GROWTH CATALYST COHORT 36 · SESSION 03

Fundraising the Right Way

Warm paths, real numbers, and the ask most founders get wrong

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Founder · Boxsy

September 3, 2026 | 11:00 AM | Microsoft Teams

Today's Session

60 minutes, four moves

:00

5 MIN

Welcome & Session 02 Check-In

One commitment per founder — did you do it? What moved in your pipeline since Dan Tyre?

:05

35 MIN

Fundraising the Right Way

Investor psychology, pipeline building, the ask, and raising for Boxsy in real time.

:40

15 MIN

Hot Seat: 2-3 Founders

Volunteer your investor list, ask, and biggest objection. Live feedback from Elisabeth.

:55

5 MIN

Commitments & Close

One action per founder before Session 03 — Financial Competency with Angela Pierce (Sep 17).

BEFORE WE START

Session 03 Check-In

- One commitment from each founder - did you do it?
- What moved in your pipeline since Dan Tyre's session?

Quick round - no slides needed. Keep it moving!

35 MINUTES

Fundraising the Right Way

What investors look for · Building your pipeline · Fixing your ask · Lessons from raising for Boxsy

What Investors Actually Look For

Pre-seed and seed - the signals that matter before a single dollar moves

Founder-market fit

Why you, why this problem, why now.

Evidence of pull

Signups, usage, revenue, or waitlists - proof someone wants this beyond you.

A coachable team

How you take feedback and move — investors watch this in the room.

A believable path to scale

Not a perfect plan - a credible one, with real milestones tied to the raise.

What Disqualifies You - Before the Pitch

Most founders lose the meeting before it starts. Here's where.

- No warm path in - a cold inbound with no context
- Can't state the ask in one sentence (amount + use of funds)
- No evidence anyone outside the founder's circle wants this
- Defensive or vague answers to basic diligence questions

Building Your Investor Pipeline

Warm paths first - always. Priority beats volume.

TIER 1

Warm intros

People who already trust the intro-maker. Highest response, highest quality meetings.

TIER 2

Thesis-fit, one-degree

Right stage & sector, reachable through a shared connection or community.

TIER 3

Cold outbound

Last resort, not first move. Use only once Tiers 1–2 are worked.

The One Thing Founders Get Wrong About Their Ask

THE PROBLEM

A vague, moving-target number

Founders ask for “whatever we can raise” instead of a specific number tied to specific milestones. It signals founders haven't done the planning work and it makes the investor do the math on risk themselves.

THE FIX

A number tied to milestones

State the amount, the runway it buys, and the 2–3 milestones it gets you to before the next raise. “$750K for 14 months of runway to hit $30K MRR and 2 enterprise pilots” beats “we're raising a seed round” every time.

FROM THE FOUNDER'S SEAT

Raising for Boxsy while building it

What changed when I had to sell the vision and ship the product in the same week and what she'd tell her earlier self about pacing the raise against real product milestones.

Build-vs—sell-vs-raise tension and how you manage it. What signals to look out for so you do not waste your precious time.

15 MINUTES

Hot Seat: 2-3 Founders

Volunteer your current investor list, your ask, and your biggest objection. Elisabeth gives live, specific feedback.

Target investor list

Even a rough one — names or firm types.

Current ask

Dollar amount + exactly what it's for.

Your objection

The one you keep hearing back from investors.

Bring the messy, unresolved version.

CLOSING THE SESSION

Commitments & Close

One action, before Session 04.

Next up - Session 04

Financial Competency with Angela Pierce

September 17, 2026