often fall into two camps: they either under-structure and create chaos, or they over-structure and stifle agility. I learned how to build systems that support scale without slowing things down with clear processes, aligned goals, smart delegation, and regular check-ins to recalibrate. That last one is the most important.

One of the principles I live by is this: don't build for today's problems. Build for the next level of growth. Think about what happens when the team doubles, when the market shifts, when complexity increases. You don't need to have all the answers now, but you need to leave room for growth without burning your team out.

Looking back, that chapter in Amsterdam was a crash course in international business, fast-scaling tech, and what it means to lead through velocity. It taught me how to operate with vision and urgency. How to stay calm in the chaos. And how to keep building, even when the pace feels overwhelming.

Because if you can find your rhythm inside that kind of speed, you can build almost anything.



Louise Radoor Larsen

CHAPTER SIX

Building Teams and Scaling Vision

If there's one thing I've learned after two decades in business, it's this: you can't scale a company unless you scale people. Tools help, and processes matter—but your biggest multiplier, your biggest risk, and your biggest competitive advantage will *always* be your team.

I've had the privilege of building and leading teams across Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific. I've worked in cultures where hierarchy is expected and others where flat structures rule. I've built teams remotely, across time zones, in offices, and during chaos. And through it all, I've seen one truth repeat itself: people don't just work for salaries. They work for vision, progress, and belonging.

But getting there doesn't happen by chance.

Every time I build a team, I start with the business goals. What are we actually trying to achieve, short term, medium term, long term? Then I look at the existing skill sets in-house. What are we great at already? Where are the gaps? What do we need more of, and not just in roles, but in capabilities, in thinking styles, in energy?

Once I have that mapped out, I build the structure around the *vision*. Too many companies start the other way around. They hire based on what's trending, or what the last company did, or they inherit a legacy org chart that no longer fits the current mission. That's how you end up with bloated teams, unclear ownership, and a whole lot of meetings where no one knows who's driving the outcome.

I like to think my approach is more intentional. I create clarity first, then build the team to support that clarity. It's not about headcount—it's about momentum.

CHAPTER SIX: BUILDING TEAMS AND SCALING VISION

When I look at candidates, I'm not just looking for experience, I'm looking for trajectory. Can this person grow fast? Do they learn quickly? Can they make decisions when there isn't a playbook? Are they naturally curious, emotionally intelligent, and able to stay grounded when the pace picks up?

Some of my best hires didn't tick every box on paper. But they had that spark. They were solution-minded, proactive, and brought a fresh perspective. And I trusted myself enough to bet on that potential. As I shared earlier, one of my proudest hiring moments came when I pulled a CV from the rejected pile and gave someone a shot others overlooked. He's now one of the top contributors in the company's APJ region. Another proud hire I did, I knew this person was the exact right fit based on the conversation we had from the reception desk, up the elevator, and into the interview room. She was hired before the interview even officially started. Because when you know what you are looking for, you know how to see it when it comes your way.

The truth is, systems aren't always designed to catch potential. You have to listen for it. You have to see beyond what's printed on the page and ask,

*What could this person become if
given the right conditions to
thrive?*

When you work internationally, everything about team dynamics gets magnified. Communication styles, decision-making processes, expectations around hierarchy, and even how people interpret silence or enthusiasm. All of it shifts depending on where you are.

That's not a barrier, it's a strength. But only if you know how to lead with cultural awareness.

CHAPTER SIX: BUILDING TEAMS AND SCALING VISION

I've learned to ask more questions, slow down where needed, and never assume that how I like to work is how everyone should work. Instead, I focus on creating alignment around shared goals, then give teams the space to reach those goals in ways that feel natural to them.

One tip I always share: over-communicate intent, not just instruction.

*People don't just need to know
what they're doing—they need to
know why it matters.*

Building a high-performing team isn't about control. It's about creating a shared vision, hiring people who believe in it, and giving them the tools, trust, and support to bring it to life.

As a leader, your job is to hold the vision and shape the conditions, then get out of the way enough to let the right people do their best work. That's how you scale. Not just faster, but better.

Let me share with you some of the best practices and worst mistakes I've encountered when building international team.



Louise Radoor Larsen

CHAPTER SIX: BUILDING TEAMS AND SCALING VISION

Some Of The Best Practices I've Learned For Hiring Internationally:

- **Start with the business vision:**
Always reverse-engineer your team design based on what the company needs to achieve next. Don't just fill roles, build capability.
- **Hire for mindset and potential:**
Skills can be taught. Self-awareness, curiosity, and ownership are harder to coach. Prioritize those.
- **Document expectations clearly:**
Use shared tools, recurring check-ins, and public OKRs to create visibility and reduce friction.
- **Invest in onboarding:**
The first 30–90 days are make or break. Help new hires understand not just their role, but how their work fits into the larger ecosystem.
- **Make time for culture building:**
In remote or international teams, relationships *don't* happen by accident. Build in space for informal connection, recognition, and moments of joy.
- **Let people lead:**
If someone's ready to take something and run with it, let them. Trust breeds ownership.
- **Be willing to evolve:**
What works today may not work tomorrow. Revisit your team structure every 6–12 months as goals shift.

