Readings-only mock · Answer key

R001–R020 · Correct answer and why every alternative is not best. Original practice, not official exam content. All explanations below are paraphrases of the cited written readings.

Quick key: R001 C · R002 A · R003 D · R004 B · R005 B · R006 D · R007 A · R008 C · R009 D · R010 C · R011 B · R012 A · R013 C · R014 B · R015 A · R016 D · R017 A · R018 D · R019 C · R020 B

R001 — C · Responsibility without blame

A supplier outage disrupts a launch. The founder did not cause it and cannot repair the supplier’s system. Under Law’s responsibility principle, which response is strongest?

A. **Not best.** The reading explicitly says responsibility can empower improvement even when something is not your fault.

Source: Thomas J Law — Entrepreneurial Mindset: 20 Ways to Think Like an Entrepreneur — Responsible, supplied PDF pp7–8

B. **Not best.** Law distinguishes empowered responsibility from waiting on blame; taking false blame and hiding the problem do not improve the situation.

Source: Thomas J Law — Entrepreneurial Mindset: 20 Ways to Think Like an Entrepreneur — Responsible, supplied PDF pp7–8

C. **Correct.** Responsibility means taking action to improve the situation even when its original cause is not your fault.

Source: Thomas J Law — Entrepreneurial Mindset: 20 Ways to Think Like an Entrepreneur — Responsible, supplied PDF pp7–8

D. **Not best.** Avoiding the commitment is not the responsibility principle; the immediate task is improving the situation within the founder’s influence.

Source: Thomas J Law — Entrepreneurial Mindset: 20 Ways to Think Like an Entrepreneur — Responsible, supplied PDF pp7–8

R002 — A · Constraints as a feedback mechanism

A team can either run one elaborate prototype review at the end of a project or many small trials with immediate user reactions. Which reason for choosing the second approach follows Johnson’s sporting analogy?

A. **Correct.** Johnson links constrained practice spaces and immediate consequences to faster learning; the mechanism is feedback, not scarcity by itself.

Source: Whitney Johnson — Why Innovators Love Constraints — Constraints lead to faster feedback, supplied PDF p2

B. **Not best.** The sporting analogy concerns repetitions and feedback, not a rule that innovation must end with fewer features.

Source: Whitney Johnson — Why Innovators Love Constraints — Constraints lead to faster feedback, supplied PDF p2

C. **Not best.** Fast feedback improves adaptation, not certainty about every future market outcome.

Source: Whitney Johnson — Why Innovators Love Constraints — Constraints lead to faster feedback, supplied PDF p2

D. **Not best.** Repetition is useful because it supplies feedback; activity alone does not validate the design.

Source: Whitney Johnson — Why Innovators Love Constraints — Constraints lead to faster feedback, supplied PDF p2

R003 — D · Bootstrapping and team selection

A founder assumes limited funding can only weaken recruiting. Which observation would best support Smith’s counterargument, rather than merely show that the firm pays less?

A. **Not best.** Smith’s self-belief and vision argument is not a guarantee of a quick exit or liquid equity.

Source: Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent and control, supplied PDF pp2–3

B. **Not best.** The proposed advantage is resourcefulness under constraint, not dependence on investor instructions and fixed specialties.

Source: Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent and control, supplied PDF pp2–3

C. **Not best.** Lack of alternatives and unquestioning compliance are not the self-belief and initiative Smith describes.

Source: Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent and control, supplied PDF pp2–3

D. **Correct.** Smith argues that bootstrapping can select people willing to bet on themselves and the vision, creating a resourceful problem-solving culture. This is his argument, not a general license to underpay.

Source: Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent and control, supplied PDF pp2–3

R004 — B · Owning direction, not just execution

An analyst can now use AI to complete routine work quickly. Her manager offers two promotions: supervise more generated reports, or choose a consequential unresolved question and be accountable for what the organization does with the answer. Which interpretation fits Levy-Weiss?

