STAGE 8

A team for each job

100 to 249 employees

For the leadership of a company where no one person can know every part any more. What holds at this size, and the checks worth running.

YOU ARE HERE

No one person can know it all

The generalists who built the company cannot keep up with what each part now needs, and a culture that held because everyone knew each other is wearing thin. You know this company. What I bring is how companies this size are organized so the parts work together.

What you are carrying

Four layers of management, the culture, a final check on key hires, and complaints the owner hears about last.

What breaks first

No one person can know every part of the business. Generalists cannot keep up. Each recruiter or manager hires a different kind of person and the culture wears thin. Performance slips and complaints rise. Every department wants its own software and nobody owns the requests. Customers get different answers from different teams.

How it sounds

“We used to all know each other. Now I don’t know half the names.”

“Every manager hires a different kind of person.”

“People are complaining more, and I’m the last to hear.”

“Our IT person is drowning.”

“Customers get one answer from sales and another from support.”

“Everyone does a bit of everything and nobody is great at any of it.”

> If two or three of these are true this quarter, this is the guide. The work at this stage is clarity: big jobs split into pieces, each piece with a dedicated owner, and the systems that let them work together.

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	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 You are here**	**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

Nine pieces of ground at this size

In order. Each is a document with an owner, and each assumes the earlier stages' paper exists.

> Start with the hiring process. Every specialist hired without it builds their own way of working, and the culture wears thin one hire at a time.

1. **A job description for every specialist role**
   Split the large jobs into pieces. Each piece gets a role description: what it owns, what it decides, how it is measured, and who it works beside.

2. **One hiring scorecard and selection process for the whole company**
   The same steps and the same standard in every department, with the owner's final check on key hires. Recruiters and managers stop hiring to their own idea of a good fit.

3. **A group onboarding program**
   The first two weeks, run for a group of new people at once, on a set calendar, with the company's beliefs taught in week one.

4. **A performance system**
   The review rhythm, with managers comparing their ratings before they are final, so a rating means the same thing everywhere.

5. **An updated handbook**
   The company's beliefs, conduct, and how to raise a complaint, with what happens after one is raised. Have an employment lawyer review it.

6 **A request process for IT and other internal services**
One way in for every request, a set time to answer, and a written list of what each service will and will not do.

7 **The decision rights matrix, by team**
Each team's decisions, approvals and limits, so a decision is made once, at the right level.

8 **A backup list**
A named second person for every key role, who has done the role for a week or more.

9 **An operating rhythm across four layers**
The meetings and reports for each layer, and how what one layer finds reaches the next within a set time. Complaints included.

Your plan

THE PAGE	WHO OWNS IT	DONE BY
A job description for every specialist role		
One hiring scorecard and selection process for the whole company		
A group onboarding program		
A performance system		
An updated handbook		
A request process for IT and other internal services		
The decision rights matrix		
A backup list		
An operating rhythm across four layers		

This stage also carries sales, product and money work. Those are outside Delphine Group's lane, so this guide leaves them out. One piece of the customer side is in the lane: one clear path for a customer who buys more than one thing, so every team gives the same answer.

SIGNS YOU ARE DOING IT RIGHT

The checks worth running

These are the ones I would run first. Each is a yes or a no.

- [ ] Every specialist role has a written description, and the person in it agrees with it.
- [ ] Every department hires through the same steps, to the same scorecard.
- [ ] New people start in groups, on a set calendar.
- [ ] Managers compare ratings before reviews are final.
- [ ] The handbook says how to raise a complaint, and complaints reach leadership within a set time.
- [ ] Every internal request comes in one way and is answered in a set time.
- [ ] Each team knows which decisions are its own.
- [ ] Every key role has a named second person who has done it.
- [ ] A customer who buys more than one thing gets one answer, whichever team they reach.
- [ ] The company’s beliefs are written, said and repeated.

A no on any line is where to start. Two or more noes in the first four lines usually means the ground from the earlier stages is missing underneath.

The first no to fix, and who owns it

HOW YOU KNOW YOU HAVE GRADUATED

The stage is done when

- [ ] Big jobs are split into pieces, with dedicated people on each.
- [ ] One hiring process runs across the company, with the owner’s final check on key hires.
- [ ] There is a real performance system, and ratings mean the same thing everywhere.
- [ ] New people start in groups.
- [ ] Internal services have a request system with written limits.
- [ ] A customer who buys more than one thing has one clear path.
- [ ] The company’s beliefs are said and repeated.

> One test: pick a key role and take its holder out for two weeks. The named second runs it, and nothing waits for their return.

If this feels harder than it should, look back. A company of 120 often bought the tools of the stage before, an HR system and an applicant tracker, without the paper from the first hires and the first team: the written procedures, the handbook, the scorecard, the first decision rights. The systems are there and the ground is not. It can still be laid at this size; it takes longer, because there are more people to bring along.

WHAT IS NEXT

After this: stage 9

About 250 to 500 people. The owner chairs, and growth comes from a large bet. The parts of it in Delphine Group’s lane: the founder recruits the most senior people personally and patiently, and the company plans its people, from the shape of the organization to planning for departures and a backup for every key role. The capital side of that stage is outside the lane.

If it would help to talk it through, book a free 20-minute call.

https://calendar.app.google/Bc2S9wSpveFS1b6c6

Twenty minutes, on your company as it is now. I've spent eighteen years leading people and operations in a large organization, including HR for several hundred people. If we're not a fit, I'll tell you and give you the path to get there.

> Everything in this guide is yours to use without me. It is complete enough to act on with your own leadership team. If you would rather have it built for your company, with your people, that is what the call is for. Every engagement says how it ends before it starts.

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.