Some Painful Mistakes to Avoid When Building International Teams:

- **Hiring before defining the outcome:**
Don't hire because it feels like the next step. Hire because there's a clear objective you need help reaching.
- **Copy-pasting org charts:**
What worked for your last company or your competitor may not serve your vision. Customize.
- **Confusing busyness with value:**
A full calendar doesn't mean someone is delivering impact. Always tie roles back to outcomes.
- **Underestimating cultural nuance:**
If you ignore how people prefer to work or communicate, you'll lose engagement fast.
- **Trying to do everything yourself:**
Leaders who don't delegate become bottlenecks. Build systems that allow you to step back without things falling apart.
- **Letting conflict linger:**
Tension is natural, especially in fast-growth teams. Address it early. Create space for honest conversations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Change, Integration, and the Renovator's Delight

If you've ever worked inside a business during a period of rapid change—whether it's a pivot, a restructure, or an acquisition—you know the feeling: everything feels like it's on the line, all at once. The team is tired, leadership is navigating uncertainty, new targets are landing, and no one's entirely sure what the next quarter will look like. And yet, the work still has to ship.

I've lived through this more than once, on both sides of the equation. I've been part of companies preparing for acquisition, and I've been inside organizations undergoing it. I've seen what good integration looks like, and what happens when communication breaks down. I've sat in strategy meetings where leaders were making the hard calls, and I've stood in front of teams who needed to make sense of the next chapter, fast.

In every one of those moments, I came back to one central truth:

in times of change, clarity is everything.

In high-growth companies, change isn't occasional, it's constant. One moment you're launching a new GTM motion, the next you're hiring globally, restructuring product, rolling out new pricing, or preparing for due diligence. In environments like this, *decision fatigue is real*, and time is always limited. You're managing a long list of strategic priorities while keeping the team grounded through the chaos.

That's why I rely on mental models to create space for clarity.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CHANGE, INTEGRATION, AND THE RENOVATOR'S DELIGHT

One of my favorite frameworks is something I've used again and again in high-pressure leadership moments, especially during transitions. It comes from a TEDx Talk called *Embracing Change* by Jason Clarke, where he introduces two powerful lenses: **The Four Doors** and **The Renovator's Delight**.

Let's start with the Four Doors. This is how I guide leaders, and myself, through change:

1. **What could we do before, and can still do now?**
2. **What couldn't we do before, and still can't do?**
3. **What could we do before, but can't do now?**
4. **What couldn't we do before, but can do now?**

This framework helps calm the chaos. It gives teams language. It creates structure. Most importantly, it opens the door for honest, grounded conversations about where we're really at and what we're actually facing.

In acquisition or integration scenarios, I've used this model to help executives communicate sweeping change in a way that feels human. I've used it to coach teams through difficult announcements. And I've used it to make tough decisions when everything felt like a priority.

But it's the second model, the Renovator's Delight, that really kicks things into gear.

The Renovator's Delight Model

Imagine your business, team, or life, is a house. You're not building it from scratch, you're renovating. So the questions you ask are simple, but powerful:

1. **What do I currently have that I want to keep?**
2. **What do I currently not have that I want to gain?**
3. **What do I currently have that I don't want to keep?**
4. **What do I currently not have that I don't want to gain?**

These four questions form the basis of how I've led teams through acquisitions, restructures, and scaled transformation. Because they force clarity. And they force ownership.

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What's most interesting is the bottom two questions. What do I currently have that I don't want to keep? That's often the hardest part, admitting that something we built or relied on no longer serves the vision. And then: What do I currently not have that I don't want to gain? That one's usually overlooked, but it's where real leadership happens. Knowing what not to bring into your future is just as important as knowing what to pursue.

This mindset has helped me work through integration plans, new org structures, GTM shifts, and hiring priorities during times when everything was moving, fast.

It's easy to think that change management is about plans and timelines. But real transformation is human.

It happens through conversations. Through the ability to make people feel safe even when things are unclear.