A. **Not best.** Choosing what matters is precisely the larger responsibility the essay says remains.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening argument; How Do You Approach a Career Today?

B. **Correct.** The essay defines the promotion as defining problems, choosing goals and owning outcomes. More output is not itself the shift.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening argument; How Do You Approach a Career Today?

C. **Not best.** The essay challenges effort and volume as sufficient measures of contribution.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening argument; How Do You Approach a Career Today?

D. **Not best.** The essay puts responsibility on people directing intelligence; it does not require human accountability to disappear.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening argument; How Do You Approach a Career Today?

R005 — B · Metrics and competing causal explanations

In Maurya’s actual Lean Canvas activation case, a colleague says: “The redesign caused the decline, so reversing it solved the problem.” What is the source-faithful correction?

A. **Not best.** This merges separate examples. The activation metrics were worsening; fonts and PDF export concerned the investor-presentation job.

Source: Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

B. **Correct.** The decline preceded the proposals. Usability tests invalidated UX as the explanation and led the team toward a different solution; the article does not report an implemented redesign causing the decline.

Source: Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

C. **Not best.** This invents both the sequence and the claimed proof; usability tests actually invalidated UX as the cause.

Source: Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

D. **Not best.** The article describes rival proposals and a learning experiment, not simultaneous implementation of all three ideas.

Source: Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

R006 — D · Technological shift as an enabling change

Two pitches call themselves “new technology.” One digitizes an existing brochure. The other uses a newly available capability to make a previously impractical customer experience workable. Under Currier’s technological-shift framework, what makes the second argument stronger?

A. **Not best.** Technology does not remove execution uncertainty; Currier treats market and execution risk separately.

Source: James Currier — The Hidden Patterns of Great Startup Ideas — Framework 2: Leverage Technological Shifts, supplied PDF pp4–5

B. **Not best.** His innovate-enough framework warns against changing too many dimensions; technological change is not permission to change everything.

Source: James Currier — The Hidden Patterns of Great Startup Ideas — Framework 2: Leverage Technological Shifts, supplied PDF pp4–5

C. **Not best.** An enabling shift can improve timing and possibility without proving demand.

Source: James Currier — The Hidden Patterns of Great Startup Ideas — Framework 2: Leverage Technological Shifts, supplied PDF pp4–5

D. **Correct.** Currier asks what changed recently to enable a new product or experience in a proven area; novelty in branding is not the mechanism.

Source: James Currier — The Hidden Patterns of Great Startup Ideas — Framework 2: Leverage Technological Shifts, supplied PDF pp4–5

R007 — A · A complete theory of profit

Godin’s long essay gives four conditions for an AI project worth building. Which proposal best satisfies that combined test, rather than only one attractive feature?

A. **Correct.** This combines specific trusted data, a built-in network effect, an expensive problem for resourceful buyers and a scope that can be bootstrapped. None alone is the entire theory.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — But is it a business? — theory of profit, items 1–4

B. **Not best.** Being small is not enough: hidden prompts and generic model access do not supply the specified data stack, network effect and value-based position.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — But is it a business? — theory of profit, items 1–4

C. **Not best.** Its infrastructural scale conflicts with the bootstrappable condition, and a costly buyer problem has not yet been established.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — But is it a business? — theory of profit, items 1–4

D. **Not best.** Popularity alone does not establish trusted useful data or a resourceful buyer with an expensive problem; attention is not the complete business case.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — But is it a business? — theory of profit, items 1–4

R008 — C · Market-first discovery

A founder has deep access to a community of museum volunteers but no product idea yet. Following Klein’s market-first route, which research instruction is best?

A. **Not best.** Individual suggestions are not automatically validated market/problem pairs; this abandons the fixed-market learning strategy.

Source: Laura Klein — Stop Validating Your Product — Solve a Problem for a Particular Market

B. **Not best.** Fixing the market does not mean prematurely fixing the problem and leading research toward preferred features.

