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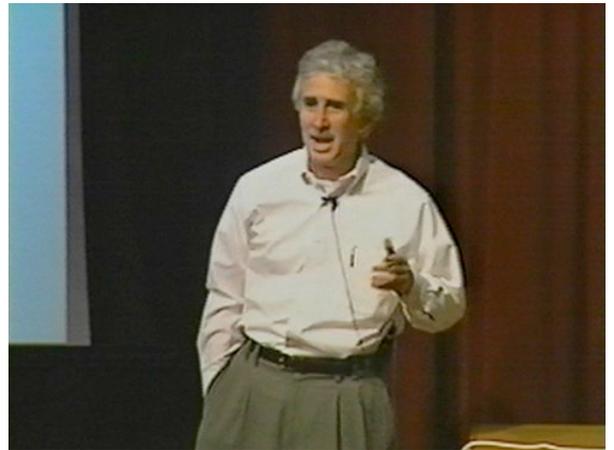
Innovate Fast and Keep The Team Small and Focused

Frank Levinson, *Finisar Corporation*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/672/Innovate-Fast-and-Keep-The-Team-Small-and-Focused>

Levinson talks about how competition is unavoidable among businesses, and in the high-tech industry, it's fast-paced and often cutthroat. Keeping ahead of the competition comes down to two things, according to him: quick innovation and keeping your team small and focused.



Transcript

My question is in terms of when you're going out there and evangelizing about the company and spreading the word, how do you balance that with the need to keep the lid on the competition to find out what you're working on in your new and innovative products? I'm not very good at it is probably the way to say it. One of them is to have a team that innovates fast. When we interact with other customers, I think one of the things that people say when they come to Finisar is wow, I've never experienced this level of velocity in development. We sort of expect once we've talked to a few customers even under nondisclosure we assume we published it in front page of the New York Times because some customers will simply go and say well, this is a really great idea but I need to make sure that the idea happens. I can't make sure of that by just letting Finisar do it. I better make more sure. I think we try very hard to do that. There's a bunch of things that that has. That's a longer discussion in some sense. Standards bodies have been subverted in the last 10 or 15 years a lot.

People have to gone to standards bodies, listened to what's been said, walked back home and patented things. We're involved in some nasty lawsuits where I can tell you we're innocent, but it's been challenging because different things happen with the thing. So it's very difficult. Your question is a good one in a lot of ways but the best way I know around it is to innovate fast and the best way to do it is to keep the teams small and focused.