As a veteran of startup companies, I have seen many organizations thrive to a certain point and then get stuck. Our CEO Nicole Sahin refers to this as "death valley," as few companies are able to persevere through that tough time in every startup's life cycle and make it through to the next level. In my experience, the most resilient companies are those with a high ability to get things done and properly prioritize in order to charge through death valley to the other side.

Here are three tips for getting things done and breaking through the startup death valley:

1. Choose which things to get done

This is easier said than done, but startup management teams require discipline to look at the hundreds of things they could do and decide what they must do. This often involves some trade-offs, and a great deal of bravery — like stopping sales for a full quarter in order to strengthen our internal systems and operations for the flood of business we knew was about to come. (Yes, we actually did that at our company.)

With limited resources, you need to focus on the foundation of your business to make sure it's solid enough to get you through your death valley. In our case, we not only gained the respect of our existing and potential customers, but we also landed the number six spot on the Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing companies in America that same year.

The best way to determine what things must absolutely get done is to align your tasks/projects with your corporate goals. What are you trying to achieve, at a high level, for the next 6-12 months? If tasks/projects don't clearly fit into supporting one of those specific goals, then take them off your list. The management team must be ruthless about this — it is easy to say, "Well, we will just do this one thing because it should be quick." You and your team will lose focus, and all those little "one things" will add up.

2. Decide the order

I look at almost everything like a puzzle: a group of pieces that need to fit together and be

put together in the right order. Once you have decided the things you must get done, look at the interdependencies and the logical order for them to be implemented.

One way to prioritize is to look at the basic things you need to run the business. For example, at one of my previous companies, I realized the need for accessible data when I asked which clients were operating in China — and nobody could easily answer that question. So we prioritized the building of a simple database that housed our clients and their countries of operation in a centralized place. This helped our account teams better manage our client accounts, eliminated a lot of inefficient communication internally and allowed our management team to run the business with far better insight. That's a lot of impact for a relatively small investment of time and money, and was then the basis for sales and marketing efforts with a more customized approach — we couldn't have done that without having the data first.

3. Get it done

I believe there are three main elements for getting things done: technology, people and process. Each startup needs to find its own specific mix based on its stage, industry, culture, etc. — because this is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. If there was one magic answer, everyone would be doing it. The key is finding the right level of each for your company at this specific point in time, while still looking ahead so you are building each of these to allow for growth.

• Technology: Find technology solutions that are going to make things more efficient for your teams to work and/or make a better experience for your clients (the best solutions are the ones that accomplish both). Also, look for technology that is going to scale with you — system transitions are hard, so invest in systems that will keep up with your growth.

• People: When hiring new employees, look for utility players who can serve multiple roles as you grow. In my experience, this can help companies navigate death valley in ways that can't be predicted, and it helps these players grow professionally by giving them exposure to a variety of tasks.

• Process: Finally, aim to create the right amount of process to tie this together. Be sure that this fits your company's culture and the work style of your team. A good process lays out clear responsibilities for team members and maps a communication flow that gets the right information to the right people at the right time.

Pulling together your technology, your team and the processes to make your startup run like a well-oiled machine is how you get things done, keep your company going through your own death valley and continue to grow for years to come.

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