Source: Laura Klein — Stop Validating Your Product — Solve a Problem for a Particular Market

C. **Correct.** Klein’s market-first route fixes the market, investigates its needs and lets the problem and product emerge from research.

Source: Laura Klein — Stop Validating Your Product — Solve a Problem for a Particular Market

D. **Not best.** That fixes a product and searches for buyers, rather than following the specified market-first route.

Source: Laura Klein — Stop Validating Your Product — Solve a Problem for a Particular Market

R009 — D · Selecting fidelity for the learning question

Interviews already suggest interest in a service, but the team still does not know what customers would pay for the delivered solution. In Dhiman’s low-/high-fidelity distinction, which next test most directly addresses that remaining uncertainty?

A. **Not best.** Attention to a concept is not the same evidence as customers valuing and paying for an actual solution.

Source: Monica Dhiman — What is a minimum viable product (MVP) and how do you define it? — Types of MVP: Low fidelity vs. high fidelity, supplied PDF pp5–6

B. **Not best.** High fidelity does not mean a complete feature set; an MVP still focuses the learning effort.

Source: Monica Dhiman — What is a minimum viable product (MVP) and how do you define it? — Types of MVP: Low fidelity vs. high fidelity, supplied PDF pp5–6

C. **Not best.** An interest signal does not by itself answer willingness to pay for delivered value.

Source: Monica Dhiman — What is a minimum viable product (MVP) and how do you define it? — Types of MVP: Low fidelity vs. high fidelity, supplied PDF pp5–6

D. **Correct.** Dhiman associates high-fidelity MVPs with an actual solution and assessing its value and willingness to pay, rather than interest alone.

Source: Monica Dhiman — What is a minimum viable product (MVP) and how do you define it? — Types of MVP: Low fidelity vs. high fidelity, supplied PDF pp5–6

R010 — C · Systematic de-risking

A founder lists ways the venture could fail. Some depend on an unpredictable external decision; others can be investigated with small experiments now. Which response best applies the Babson article’s de-risking account?

A. **Not best.** A plan does not make external uncertainties controllable; intentional iteration builds knowledge through experimentation.

Source: Babson / Heidi Neck — It’s Not Failure, It’s Intentional Iteration — De-risking, supplied PDF p3

B. **Not best.** This abandons the incremental progress on controllable risks that the article recommends.

Source: Babson / Heidi Neck — It’s Not Failure, It’s Intentional Iteration — De-risking, supplied PDF p3

C. **Correct.** The article’s Laura example identifies failure modes, separates controllable risks and makes progress on those she can address.

Source: Babson / Heidi Neck — It’s Not Failure, It’s Intentional Iteration — De-risking, supplied PDF p3

D. **Not best.** The article distinguishes intentional iteration from a simplistic celebration of failure; experimentation and analysis matter.

Source: Babson / Heidi Neck — It’s Not Failure, It’s Intentional Iteration — De-risking, supplied PDF p3

R011 — B · Acting on mission without founder theater

A developer shares Marandiz’s concern about meaningful work but does not yet know what company to start. Which immediate choice is most consistent with the conclusion of his essay?

A. **Not best.** The author’s own conclusion permits learning and collaborating without immediately founding an organization.

Source: Marco Marandiz — I’m Done Pretending Silicon Valley Tech Is Visionary — Concluding personal goals, supplied PDF p6

B. **Correct.** Marandiz explicitly says he is not then trying to decide whether to build his own organization; he wants to learn around people pursuing compatible goals.

Source: Marco Marandiz — I’m Done Pretending Silicon Valley Tech Is Visionary — Concluding personal goals, supplied PDF p6

C. **Not best.** The essay criticizes ego-stroking attention and opportunistic missions rather than treating publicity as the guiding goal.

