

# Startups!

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# What's a startup?

- A new, small company
- Not profitable yet (usually)
- Startups are very common in the tech sector
  - Computer programs are cheap and easy
  - The internet can reach a wide audience quickly

# A Bit About My Experience

QUIXEY



“So, uh... what did we hire  
you to do?”

# Things I Worked On

- Website (desktop + mobile)
- API layer
- Search engine core
- QA & Testing
- Internal tools
- Analytics
- Data science
- Deployment & operations
- etc., etc...

# Things I Learned

- Python
  - HTTP
  - Lucene
  - Nginx
  - Puppet
  - Fabric
  - Mongo
  - Search algorithms
  - Natural language processing
  - Zookeeper
  - Kafka
  - Gradle
  - Innumerable smaller APIs
  - A wee bit of Hadoop
- Startups are awesome
  - Startups are hard

Why work at a startup?

Have an awesome work environment





# More control & more freedom

- Nothing is set in stone yet
- You might not even have a boss!
- A very large percentage (all?) of the company's code will be YOUR code

# Be part of a small team

Taken about a year before I joined. That's all of them!



(No really, that's it. The whole company.)

~~Be part of a small team~~

**Be a code ninja**

taken about a year before I  
joined. That's all of them!



(No really, that's  
it. The whole  
company.)

# Be respected

- No seniority
- No “levels”
- (often) No pay grades
- **You are valued based entirely on your contributions, not your history or experience**

# Stock options



An awful lot

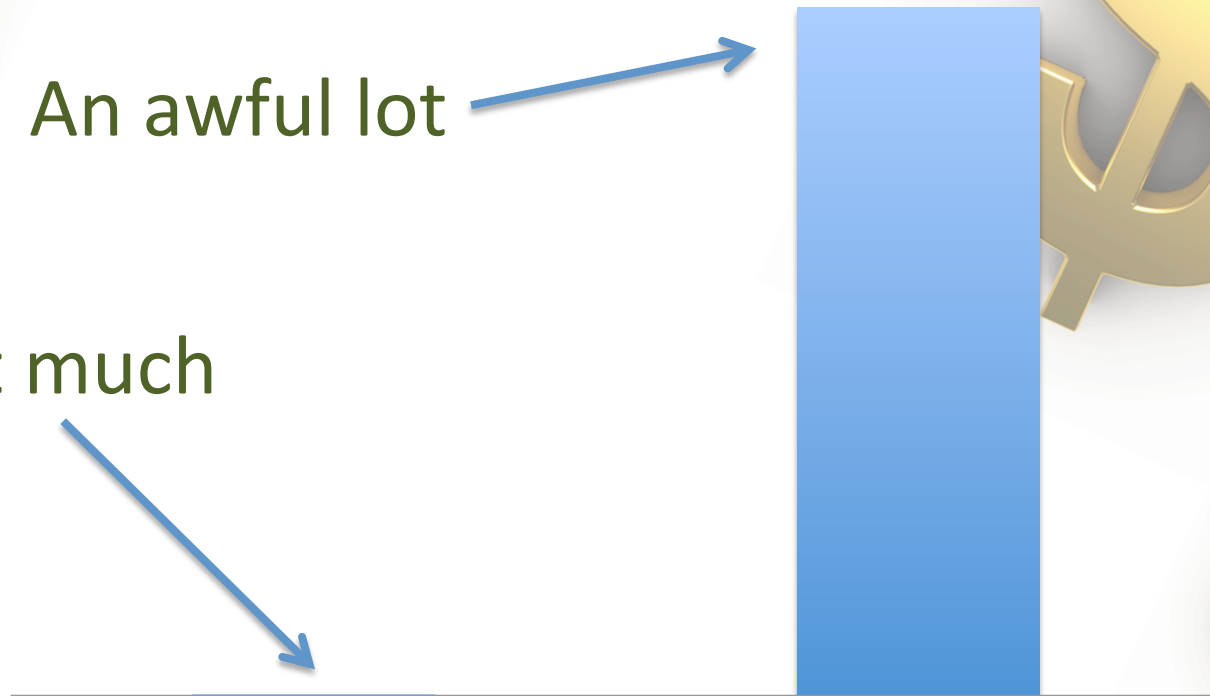


Not much



What you pay

What it might be worth someday



# How do I “startup”?

(Disclaimer: I have never started my own startup; this is stuff I learned talking to Quixey’s founders.)