When one of the companies I joined had just been acquired, everything changed, quietly at first, and then suddenly. My job wasn't just to deliver. It was to translate. To guide teams through uncertainty. To hold space for the questions people were afraid to ask and to reorient them around what we *could* still control.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CHANGE, INTEGRATION, AND THE RENOVATOR'S DELIGHT

Some Learned Best Practices for Leading Through Change

- **Set context before you make change:**
People resist what they don't understand. Tell them *why*, not just *what*.
- **Use visual frameworks:**
Whether it's Four Doors or Renovator's Delight, a diagram people can latch onto creates calm in chaos.
- **Communicate early, often, and honestly:**
Even when you don't have all the answers. Silence breeds fear.
- **Map decisions to outcomes:**
Keep connecting the change to the larger goal. Progress is the best motivator.
- **Let people contribute:**
Change is easier to embrace when you've had a hand in shaping it.
- **Make space for grieving:**
Integration means loss, too. Let people process and choose what's best for them.

If you want to lead through change, don't just manage the spreadsheet. Manage the humans. Be the kind of leader who builds structure and clarity, not just for efficiency, but for trust.

People will follow trustworthy leaders through the hardest of changes, and they will leave the ones that never understood that change only happens when we're all aligned.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Redesigning Life at a New Growth Stage

There are seasons in life and business when the systems you've built no longer serve where you're going next. The structure, the role, and the routine might have all worked beautifully at one stage. But then something shifts. You grow. Your priorities evolve. And suddenly, what once fit perfectly starts to feel restrictive.

That's where I found myself, right at that pivotal point. I was working in Amsterdam, working with global teams, delivering results I was proud of, and on paper, doing exactly what I had set out to do. But internally, I felt a pull I couldn't ignore. Not dissatisfaction. Not burnout. Just a deep sense that I had outgrown that particular structure.

I began thinking of my life the same way I'd approach scaling a business: if I wanted to continue evolving, I needed to redesign my operating model.

So, I made a bold choice.

I sold my car, my furniture, my stuff. I let go of the physical things I no longer needed. I simplified everything: my wardrobe, my schedule, my attachments. I created space to listen to what was next. Not reactively, but intentionally.

This wasn't about running away from something. It was about creating the capacity to build something new. A new rhythm. A new season. A new stage of life, aligned with who I had become and who I wanted to be next.

Over the years, I've lived in Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, and most recently Portugal, while visiting over 35 countries on this beautiful planet of ours. Each place has added something to my lens, whether it was language, pace, values, or perspective. But this time, it wasn't just about geography. It was about agency. About choosing where and how to live, based on alignment, not obligation.

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What I've learned from moving countries multiple times is that reinvention doesn't happen all at once. Just like a company entering a new market, it starts with research, then experimentation, then strategy. You test what works. You listen. You tweak. And then you commit.

That's what life redesign felt like for me.

It is not a vacation. It is not a sabbatical. It is real life, rebuilt to match the person I've grown into. And that version of me needed more space for creativity, for autonomy, for global impact on my terms.

*There's this idea that if your
career is going well, you
shouldn't rock the boat.*

That if you've achieved a certain level, the next step must be more of the same, just with a bigger title or paycheck. Many of us are brought up with those beliefs and in systems that are supportive of those beliefs.

But that model doesn't account for real transformation. It doesn't leave room for the kind of evolution where you let go of old definitions of success and choose something deeper. Something that fits not just your résumé, but your values, your pace, and your ambitions of today.

I reached a point where I didn't just want to grow professionally, I wanted to expand personally.

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I wanted to work in ways that honored my energy, my creativity, and my global perspective. I wanted to engage with people and businesses who were navigating real growth moments, not just in numbers, but in identity.

With the transformation that new technology is bringing to our industries and workplaces today, I don't think we can afford not to evolve and grow as humans as well. There has to be a balance here.

That shift required not just a new environment, but a new operating model. Fewer meetings. More strategy. More time in flow. More space for thoughtful execution and meaningful conversations with clients who value depth over noise.

When companies go through change, we talk about transformation, reorgs, pivots. But when people go through change, we often reduce it to “quitting” or “starting over.”

What if we reframed that?

What if redesigning your life is actually a strategic move—a restructuring based on data you've been collecting for years?

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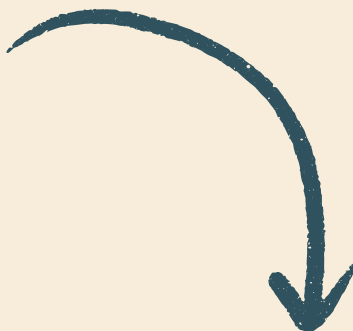
That's how I approached it. I asked myself: What am I really good at? What energizes me? What kind of impact do I want to have next? And what structure, what environment, rhythm, relationships, do I need to make that possible?

Those questions didn't come with quick answers. But they gave me a framework. A way to rebuild.

