



Stanford eCorner

Listening Skills in an Entrepreneur

Mark Zuckerberg, *Facebook*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1504/Listening-Skills-in-an-Entrepreneur>

Amongst his different entrepreneurial talents, Jim Breyer, Managing Partner of Accel Partners, talks about the importance of Zuckerberg's listening skills that have helped him effectively lead Facebook to success.



Transcript

Mark has a skill which, a number of skills, which one rarely sees in an entrepreneur no matter what the age is. He's a great listener and he learns by listening. I'm still stunned to see how many entrepreneurs come to our offices in Palo Alto and it's all output and there's no thoughtfulness. And it is amazing that the very best entrepreneurs are very proactive. They're very courageous. They deal with tension. But they're great listeners and then they translate that into interactive learning and the organizations tend to be great listening organizations. And Mark is extraordinary that way as are many of the best entrepreneurs or executives that we've met. There is also the constant, creative tension around experimentation and making sure everyone in the organization feels it's better to experiment, fail and then move on and experiment again than to not do that. And in something like a consumer internet company like Facebook, that constant real time interaction and experimentation is something that the very best entrepreneurs do.

They have the passion. They have an innate feel for it and it happens organizationally that it happens from a leadership standpoint. That's something that can to some extent be taught. It can be honed but those are some of the skills for a consumer internet company and one that is growing this quickly that is just essential. And it needs to be embodied in the entrepreneur. That's something that we see again and again and it's remarkable how little common sense is often applied. If somebody just steps back and truly listens and watches the customers rapidly iterates, good things tend to happen.