

Startup CEO Resource Guide

Curated courses, frameworks, books, and podcasts for founders and executives building in biotech, pharma, and the life sciences

Courses

- [RA Capital University](#): foundational biotech investing & drug development coursework from a leading life sciences investor.
- [Coursera: Introduction to the Pharmaceutical Industry](#)
- [LinkedIn Learning: Building Business Acumen for Aspiring Professionals](#)
- [LinkedIn Learning: Workplace Essentials for Early Career Professionals](#)
- [Jim Wells & Michelle Arkin \(UCSF\), Part 1: Introduction to Drug Discovery](#)
- [Jim Wells & Michelle Arkin \(UCSF\), Part 2: Introduction to Drug Discovery](#)
- [MassBio: Intro to Biotech, Business & Science](#)
- [YC Startup School \(Y Combinator\)](#): free, self-paced curriculum on fundraising, product, growth, and hiring from the accelerator behind the most-funded founder network.
- [Coursera: Venture Capital & Private Equity \(Wharton\)](#): the investor-side view of deal structuring, useful for CEOs preparing to raise.
- [Biotech Startup School- Free Online Course](#)
- [Building Biotech Businesses Masterclass with Ulf Grawunder](#)

Frameworks, Blogs & Guides

Regulatory & Industry

- [FDA Learning Portal: Drug and Device Approvals](#)
- [FDA Learning Portal for Students, Academia, and Industry](#)
- [Thomson Reuters: 10 Ways to Make the Most of Your Internship](#)

Fundraising, Pitch Decks & Deal Terms

- [Carta Learn: Portfolio Company Structures](#)
- [Carta Learn: Pitch Deck Guide](#): a free template download plus a slide-by-slide walkthrough of what belongs in an investor deck.
- [Sequoia Capital's 10-Slide Pitch Deck Framework](#): widely referenced structure (problem, solution, market size, team, financials) that shaped how most modern decks are built.

- [**NVCA Model Legal Documents**](#): the industry-standard term sheet, stock purchase agreement, and investor rights agreement templates used in most U.S. venture financings.
- [**Mercury: Understanding the Venture Capital Term Sheet**](#): simple breakdown of liquidation preferences, board composition, protective provisions, and what's negotiable.
- [**Wall Street Prep: The Ultimate Guide to Cap Tables**](#): how ownership and dilution work across multiple rounds of financing.
- [**Rho: Guide to Active Biotech VC Firms**](#): a curated list of life-sciences-focused venture investors for founders mapping their raise.

Leadership & Operating Knowledge

- [**First Round Review**](#): a long-running library of tactical essays from operators and investors on the practical mechanics of running an early-stage company.
- [**a16z Content Hub \(Andreessen Horowitz\)**](#): VC-authored frameworks on fundraising, go-to-market, and scaling.
- [**Y Combinator Blog**](#): startup advice and essays from the accelerator's partners and founder network.
- [**Paul Graham: Essays**](#): foundational writing on how startups succeed or fail; more mindset than tactics, worth returning to when stuck.
- [**A Smart Bear \(Jason Cohen\)**](#): deep, systems-level thinking on product, positioning, and business fundamentals.
- [**Stratechery \(Ben Thompson\)**](#): sharp strategic analysis of technology and business models; useful for sharpening competitive thinking.
- [**Lenny's Newsletter**](#): product, growth, and career insights from operators, especially useful once a company has users and needs to scale.
- [**Not Boring \(Packy McCormick\)**](#): accessible essays connecting business strategy, technology, and market trends.

Books

- [**The Billion Dollar Molecule by Barry Werth**](#)
- [**Genentech: The Beginnings of Biotech by Sally Smith Hughes**](#)
- [**Venture Deals by Brad Feld & Jason Mendelson**](#): considered the standard founder's primer on how VC term sheets and deal mechanics actually work.
- [**The Lean Startup by Eric Ries**](#): the validated-learning framework for testing a business idea before scaling it.
- [**Zero to One by Peter Thiel**](#): on building something genuinely new rather than competing in an existing market.

- [**The Hard Thing About Hard Things by Ben Horowitz**](#): the operational and psychological realities of running a company.
- [**The Outsiders by William N. Thorndike Jr.**](#): eight unconventional CEOs and how disciplined capital allocation drove outsized returns.
- [**Financial Intelligence by Karen Berman & Joe Knight**](#): a jargon-free guide to reading and using financial statements, useful for non-finance CEOs.
- [**Atomic Habits by James Clear**](#): practical systems for building the small, consistent habits that compound into leadership effectiveness.

Podcasts

- [**It's Bigger Than Biotech**](#)
- [**The Readout Loud**](#)
- [**Business of Biotech**](#)
- [**Acquired**](#): narrative deep dives, hosted by Ben Gilbert and David Rosenthal, into how major companies were built and financed.
- [**20VC \(The Twenty Minute VC\)**](#): hosted by Harry Stebbings; frequent investor interviews on what VCs look for in founders and deals.
- [**Masters of Scale**](#): hosted by Reid Hoffman; scale-stage frameworks on hiring, growth, and leadership once a company has traction.
- [**Lenny's Podcast**](#): hosted by Lenny Rachitsky; specific, tactical conversations on product, growth, and career decisions.

Chameleon Firm Resources

- [**Chameleon Strategies Consulting — Website & Blog**](#): HR and executive advisory insights for biotech, pharma, and life sciences leaders. See the Insights tab for our 2026 HR Wellness Foundation Series by Sophia Fulton.
- [**Chameleon Law Group — Website & Blog**](#): employment law guidance and compliance updates for growth-stage life sciences companies. See the Blog tab for our 2026 The Executive Playbook: Leading Her Way series by Sophia Fulton.

Biotech Finances

- [**How To Build a Startup Budget: A Simple Guide for Founders**](#)
- [**A Founder's Guide to Data-Driven Budgeting in Biotech**](#)
- [**Biotech Startup Budget Planning: Milestone-Based R&D, Lab Operations, and Clinical Trial Costs**](#)

- [**Biotech Startup Budget & Projection Guide 2025: Complete Framework for Founders**](#)
- [**The Founder's Guide to Creating an Accurate Biotech Cash-Flow Forecast**](#)
- [**Biotech Financial Planning: Key Considerations for Founders**](#)
- [**Building Better Biotech Financial Models and Managing Valuation Risk with Frank David**](#)
- [**Biotech Startup 101: How to Create Financial Projections for a Biotech Startup**](#)
- [**Building Biotech Businesses Masterclass with Ulf Grawunder**](#)
- [**Biotech Investing Basics Video Series**](#)
- [**How to Start a Biotech Startup: 5 Young VC-Backed Founders Share Their Stories**](#)
- [**Biotech Startup School- Free Online Course**](#)