# Startups are Hard

From the WSJ:

- 75% of startups fail completely
- 30% of VC-funded startups fail completely

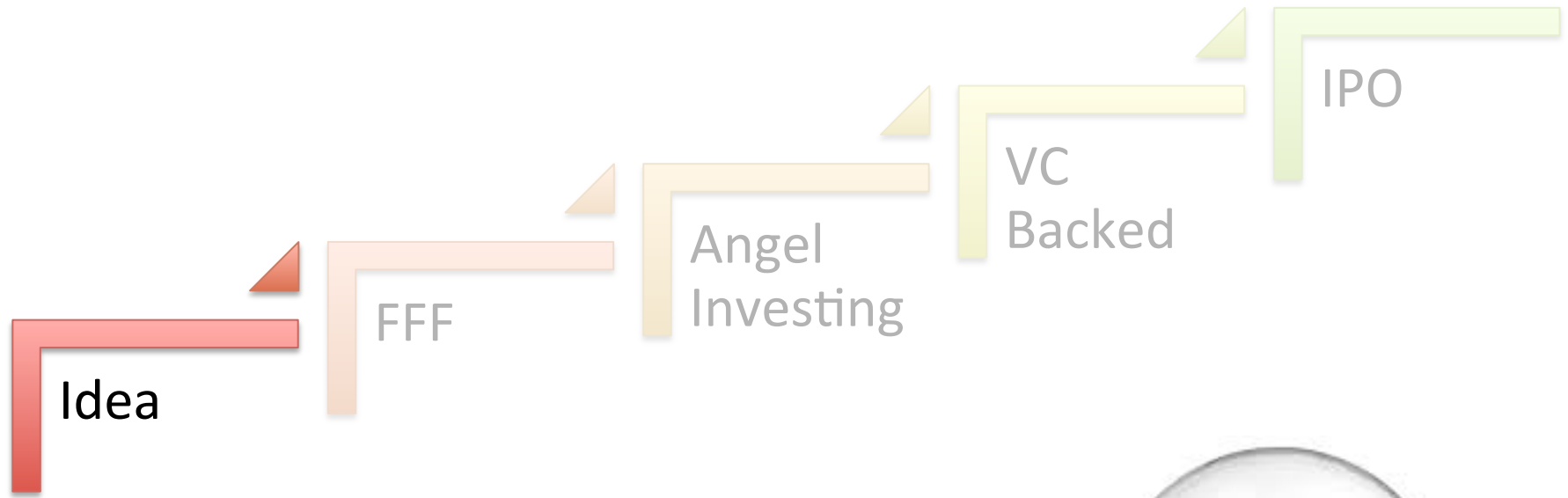


(We'll cover what "VC funded" means shortly)

# Why do they fail?

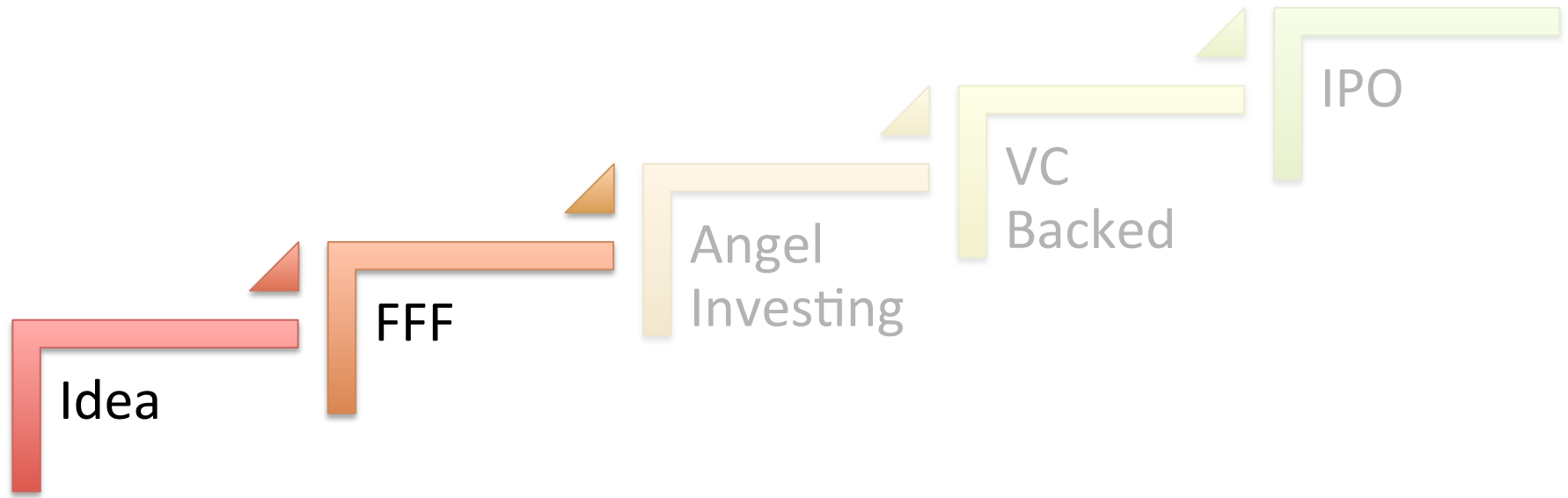
- Not enough funding
- Wasted money
- Hired the wrong people
- Hired too quickly (or too slowly)
- Unable to monetize
- Beaten out by a competitor





