# Venture capitalists share advice with small enterprises

In September, SiMODISA did a quick poll on the top ten lessons venture investors in South Africa would love to share with entrepreneurs about scaling up.

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That's the stage after you have product-market fit and a scalable business model and now you're pushing for growth. Many of these venture capitalists (VCs) are entrepreneurs themselves, or were once entrepreneurs and are now VCs. So many of these insights come from people who've seen it from both the inside and the outside.

'Pinged' VCs include 4Di, Edge Growth, Grofin, Hasso Plattner Ventures, IDC's VC team, Invenfin, Knife Capital, Sanari Capital, and Vumela.

Here's a Top 12 the VC community would love to share with entrepreneurs:

1. Make building an A-team your first priority.

2. Clearly answer the simple question of "What do you do?" Value proposition.

3. If you're not an enterprise leader or scale-up CEO, get one. Take a role in the business that fits your strengths.

4. Focus on the customer and not the product iterations. Great companies are built from the departure point of the customer's psychology.

5. Once you have something scalable, shift attention from finding to executing. Stop the thousands of experiments. Focus on building a great company.

6. Build for exit. Even if you don't plan to exit, it results in building a better company with more options.

7. Openly disclose relevant information - good and bad. Non-disclosure will work out badly.

8. Don't scale mess. Be clear on what you're scaling (what market, what offering, what business model), get it right first, and then focus on scaling that.

9. Build a numbers-driven, results-driven performance culture. Have priorities, have scorecards, track execution, reward success.

10. Be investable. Have your house in order. It's too late to start when you need capital quickly.

11. Hire heads of marketing and sales who know how to make marketing and sales scalable, systematised functions that are managed like fine-tuned engines.

12. Systematise. Think 'how will we do this at scale - 10,000 times more than we do it today?' Figure out the systematic approach, and then build it that way.