Source: Marco Marandiz — I’m Done Pretending Silicon Valley Tech Is Visionary — Concluding personal goals, supplied PDF p6

D. **Not best.** Marandiz advocates caring and taking steps despite difficult odds, not waiting for a guarantee.

Source: Marco Marandiz — I’m Done Pretending Silicon Valley Tech Is Visionary — Concluding personal goals, supplied PDF p6

R012 — A · Why the incumbent cannot simply match price

An established supplier sees a cheaper entrant improve. A director says, “Just sell our existing product at the entrant’s price; nothing else needs to change.” Which objection is central to Suster’s article?

A. **Correct.** Suster explains both existing customers’ reaction to drastically lower prices and incumbents’ higher cost structures. The dilemma is structural, not ignorance of the entrant.

Source: Mark Suster — Understanding How The Innovator’s Dilemma Affects You — Incumbent response and cost structure, supplied PDF p5

B. **Not best.** The article does not require complete invisibility; incumbents can see a product and still face difficult incentives and costs.

Source: Mark Suster — Understanding How The Innovator’s Dilemma Affects You — Incumbent response and cost structure, supplied PDF p5

C. **Not best.** The entrant can initially be less performant and later become good enough; more features alone need not solve the dilemma.

Source: Mark Suster — Understanding How The Innovator’s Dilemma Affects You — Incumbent response and cost structure, supplied PDF p5

D. **Not best.** The reading describes enterprise buyers eventually considering the cheaper option good enough; old preferences are not permanent.

Source: Mark Suster — Understanding How The Innovator’s Dilemma Affects You — Incumbent response and cost structure, supplied PDF p5

R013 — C · Summoning people to a credible cause

A startup modernizing an unglamorous essential service cannot offer glamour or promise a windfall. Which recruitment pitch best applies Ryu’s account of summoning people to a cause?

A. **Not best.** His three powers are complementary: summoning people does not replace naming the enemy or a diagnosis and plan.

Source: Marcus Ryu — The Startup as Insurgent — Last superpower: summon people to a cause, supplied PDF pp5–6

B. **Not best.** Shared purpose is not a guarantee; Ryu explicitly offered no promise of success.

Source: Marcus Ryu — The Startup as Insurgent — Last superpower: summon people to a cause, supplied PDF pp5–6

C. **Correct.** Ryu pairs candid hardship with insurance’s relevance on people’s worst days. A cause supplies significance without guaranteeing success or wealth.

Source: Marcus Ryu — The Startup as Insurgent — Last superpower: summon people to a cause, supplied PDF pp5–6

D. **Not best.** His cause did not conceal the unglamorous and difficult reality behind a promise of enjoyment.

Source: Marcus Ryu — The Startup as Insurgent — Last superpower: summon people to a cause, supplied PDF pp5–6

R014 — B · Timing and consent in founder agreements

A company omitted blanket share-transfer restrictions at founding. After a cofounder departs, the remaining founder wants to impose them on that person’s existing shares without agreement. What caution does Kupor make?

A. **Not best.** The article’s problem is precisely that departed founders may retain valuable vested shares; departure does not automatically erase them.

Source: Scott Kupor — Your next business partner should come with a prenup — Transfer restrictions, supplied PDF p4

B. **Correct.** Kupor recommends settling these terms in advance and states that implementing restrictions post-hoc requires shareholder consent.

Source: Scott Kupor — Your next business partner should come with a prenup — Transfer restrictions, supplied PDF p4

C. **Not best.** ROFR is a matching right, not the blanket consent-based restriction described in the article.

Source: Scott Kupor — Your next business partner should come with a prenup — Transfer restrictions, supplied PDF p4

D. **Not best.** The founder’s concern does not substitute for the consent the article says is required.

Source: Scott Kupor — Your next business partner should come with a prenup — Transfer restrictions, supplied PDF p4

R015 — A · Competitor relationships and shared market adoption

After speaking candidly with another founder in the same emerging category, a CEO learns both firms struggle to persuade buyers to try the category at all. Which response best follows Suster’s peer-support lesson?

