



Stanford eCorner

Can Entrepreneurship Be Taught?

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/855/Can-Entrepreneurship-Be-Taught>

Mandelbaum believes that one is born an entrepreneur. A person can learn the basics of entrepreneurship, but the willingness and eagerness to take risks should come naturally and cannot be taught. A great entrepreneur is someone who keeps the team going through the bad times when the future looks dim, she notes.



Transcript

The question is can entrepreneurship be taught. I have talked for hundreds of hours on this one. I for the most part believe you're born an entrepreneur. Now, that doesn't mean that if you're a big company person or you've never had an idea in your life that you can't be an entrepreneur but if you have just that fire within you to start something. When people look at me and they say, gosh, you take so many risks and I'm thinking what risks? I don't think of them as risks at all. Starting a venture firm, I don't think of it as risky. It seems like the right thing to do. What seems hard to me is going to a company that has a thousand people. The safety of it would be scary to me. I think you can learn the basics of entrepreneurship, how to start something, how to attract good people, what makes a good company, sort of the checklist but to be a good entrepreneur, you sort of have to look within and are you okay with uncertainty everyday, all day everyday? That's what it is.

You asked before how do you decide to work on something or when you meet with a team. If that guy comes in and just says I've got to do it, this is what I have to do, are you okay not getting a salary? Absolutely. Would that be okay for an extended period of time? No problem. Just where they're really just so this is what I have to do. I think those are the ones that will deal with those dips really well. When things are going well, great, big party, good holiday party, whatever. It's the bad times. That to me is what makes a great entrepreneur. Someone who can keep the team going even when they're not getting paid.