



Athena Guidebook

Welcome fellow Athenian. Let's learn, build and make a dent in the universe.

1. Join the community.

- a. **Discord** for learning discussions - [Invite link](#) Introduce yourself in #introductions with your background, current work, and a link to your Athena application form.
- b. **WhatsApp** for event announcements - [Invite link](#)

2. Mentorship sessions & Focus group

- a. [Register on Luma](#) Every 1st Wednesday of the month 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM GMT +5:30
- b. (1 hour) **Ask me anything** with founders who've built million dollar businesses
- c. (1 hour) **Focus group** discussion with 8 other founders. Talk about what you learned, and what are your biggest challenges. Brainstorm solutions.

3. Watch [Athena's 1 hour startup course](#)

Read: [Sam Altman's Playbook](#) and [Founders at Work](#)

4. \$100 USD prizes for learning entrepreneurship. Startups succeed by:

Building a 10x better solution to an important problem. Here's how:

- a. [Pick an important problem](#)
- b. [Study 10+ companies](#)
- c. [Talk to 5 ex-founders / industry experts](#)
- d. [Talk to 10+ users](#)
- e. [Validate your idea](#)
- f. [Study Athena's Startup Curriculum](#)
- g. **[Athena Residency](#) \$50,000 - \$100,000 USD funding**

5. Weekly updates:

- a. ***What did I do last week? Learnings? Biggest challenge? Goals next week?***
- b. Every week post an update on LinkedIn, Twitter. Share your post in the #goals channel on Discord. Give 3 other people feedback on their learnings.

Example posts: [Rob](#), [Joseph](#)

6. Study Athena's [Startup Curriculum](#)

- a. 100+ of the most actionable startup resources. Study in 12 months. 1 resource per week. Listen to audiobooks, and videos at 3x speed while going for walks.

7. Appendix

a. Why build in public?

- i. **Build a personal brand.** [Rob has been building in public on LinkedIn](#) for years and has built an audience of 70,000+. This has driven a significant amount of ContactOut's customers.
- ii. **People will help.** Your friends will give you feedback. Customers will tell you how to improve. Mentors and industry experts will help when you reach out. Investors will notice.
- iii. **It'll keep you accountable.** If you announce to all your friends that you are going to start a business, you'll be posting updates every week about your progress. Now you're committed. If you don't do it, you'll look like a failure in front of your friends.
- iv. **What if someone steals my ideas?** All the best ideas are already out there online. We each have the entire trove of all human knowledge in a device in our pockets. Yet most of us are too lazy to go learn and build. Ideas are cheap. It's execution that counts.
 - *"Don't worry about people stealing your idea if it's any good everyone will dismiss it. The ideas that sound good now were completely crazy before. Terrifyingly counterintuitive" - Brian Chesky Airbnb founder*

- b. **Time tracking** has massively helped Rob with his productivity. Log how many hours you work using [TimeDoctor](#) or [Toggl](#) which is a simple stopwatch on your desktop. Rob found himself doing things like: doom scrolling on social media, or making 3 cups of tea every hour. Urgency and focus is critical. Only log your productive time, excluding breaks, social media, surfing the web etc. Aim for 30 productive hours per week. When Rob did this he realized half the time he spent working was unproductive. You won't know until you measure.

c. Focus group

- i. Equal speaking time for everyone. More perspectives = better ideas.
- ii. Communicate softly. 90% of opinions are wrong. Even successful people are wrong a lot. See: [message strength](#), [stated confidence](#).
- iii. Build on ideas: Instead of talking about how ideas won't work, brainstorm how they can work.
 - Bad example: I don't see how your business idea is any different from ChatGPT

- Good example: I wonder if we could learn more about ways to differentiate by studying 10 similar large language models for learning on Crunchbase. Maybe building a custom language model for a specific niche like law or finance.
- iv. Share your personal experience instead of giving an opinion. What's a time in your life that you faced a similar problem? What did you do?
 - Bad example: I think you should talk to users.
 - Good example: When I was building my product the first thing I did was talk to a lot of users and that helped me decide to focus on providing personal emails to recruiters. I learnt this from the Running Lean book.
- d. **Find Athenians in your city** and meet up once a month.
Who are the smartest people you know who are interested in starting a business? Invite them to Athena and start a focus group in person. The founders you meet and the friends you make is the biggest benefit of any startup accelerator.



Welcome to Athena