STAGE 3

Getting help

1 to 4 employees

For the owner with a first few hires, still doing most of the work and now teaching it too. Here are your checks.

YOU ARE HERE

You hired help. Now you have two jobs.

Yours, and checking theirs. You are the only one who knows how anything is done, so every question comes back to you. That is normal at this size, right? I don’t know your business. You do. What I know is what this stage needs written down so the help actually helps.

What you are carrying

Most of the work still, plus teaching it, checking it and paying for it.

What breaks first

There is more work than one person can carry. New hires learn by watching, so they learn half of it. People may be paid informally and payroll taxes handled wrong. Software piles up that nobody uses. A new customer's first week depends on who picks up the phone.

How it sounds

“It’s faster if I just do it myself.”

“They keep asking me the same questions.”

“I hired someone and now I have two jobs: mine and checking theirs.”

“I’m honestly not sure we’re doing payroll right.”

“Nobody else here can quote a job.”

> If two or three of these sound like your week, this is your guide. This is one of the two stages most often rushed. Companies grow past it on the way to the next thing, and the paper never gets written. At thirty people it is still missing, and harder to write, because there are more people to bring along. If you are here now, this is the cheapest time to lay it.

Where this stage sits

A company grows through stages by the number of people it employs. Each stage has one thing that breaks first, and one piece of ground that has to be laid before the next stage can hold. The ground is mostly paper: who does what, how the work is done, how people start, how they are reviewed, who decides what.

STAGE	NAME	PEOPLE	WHAT BREAKS FIRST	THE GROUND TO LAY
2	Doing it all	The owner, with part-time help	Quality rises and falls with your week	A checklist for the core job, paperwork for every helper, business money kept apart
3	**Getting help You are here**	**1 to 4 employees**	**More work than one person can carry**	**The important tasks written down, and the first two weeks for every new hire**
4	Choosing what matters	5 to 9 employees	The work is pulled in every direction	The basic rules, a hiring process, one customer record
5	First managers	10 to 19 employees	Good doers promoted with no training	Managers who know what they own, one service standard, a budget
6	Better, not more	20 to 49 employees	More people have made the work worse	One change at a time, measured performance, an operating rhythm
7	Sorting it out	50 to 99 employees	Every system is overloaded	One home and one owner for people, applicants, customers, money and data
8	A team for each job	100 to 249 employees	No one person can know every part	Specialist roles, one hiring process, a real performance system

Stages 0 and 1 come before steady paying customers and a team, so the stages here start at 2. After stage 8, stage 9 runs from about 250 to 500 people. The counts are employees; at the edge of a band, read the work, not the number.

Stage structure after Alex Hormozi and Leila Hormozi, $100M Scaling Roadmap (acquisition.com). Words and names are Delphine Group's.

WHAT TO FOCUS ON

Eight pages that make the help help

None of this needs new software. Each is a page you write, then use with your team.

> Start with the five procedures. They are what your new hires are missing, and every other page here leans on them. Fix problems the same way: the one customers raise most, then the next, one at a time.

1. **Written procedures for the five tasks that matter most**
   List the tasks that cost the most when they are done wrong. Pick five. For each, write the steps in order, then watch someone else do it from the page and fix what they trip on.
2. **A job description for each role**
   One page per role: what it is for, the main tasks, what good looks like at ninety days, who it answers to. Write it for the role, not for the person in it.
3. **The first two weeks**
   A day-by-day page for a new hire: what they learn, what they do and what you check each day. Run it on the next hire and fix it after.
4. **An onboarding plan for the first ninety days**
   What a new hire should be able to do alone at thirty, sixty and ninety days, and the date you will sit down to check each one.

5 **A weekly one-to-one**
Fifteen minutes, the same time each week, with each person. Three questions: what went well, what got in the way, what do you need from me. Write two lines after each one. This is the start of a review rhythm.

6 **A payroll service and basic books**
Move pay onto a payroll service so deductions and remittances are done properly, and keep the books on a set day each week. If anyone has been paid informally, ask your accountant how to put it right.

7 **A new customer welcome checklist**
What every new customer gets in their first week, in order, whoever picks up the phone.

8 **The runs-without-the-owner list, started**
Write down what would stop if you were gone for one day, and who would cover each item. Fill one gap a month. While you are at it, cancel the software nobody uses.

Your plan

THE PAGE	WHO OWNS IT	DONE BY
Written procedures for the five tasks that matter most		
A job description for each role		
The first two weeks		
An onboarding plan for the first ninety days		
A weekly one-to-one		
A payroll service and basic books		
A new customer welcome checklist		
The runs-without-the-owner list		

Much of this stage's work is also in sales. That is outside Delphine Group's lane, so this guide leaves it out.

SIGNS YOU ARE DOING IT RIGHT

Here are your checks

Have you done these? Tick only what is true today.

- [ ] Each role has a one-page job description.
- [ ] The five tasks that matter most are written down, and someone other than you has done each one from the page.
- [ ] Your next hire has a plan for the first two weeks, day by day, and for the first ninety days.
- [ ] Each person has a fifteen-minute one-to-one with you every week.
- [ ] You check the work instead of redoing it.
- [ ] Everyone is paid through a payroll service, and the books are done on a set day.
- [ ] Every new customer gets the same first week.
- [ ] You have a written list of what would stop if you were gone for a day.
- [ ] You are fixing one problem at a time, the biggest first.
- [ ] Software nobody uses has been cancelled.

If you ticked them all, the ground for the next stage is laid. If not, start at the top. One a week is enough, and the first one does the most.

The one I will do first, and when

HOW YOU KNOW YOU HAVE GRADUATED

You are ready for stage 4 when

- [ ] The tasks that matter most are written down, and the team is trained on them.
- [ ] You check the work instead of redoing it.
- [ ] Payroll and the books are done properly.
- [ ] Problems get fixed one at a time, the biggest first.
- [ ] Every new customer starts the same way.

> One test: by the end of their first two weeks, a new hire does one of the five tasks from the page, without asking you.

WHAT IS NEXT

Stage 4: Choosing what matters

From 5 to 9 employees, and for the first time one layer between you and the front line. The work gets pulled in every direction, and every question about time off and coverage lands on you. The ground that holds it is the basic rules in writing, a hiring process, and one customer record. Your five procedures carry straight into it.

Want this done for your company? Book a free 20-minute call.

https://calendar.app.google/Bc2S9wSpveFS1b6c6

Everything in this guide is yours to use on your own. It is complete enough to do without me. If you would rather have it built for your company, with your team, that is what the call is for. If we're not a fit, I'll tell you and give you the path to get there.

Part of the work is coaching you through the load while the ground goes in. It is leadership coaching, not therapy. If what you are carrying is more than that, I will say so and point you to someone who can help.

> Not sure this is your stage? Take the free stage quiz: **https://tally.so/r/Zj44Ke**

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This guide rests on Delphine Group's stage model, itself a draft. The lines under "How it sounds" are common phrasings, not quotes from anyone. This is general information, not legal, tax or accounting advice; where a page says to ask an accountant or an employment lawyer, do.