

# BUILDING TOMORROW'S CYBERSECURITY LEADERS

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Tim Eades is the founder and CEO of Anetac, a cybersecurity company focused on operational resilience, and the Fund Manager of the Cyber Mentor Fund I, where he has successfully led investments in early-stage cybersecurity startups.

As both an investor and operator in cybersecurity, my approach has always been about more than capital. I'm focused on identifying visionary founders, mentoring them, and guiding them through the complexities of scaling – especially in an industry where the stakes couldn't be higher. I don't just look for companies that are solving today's problems – I'm after those that anticipate the threats of tomorrow.

## Spotting the Game-Changers

In cybersecurity, success hinges on foresight. The most critical threats are the ones just over the horizon, and I make it my business to partner with founders who understand this. I look for entrepreneurs with deep technical expertise and a unique approach, those solving tomorrow's problems with solutions grounded in innovation and scalability.

I start by diving deep into the problem the startup is solving. I ask founders tough questions – why does this problem matter now? Has the landscape shifted in a way that makes this solution urgent and scalable? And how defensible is their approach?

To dig deeper, I'll often reach out to security executives and potential customers in my network to gauge their perspective on the problem and how much value they would place on a potential solution. This helps validate the opportunity and ensures that the company is solving a pressing, high-value challenge that will resonate in the market.

While technology is important, it's often the founder who makes or breaks a startup's potential. I look for founders who not only excel technically but can navigate the ever-changing regulatory environment and anticipate the next wave of threats. Resilience and adaptability are crucial in an industry as dynamic as cybersecurity.

### Mentorship That Matters

My investment doesn't stop with funding. I'm hands-on – whether it's helping refine the product-market fit or navigating early customer acquisition. Achieving product-market fit is pivotal, and in cybersecurity, this can be particularly challenging. Early customers, especially in sectors like operational technology or critical infrastructure, are notoriously risk-averse. These environments are often fragile, making them prime targets for cyberattacks but difficult markets to penetrate.

I help founders tackle these challenges head-on by leveraging my network to gather real-world feedback from security executives. This ensures their products are not only technically sound but tailored to meet the specific needs of high-stakes industries. Establishing trust in the early stages is crucial; the right relationships can fast-track this process.

### Scaling with Precision

Scaling a cybersecurity company isn't just about adding more customers. Cybersecurity startups often face unique challenges in maintaining operational excellence while growing. Expanding a tech stack, recruiting talent, and handling complex security integrations – all without compromising quality – requires strategic planning.

I help founders ensure they have the infrastructure and processes in place to scale sustainably. For example, critical infrastructure environments require highly specialised solutions that can operate seamlessly without disrupting essential services. Scaling in these sectors demands careful coordination of product updates, cybersecurity hygiene, and customer service. Losing trust due to an operational failure in these sectors can be catastrophic, so maintaining high standards during growth is non-negotiable.

### What Sets Us Apart

I remain actively involved long after the initial funding, guiding key decisions on hiring, market moves, and scaling operations. This deep involvement is about more than oversight – it's about leveraging experience to help founders avoid common pitfalls and keep their focus on long-term success. By providing hands-on support from selection through scaling, I'm committed to building companies that will lead the future of cybersecurity.

My mission is simple: to back the most robust and aggressive security solutions with exceptional founders who have the vision and expertise to solve the most critical problems for the enterprise. This will, of course, create successful companies, but it will also make the world a more secure place for everyone and, for investors in my fund, it offers the prospect of a very attractive investment return.

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