RIPLEY BACKS TEN IDEAS



FundOpsHQ

A story about venture capital



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Ripley the raccoon ran a small venture capital fund. Animals put money in, and Ripley used it to help brand-new companies get started, in return for a share of each one.



Her old teacher, a wise grey owl, had told her: "Most new companies will not make it. A few will do well. And one may grow so big that it pays back the whole fund."



So Ripley backed ten young companies, each with an idea she believed in. She kept almost half the fund aside, to give more later to the ones that grew.



One was Dot, a young vole who had made a little filter that turned muddy pond water clean enough to drink.



The first years were hard. A boat that steered itself kept drifting, and a new hive cost more to make than anyone would pay. One by one, four companies closed.



When Pip the hedgehog closed her hive company, Ripley did not walk away. She thanked Pip for her honest work and asked her what she had learned.



Meanwhile, farms all over the valley were buying Dot's filters. To make enough of them, Dot needed a bigger workshop, and more money to build it.



This was what the money set aside was for. Ripley's fund put more into Dot's company. Putting more into a company you already own a piece of is called a follow-on investment.



Soon Dot needed more than Ripley's fund could give, so a bigger fund run by a calm old bear invested too. Ripley's share got smaller, but the company grew much bigger.



Then Pip came back with a new idea: a cheap, simple hive. Ripley's fund had passed its time for new companies, so she took Pip to a friend whose fund had not.



Nine years later, a big water company bought Dot's company. Selling a company, or listing it on a stock market, is called an exit.



Four had closed. Five gave back about what was put in, some more, some less. But Ripley's share of Dot's company paid back the whole fund, and more.



That night the owl asked if she was sad about the four that closed. "A little," said Ripley. "But every one of them was brave to try. And Pip is trying again."



A NOTE

The words in this book are real ones, explained simply. The animals and examples are made up, and real terms vary from fund to fund. It is not advice. The pictures were drawn with an AI image model and checked by hand.

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