A. **Correct.** Suster found market traction was the bigger shared challenge and recommends confidential founder relationships and friendly competition. This is not a proposal to coordinate prices or divide customers.

Source: Mark Suster — Start-ups are all Naked in the Mirror — CEO outreach; takeaway 6, supplied PDF pp3,5

B. **Not best.** Shared difficulties can provide perspective and support; they do not establish that the market is impossible.

Source: Mark Suster — Start-ups are all Naked in the Mirror — CEO outreach; takeaway 6, supplied PDF pp3,5

C. **Not best.** Suster explicitly says to keep these conversations confidential; peers’ difficulties do not erase one’s own weaknesses.

Source: Mark Suster — Start-ups are all Naked in the Mirror — CEO outreach; takeaway 6, supplied PDF pp3,5

D. **Not best.** The article says compete to win in a gentlemanly way; it does not recommend market-sharing arrangements.

Source: Mark Suster — Start-ups are all Naked in the Mirror — CEO outreach; takeaway 6, supplied PDF pp3,5

R016 — D · Hiring for strength rather than least objection

A candidate has an exceptional relevant strength and a trainable gap. Interviewers agree on the strength, but one minor objection automatically kills the application under the company’s voting rule. What would Ward most directly challenge?

A. **Not best.** That strengthens the very veto mechanism he criticizes: a small objection can outweigh strong positive conviction.

Source: Henry Ward — How to Hire — Hire for Strength vs Lack of Weakness, supplied PDF pp6–7

B. **Not best.** Ward wants evidence about what the candidate is amazing at, not an unexamined preference or automatic dismissal of concerns.

Source: Henry Ward — How to Hire — Hire for Strength vs Lack of Weakness, supplied PDF pp6–7

C. **Not best.** Ward favors judgment about strengths and complementary skills, not automatic hiring regardless of all other issues.

Source: Henry Ward — How to Hire — Hire for Strength vs Lack of Weakness, supplied PDF pp6–7

D. **Correct.** Ward argues consensus voting minimizes objections and creates false negatives. His team triangulates evidence of strengths, while the hiring manager decides; this does not mean every concern must be ignored.

Source: Henry Ward — How to Hire — Hire for Strength vs Lack of Weakness, supplied PDF pp6–7

R017 — A · Mastery, membership and meaning in practice

A fairly paid operations team has stopped developing skills, works in isolated departmental groups and cannot see how its routine work helps anyone. Which intervention best addresses Kanter’s three needs as reported by Yakowicz?

A. **Correct.** Supported challenges develop mastery; cross-group connection strengthens membership; linking ordinary work to useful impact supplies meaning. Fair pay remains a necessary foundation, not a substitute for these needs.

Source: Will Yakowicz, reporting Rosabeth Moss Kanter — 3 Things Your Employees Want More Than Money — Mastery, Membership, Meaning, supplied PDF pp1–3; recovered authorized Meaning paragraph

B. **Not best.** Pay matters, but money alone does not directly repair the skill development, social connection and purpose deficits described.

Source: Will Yakowicz, reporting Rosabeth Moss Kanter — 3 Things Your Employees Want More Than Money — Mastery, Membership, Meaning, supplied PDF pp1–3; recovered authorized Meaning paragraph

C. **Not best.** Membership allows individuality, mastery needs supported challenge, and meaning requires connecting work to purpose rather than only posting words.

Source: Will Yakowicz, reporting Rosabeth Moss Kanter — 3 Things Your Employees Want More Than Money — Mastery, Membership, Meaning, supplied PDF pp1–3; recovered authorized Meaning paragraph

D. **Not best.** Unsupported difficulty is not the recommended mastery support; rivalry and unexplained workload do not address membership and meaning.

