



## Stanford eCorner

### Influence of Leadership Style on a Company

Ray Lane, *Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers*; Ron Bloom, *PodShow*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1675/Influence-of-Leadership-Style-on-a-Company>

Bloom talks about the importance of leadership in shaping the perception of a company. It is the leader who defines the vision of the company. At PodShow, Bloom and Adam Curry make calculated decisions about the steps they take that are visible to the world. This ensures creation of an image aligned with their vision for the company.



#### Transcript

It seems to me that in the entertainment industry sort of having a charismatic type of a leader tends to be an asset to the company, and I think that even other non-media companies like you know, Apple, Streetjob or Google, with sort of game, Larion are thinking about sort of how you brand the company. A lot of that has to do with what people perceive the company ought and how they perceive maybe the leadership of that company and in this scarcity taking all about where you see yourself as a leader and how you think your leadership style will influence the company. Well, I see myself as a leader and how do I think my leadership style. I want to say that I absolutely agree with your take that I believe in any company, leadership has the opportunity to highly influence the way the company is perceived. I think my number role is vision. I have to be able to articulate it and I have to be able to demonstrate it in a way that is typically at odds with the rest of the world. So I have to look for outspoken, arrogant ways to talk about the vision of the company, but if I'm lucky or fortunate or good or have good advice. I have to pre-load those statements with some sort of proof of concept that lets me back up what I'm saying. So, just when people are getting irritated by a position, outcome and case study and then another position, and then another study. And then, my partner Adam and myself, every spec of clothing, every photo up or every turn down of speech, every acceptance of a place, every single thing, every message he does on his show, and he has a show and I do not, everything we do is calculated.

Not always gets the response that we want. Controversy is great. I'm understanding that Ray is getting a great experience on how that works. In the beginning, we used to have little controversy. He would call me or write about it. About the third time I go, "Hey, this controversy is just pretty cool." The people are complaining about Pod Show and they don't get it. No, no. That was planned, Ray. Don't worry about it. In the media company that's important, but also, I think that this translates to any type of a business.

You have to understand that just because you believe in what you're doing, maybe. I see a lot of entrepreneurs who don't when you peel away the onion, but let's assume that you do that somehow, everybody else is busy. And pod shows have a mission. Our mission is to be a board, to move the share price of our customers, our advertisers. To be a boardroom decision, you know, right now. In a couple of years, that won't matter anymore but right now in an early stage company, you want to strive; you want to know where you can fall in the meter. And for us, it is really, really important for someone to look at us and say, "I worked with those guys. My personal success is better. And I'm going to make a big move for my company. If not, they're going to do Time Warner; they're going to do AOL; they're going to do Yahoo; they're going to do Google.

So, I can't compete with those guys, and I got to differentiate us and as a leader. I try to do that. From my staff, we try to bring in culture that they help create which they help create. We are a family. We have a hundred people. We have 175 people attend our employee party. At Christmas Eve we didn't invite even any board members, really we just kind a kept it a Christmas, I should say. We break every Friday for food bar every Friday. This is something my partner and I have done for three companies now. Everybody's Dutch.

There's a word I can't pronounce called buja, which is this Dutch drinking thing they do on Friday, which we stole from our business over there, where everybody gets together. Out comes the beer and wine and food and we talk. We have a different version of stand-up meetings. We do everything. We experiment with different ways internally. We put employees first and ask employees to put family first and we drive everybody like Taipei. So that's kind of what we are.