The Engineer / Programmer

Hackers that like to build stuff—using the right principles in modern languages and frameworks. Do you gravitate towards the best tools for the job and are you naturally creative? Do you sketch out or build things for yourself in your spare time?

Out of all startup jobs, getting a job as an engineer has probably the most clarity. Spend your time honing your craft and you'll do just fine.

The Designer

You are a details person and an aesthetics task master. You have concrete skills like vector/ raster or prototyping and both. Illustrator / Photoshop are software skills however, you have a masterful eye for color, layout and typography that is software independent.

Rapid prototyping skills include the ability to build mock-ups of whatever idea you have in your head. Either through sketches, wireframes, code, or by using any of open-source apps and products that you may have forked on github.

Being really good at employing a variety of different softwares and code and frameworks to get stuff designed is a totally awesome skill to have.

The Product Person

A product person loves building stuff and analyzing traffic. Often times they're also engineers or have some level of coding abilities but may lack an extensive background/interest in computer science.

Product managers can usually do a little bit of each of these tasks: designing in Photoshop, customer development, working with engineers, rapid prototyping, analyzing conversion metrics and project management. And usually you'll be really, really good at least one of those.

The Salesperson

Sales people are non-stop hustlers. They are picking up the phone 70 to 100 times a day. They love the thrill of working hard and seeing a result. They're not afraid of repetitive tasks and they're fundamentally competitive with other sales person, which is intrinsic to a good sales culture.

Sales people must be persistent. Learn how to find that balance of respectful persistence. And simply do not accept rejections.

Business Development

While often lumped together, business development is slightly different than sales. These are for people that love networking, building relationships. They have a sense that they can nab a meeting with anyone, they need to be making deals. I've never met a good biz dev person who doesn't consider themselves awesome at negotiations, poker, monopoly, settlers, etc.

Most people get into higher level bus dev by proving their skills at basic sales first.

Marketing Person

The stuff where you talk about brand and marketing messages and whatnot – those jobs have mostly gone away already. If you want traditional brand marketing, stick to bigger companies.

Every good startup I know is currently hiring a growth hacker. This could be a good role for you if you're super analytical about metrics and the first time you used a spreadsheet it became second nature. But more than anything, you need to be naturally good at pulling off shenanigans. I don't mean doing unethical stuff, I mean being able to hack together experiments quickly to see if they'll work.

The best prep for this type of role is generally side projects as well. Do something that generates tons of adoption.