And I'll be honest.... It wasn't always smooth. You don't rebuild without friction. There are moments of doubt, of discomfort, of identity shift. But just like in business, growth doesn't come from staying comfortable. It comes from listening closely, acting with clarity, and adjusting as you go.

Redesigning your life, whether personally, professionally, or geographically, isn't about blowing everything up. It's about pausing to ask better questions. It's about recognizing when the systems that once supported you now feel too small. And then having the courage to shift into something that matches your next stage.

Go against the grain and let it shape your journey. It's a most fulfilling, rewarding, character-building, and very human experience. And we could sure use many more humans who are brave enough to do so in this world we are living in.



Louise Radoor Larsen

CHAPTER EIGHT: REDESIGNING LIFE AT A NEW GROWTH STAGE

Things to Consider When Entering a New Growth Stage

Here are some guiding questions and considerations that have helped me, and that might support you in your transition:

Question To Ask	Considerations To Make
Are you craving expansion or restoration?	Sometimes we want to grow. Other times, we want to slow down and integrate what we've already learned. Know which season you're in.
What are you no longer willing to compromise on?	This could be time, freedom, values, environment, or energy. Get clear on your new non-negotiables.
What parts of your current system feel outdated?	Just like in business, your operating model may need to evolve. Maybe your schedule, your commute, your goals, or even your identity, needs to shift.
Where do you feel most in flow?	Growth comes from alignment. Pay attention to where you feel energized, focused, and fully yourself. That's data worth acting on.
What are your current constraints, and are they real?	Many of the limits we operate under are inherited, imagined, or simply expired. Challenge them.
Who are you becoming, and what does that version of you need?	Every new chapter of life asks something different from you. You might need different habits, support systems, spaces, or even boundaries.
Are you willing to be a beginner again?	Reinvention requires humility. You might have to unlearn before you build. And that's okay.
Can you hold uncertainty long enough for clarity to emerge?	Transitions aren't tidy. Give yourself time to experiment. Trust the process—even when it feels slow.

Epilogue



Building the Life and Work You Want

If there's one thing I hope you take away from this little story, it's this: you can build a career that feels like you. One that evolves as you do. One that holds ambition and autonomy in the same hand.

You don't have to choose between doing meaningful work and living a meaningful life. You don't have to climb a ladder that leads somewhere you no longer want to go. You don't have to stay in structures that were never designed for how you think, work, or lead.

You get to grow and rebuild on purpose.

Over the last 20+ years, I've worked across industries, scaled teams internationally, launched new markets, led through acquisitions, and delivered strategic transformation inside complex systems. And every chapter has taught me something different, not just about business, but about myself.

There were times when the pace was relentless. Times when I had to fight to be heard. Times when I didn't know what was next. And also, times when the momentum was thrilling, when everything clicked, the vision was clear, the team was aligned, and we *built* something extraordinary together.

Those are the moments I live for. Not the status. Not the resume. The *building*.

And the truth is, you don't need to burn everything down to build something new. You just need to ask better questions. Get clear on what season you're in. And give yourself permission to reimagine what success can look like at *this* stage.

For me, that's taken the shape of strategic consulting, international living, and partnerships with teams who want to build smarter, not just faster. For you, it might look different. And that's the point.

*There's no universal blueprint.
But there is a rhythm. A voice. A
vision. And when you listen to it,
everything starts to align.*

Let's Talk

If something in these pages sparked an idea, a reflection, or a moment of resonance, I'd love to hear from you. Whether you're a founder navigating growth, a leader in transition, or someone standing at the edge of reinvention, you're not alone on this exciting journey.

Feel free to reach out for a conversation, a collaboration, or even just a cup of something and a chat across time zones.

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About The Storyteller

Louise Radoor Larsen is a globally experienced strategist, marketing leader, and business builder with over 20 years of experience working across industries, continents, and company stages. She's led teams through hypergrowth, navigated through mergers and acquisitions, scaled international go-to-market strategies, and guided founders and executives through critical inflection points.

Having lived and worked in Denmark, the Netherlands, the UK, and Portugal, and partnered with clients across more than 35 countries, Louise brings a unique blend of operational clarity, cultural intelligence, and people-first leadership to everything she does.

Louise is the founder of Momentum Marketing, a consultancy focused on helping B2B tech scaleups and transformation-stage businesses align strategy with execution. Her work sits at the intersection of structure and story, helping companies clarify their vision, build high-performing teams, and track what truly matters.

When she's not working, you'll likely find her walking through Lisbon's creative neighborhoods, diving into big conversations, or tinkering with new ways to connect strategy with soul.

You can learn more, reach out for a conversation, or start a collaboration at: louiseradoorlarsen.com



*Everyone you will ever meet
Knows something you don't.*