Source: Will Yakowicz, reporting Rosabeth Moss Kanter — 3 Things Your Employees Want More Than Money — Mastery, Membership, Meaning, supplied PDF pp1–3; recovered authorized Meaning paragraph

R018 — D · Suster’s opportunistic recruiting rule

A founder encounters an exceptional candidate who is intelligent, ambitious and culturally fitting, but whose skills do not match an exact posted vacancy. What does Suster’s own Always Be Recruiting argument favor?

A. **Not best.** Suster still requires screening for intelligence, aptitude and fit; ABR is not indiscriminate recruitment.

Source: Mark Suster — Startup Mantra: Hire Fast, Fire Fast — Hire Slowly? / ABR, supplied PDF p2

B. **Not best.** That is the opposite of Suster’s explicit opportunistic-hiring position.

Source: Mark Suster — Startup Mantra: Hire Fast, Fire Fast — Hire Slowly? / ABR, supplied PDF p2

C. **Not best.** Always Be Recruiting means maintaining the search rather than waiting for an urgent vacancy.

Source: Mark Suster — Startup Mantra: Hire Fast, Fire Fast — Hire Slowly? / ABR, supplied PDF p2

D. **Correct.** Suster expressly favors hiring great people when they appear and making the role fit. This source-specific view should not be replaced with Ward’s separately stated needed-leverage principle.

Source: Mark Suster — Startup Mantra: Hire Fast, Fire Fast — Hire Slowly? / ABR, supplied PDF p2

R019 — C · Direction plus disciplined causal learning

Hypothetical integration: an AI-enabled product team is rewarded for shipping experiments quickly. Activation falls, and each specialist proposes a familiar fix. Combining Levy-Weiss and Maurya, what should the leader change first?

A. **Not best.** Fluent output is not evidence of a cause. Maurya’s learning experiment challenged the favored explanation rather than defended it.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening; Effort Was Never Enough; Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

B. **Not best.** Levy-Weiss places direction and outcome ownership on people; disconnected professional metrics also preserve Maurya’s specialist bias.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening; Effort Was Never Enough; Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

C. **Correct.** Levy-Weiss supplies responsibility for goals and outcomes; Maurya warns that worsening metrics do not identify causes and specialists favor their familiar tools. Together they support directed learning, not a shipping-volume contest.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening; Effort Was Never Enough; Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

D. **Not best.** This substitutes volume for outcome ownership and makes causes harder to distinguish; both readings challenge that logic.

Source: Gigi Levy-Weiss — The Promotion You Never Asked For — Opening; Effort Was Never Enough; Ash Maurya — Love the Problem, Not Your Solution — The Curse of Specialization, supplied PDF pp8–9

R020 — B · Sponsored value and control before scale

Hypothetical integration: a small AI team wants to help an underserved population with a costly document problem. A mission-aligned institution has distribution and a budget; users worry about how their records will be used. Combining Godin’s essay with Smith’s bootstrapping logic, which early plan is strongest?

A. **Not best.** This postpones learning and disregards Godin’s user-control/ adoption constraint and Smith’s caution about funding before knowing the business.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — The sponsored model; A note on data stack reality; Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent, control and funding to scale, supplied PDF pp3–4

B. **Correct.** Godin’s sponsored model aligns institutional funding, distribution and user benefit; his data-stack warning requires reassuring control. Smith supports learning what the business is before raising money to scale it. Sponsorship is revenue, not automatically venture funding.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — The sponsored model; A note on data stack reality; Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent, control and funding to scale, supplied PDF pp3–4

C. **Not best.** Godin explicitly allows institutional payment when affected users lack resources; ignoring existing distribution makes the proposed route harder.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — The sponsored model; A note on data stack reality; Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent, control and funding to scale, supplied PDF pp3–4

D. **Not best.** Godin warns that data products may not be adopted if control and what happens when things go wrong are not immediately reassuring.

Source: Seth Godin — AI together (including But is it a business?) — The sponsored model; A note on data stack reality; Ryan Smith — Why Every Startup Should Bootstrap — Talent, control and funding to scale, supplied PDF pp3–4