



Stanford eCorner

Learning From Failure

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Bartz talks about how people who failed within Buzzsaw, were often given new projects to work on. Failure was valued, she says. Rather than criticizing projects that failed, Bartz notes how people wanted to apply the knowledge they learned from mistakes into new projects.



Transcript

This is a constant state, not so much. I'd say the first six months of fail fast forward because this is where we're into the end of the second year now was. That was the question. And the biggest 'poof' is that people who honestly, visibly failed, get another successful project to work on. And some of that is that first trust. We don't stand up and say, "And now, the failure words for the week." It's not that. And by the way, I would hope it isn't big failure. And fail is such a big word. It's just that fail fast forward sounded neat. So I couldn't think of another word to put up there.

So, it really is about saying, "Great job! What did we learn?" Why don't you go off from this project and not have people go, "Hoh, hoh, hoh, what? What's going to happen to them?" And in fact, sometimes it even went beyond that which is any of those anybodies say, "Shut up." In fact, you're the people that are doing a bad job. Not the people at trite over here. It all sounds subtle but it's not. All it takes is a few things that folks will say, "Uhh, that's a big one." And finding out that, that stuff didn't happen. And you start getting more of a climate of trust around bigger risk. Hey, the engineering group that did the three months; there was a whole group of people sitting on the side lights saying, "They can't do it." "Why did they say they were going to do it?" "It's going to be a lousy quality because how are they going to compress all these?" They were hung out there, big time. And now, of course, they look as smart as anything because they started setting the motion for the company. So it just takes those kinds of successes.