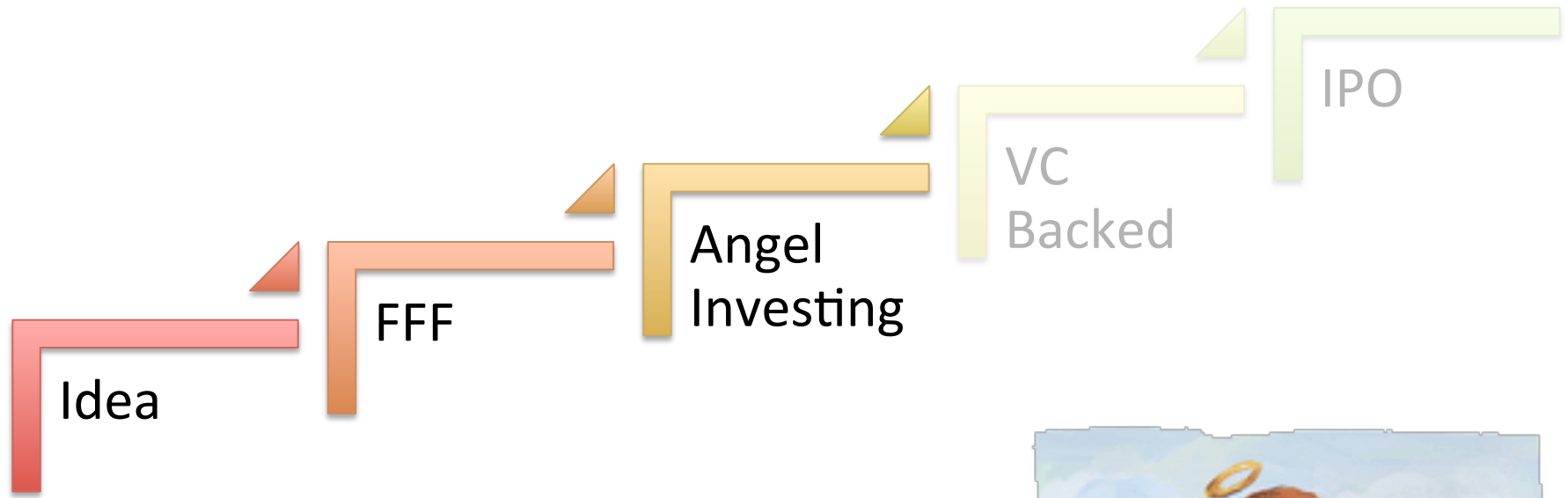
## Step 1: An Idea





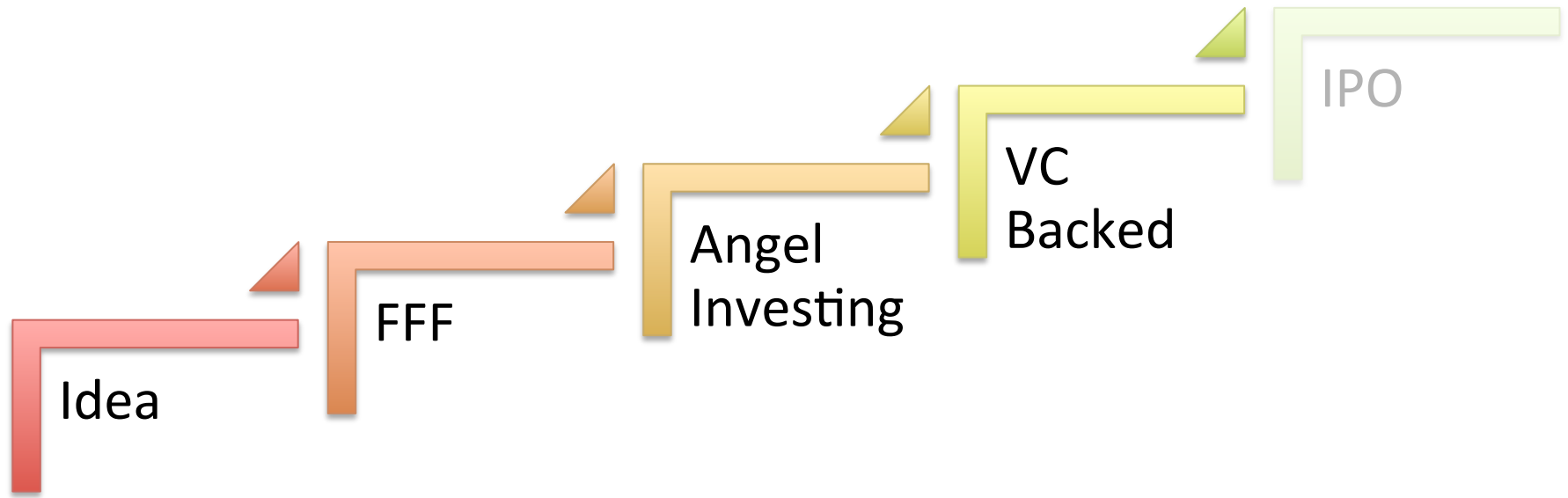
Step 2: get started





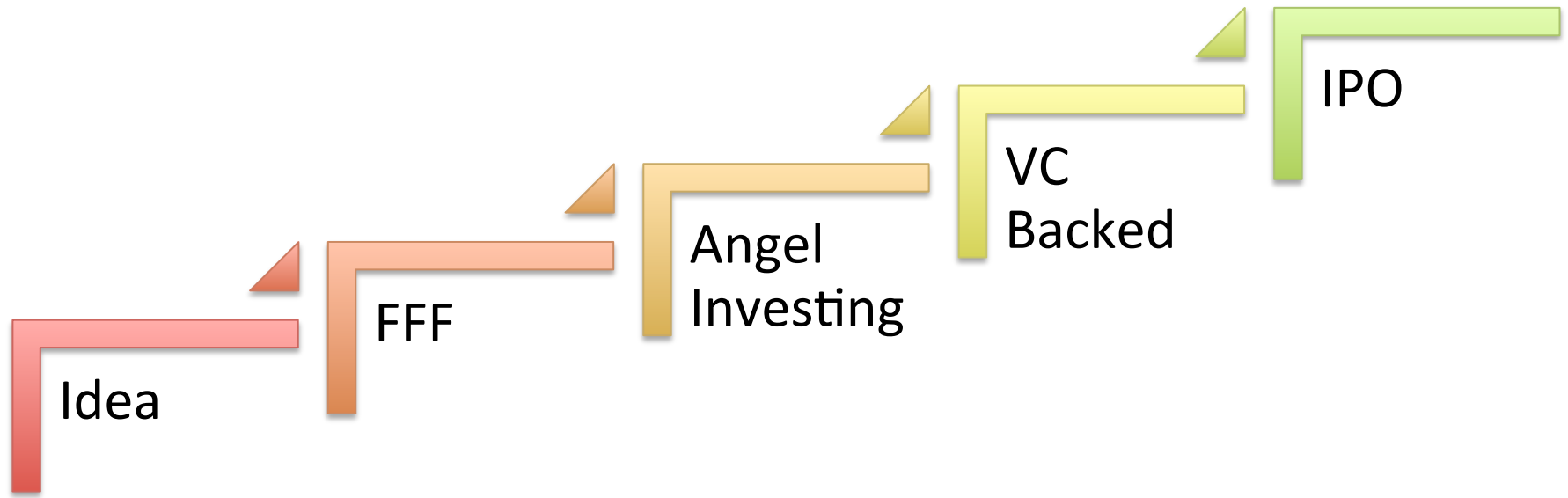
Step 3: build up





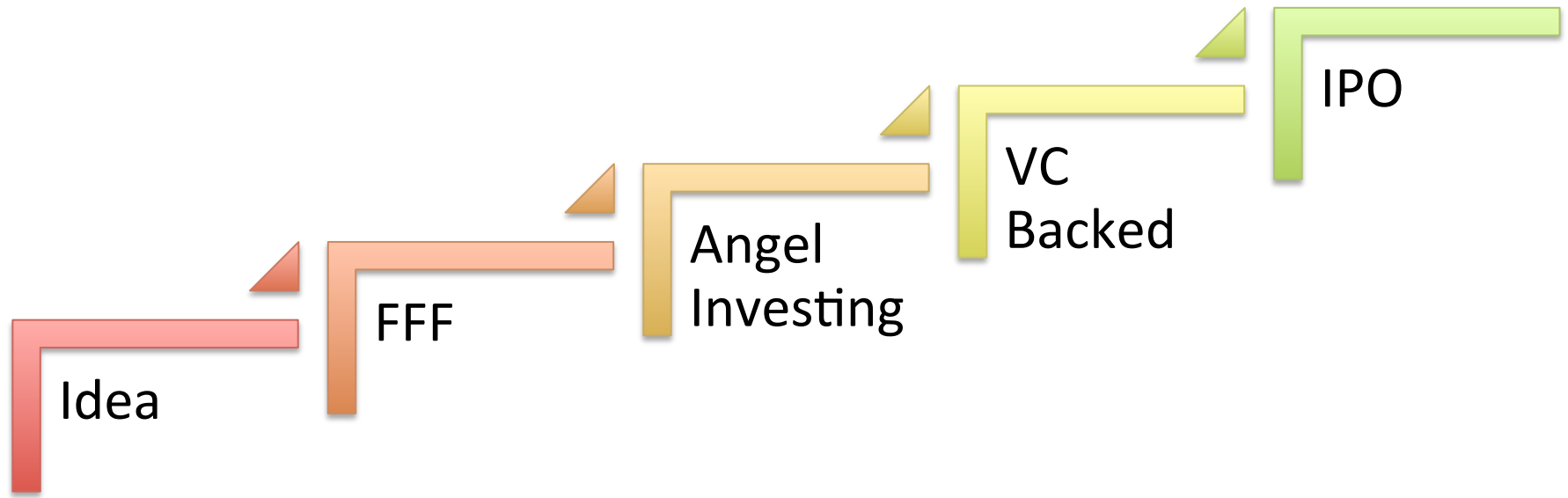
Step 4: prove yourself





Step 5: be successful





## Meanwhile...

- Development
- Publicity
- Marketing
- **Building a team**
- HR
- Sales

# Why bother?

- Work on something you care about
- Work on your own terms
- Change the world

# Resources

- UW Center for Commercialization
  - [depts.washington.edu/uwc4c/](https://depts.washington.edu/uwc4c/)
  - Will help you develop ideas & find investors
- UW Startup Weekend
  - [uw.startupweekend.org](http://uw.startupweekend.org)
  - Networking event... no news about this year tho
- UW Career Fair
- Startup Seattle
  - [startupseattle.com](http://startupseattle.com)
- Started in Seattle
  - [seattle.started.in](http://seattle.started.in)



# Last Notes

# Advice...

“We invest in people, not in products.”

(paraphrased from one of Quixey's investors)

Your idea won't stand up on its own. Be the kind of person people can trust, and surround yourself with others of equal caliber.

And network like crazy.

# A startup might NOT be for you

- Pay is often lower than at large companies
- Less job security
- Long hours

... but these are true of some large companies too!

# Shameless plug...

If you like the culture but don't want the hassle of starting your own company...

Go work for Quixey!

- [www.quixey.com/careers/](http://www.quixey.com/careers/)
- 3 free meals a day, good pay, full benefits
- Silicon Valley is sunny and beautiful
- Seriously, I will give you a referral

Ask me anything!