



Stanford eCorner

Follow Your Passions

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/48/Follow-Your-Passions>

Jeff Hawkins encourages students to do something they believe in. Business is hard and every company will have its trouble, the only way one gets through these times is if they you a cause and you believe in it. This passion gives momentum to see the bad times through. In his experience, people who started a company for the sake of starting a company failed when the hard times came upon them. At Palm the passion was the product, selling the company was not in contradiction with this passion, but allowed people at Palm to continue making good products. He says that it doesn't matter that the money isn't rolling in, but that we are all excited about what we are doing, and we think its great! This excitement carries companies and people through!



Transcript

The thing is I would suggest you really do something you believe in and do it because you believe in it! My main lesson here is business is hard and, I don't care who you are, every company that gets started eventually has trouble. It's just inevitable. It's part of business. And it gets really hard and it gets really draining. And there are times when you can get depressed and you just come home and you're grumpy! And this is where the stress and the friction at home come from and so on. And at work people are down and you've got to motivate them. The only way you are going to get through this time is you have to have a cause. You have to have a belief in something! You have to be doing this for some good reason because if you're just in it for the money or you're just in it because you think it's going to be fun or you want to be in control of yourself, you don't have a real foundation belief in something. You just won't have the momentum and the strength to carry through. I have seen a lot of entrepreneurs start companies and the hard times come and they fail.

They fail even personally or the company fails. And the people who generally have moved through those things are the ones who have a long term belief in what they are doing for some purpose or another. I'll give you a story here. I was going to say this, when we were Palm and we were about to launch the Palm Pilot and we sold the company to US Robotics. Why did we do that? Because our passion was the product! We were all there because of the product. Long ago we gave up making any money at this. Right, that was a dream that was a couple of years earlier. Why we were doing it? Because we believe in it! We believe in this product. We believe in the concept. So selling the company was not in odds with that.

It wasn't in odds with that at all because now we have financing to bring this thing to market. We are going to be left alone. We're going to be able to do our thing and the product was going to be successful. And sure enough that's what happened! If our motivation was different if our motivation was financial we probable would have totally different outcome. It was during those times when everyone said we were crazy and all these things we're going bad it was that belief in the cause that kept us going. That's why we started Handspring because we still have the belief. We still believe we are on a mission and that's why

we try to get over employees around that mission and that helps you get through the bad times. You now, someone asked us about our stock, our stock is in the toilet right now! But it doesn't matter. We are not losing any employees because we are all excited about what we are doing! We think it's great and it's still has most of the fun than we usually have. So that is really helpful.

Do something you believe in to help you carry through the difficult times.