



## Stanford eCorner

### Leadership, Communication, and Facilitation Skills

Kim Smith, *New Schools Venture Fund*

October 19, 2003

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/615/Leadership-Communication-and-Facilitation-Skills>

Smith says that John Doerr, renowned venture capitalist at KPCB, attributes his success to his ability to communicate and facilitate, above his technological expertise. Technical knowledge is useless if you cannot motivate people to do something with it, she adds.



#### Transcript

In fact, it reminds me of one thing I wanted to point out about leadership. I asked John Doerr once we were in a meeting and he's a fantastic facilitator. It was a board meeting and afterward I asked him what he thought was more responsible for his success. Is it technological expertise? And he's a patent holder and he has great technological expertise. Or his ability to communicate and facilitate? And he said, "Hands down. Communicate and facilitate." Because absent that, it wouldn't really matter what he knew technologically if he couldn't get other people to be motivated to do something about it. It's not that he wouldn't have an impact. He'd still have an impact, but it would be limited to what he could do. By being a facilitator and a communicator, he suddenly could mobilize thousands of other people to try to do that same thing. So I just want to emphasize that it's an important skills that to develop even if it doesn't come naturally because the person who's going to facilitate that board meeting is going to get people to do things their way.