Startup Confessions
A Founder's Guide to Getting it Wrong (and Sometimes Right)
Gauthier Van Malderen

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- A brutally honest and highly entertaining founder's perspective — no startup clichés, no sugarcoating
- Combines humor with practical leadership lessons on hiring, culture, pricing, fundraising, and governance
- Perfect for entrepreneurs who are tired of perfect "success playbooks" and want real-world insight
- Written in a confessional style that makes the reader feel understood: "progress is moving from one failure to the next"
- A modern founder's handbook for navigating the messy middle ground between chaos and growth

Most startup books tell the polished version of entrepreneurship: heroic founders, elegant frameworks, and inevitable success.**Startup Confessions** does the opposite. Written with sharp wit, brutal honesty, and hard-earned insight, this book reveals what building a company actually feels like: chaotic decision-making, pointless projects, fundraising rejection, hiring mistakes, leadership flaws, and the constant performance of calm while everything backstage threatens to collapse. Based on eight years of scaling Perlego, the author offers a refreshing alternative to traditional startup myth-making: a candid guide for founders who want to fail faster, learn cheaper, and build with realism instead of illusion. This is not a triumph story. It is the truth — and that is exactly why it matters.

Gauthier Van Malderen is the founder and former CEO of Perlego, the global digital learning platform that scaled internationally. With firsthand experience in building, failing, learning, and ultimately leading a high-growth startup through its most difficult chapters, he writes with rare authenticity about what entrepreneurship truly demands.