



## Stanford eCorner

### Do Not Wait: Put your Plan into Action Now

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1695/Do-Not-Wait-Put-your-Plan-into-Action-Now>

Waldorf believes it is important to grab opportunities as they come instead of waiting for the right moment. It is not an easy path, he notes. For this reason, he says an entrepreneurial career is not for everyone.



#### Transcript

The fifth point. You have got to put your plan into action now. You've got to take charge of your career, again, not just if you're thinking about starting a company, just if you want to have an entrepreneurial career path within other companies, wherever you plan on going. You have an unbelievable platform here at Stanford. Talking to Tom before the class about all the different things you have going on here, this EWeek, all the different speakers, getting a cup of coffee in Terman, looking at all the different flyers, all the different things that you can do, don't lose sight of this amazing opportunity. While you are here, you can put your career onto an incredible--you can start it on an incredible march. It is so easy as a Stanford student to just roll out of bed, put on a suit, go for the case interview, go to the bank, go to the consulting firm. If you have thought about this, and I know a lot of you have, really push it through to what you're passionate about. Stay focused on this. It is really easy to get diverted when you are at Stanford, to get busy and not put the time into the job search.

The really good jobs won't come to you. You're going to have to go out and get them. And while you're here at Stanford, you have the most unbelievable opportunity to reach out to people at just about any company in the world. You could send a letter to the CEO of just about any company that you're interested in, and I would guess that you probably have a better than 50/50 chance of getting a response to a letter that simply says, "Hey, I'm interested in your company. I'm a Stanford student. Is there a chance I could come in for 20 minutes to talk to you about what kind of career I might be able to have?" And you might think to yourself, 'Greg, how can you give this advice to everybody? Everybody in this auditorium is going to do it.' But the reality is, because I've given this advice many times before, that many of you will think about it, but very few of you will do it. And I think there is this incredible amount of thought that goes into entrepreneurship while people are students, and then they kind of let time go by because they think it will always be easy to get back into it later. When you think about 'What kind of job does it make sense to get?' I just simply say, "Get customer-facing." And what I mean by that is whether you are in the social sciences or you are in the engineering school, get a job where you can get focused on what makes customers happy, help people buy products, learning really just how to make a business go. As I'm kind of flipping through resumes for almost any job that I'm hiring, if I see that somebody at some point in their career has had a waitressing job or a waiting-tables job, or maybe they managed a college bookstore, that tells me so much about their ability to satisfy customers. Those are the people who really win.

And I think if you're interested in an entrepreneurial career, find yourself in a customer-facing job. I cannot tell you how often I get an email that goes something like this: "Dear Greg, You may not remember, but I met you at," fill in the blank, Stanford ETL lecture 2007, "I really loved what you had to say about entrepreneurship and I was really interested in getting an

entrepreneurial job." "But I got really busy, so I accepted a job at," fill in the blank, insulting firm investment bank, "and I am miserable. How do I get back into kind of the entrepreneurial community? Who should I talk to? I should've done it right out of business school or undergrad because my boss doesn't care about me and I have no passion for what I'm doing." So an entrepreneurial type of career isn't for everybody. Some people don't even want to go to a mid-sized public company with 500 employees. If I had to pick a place for all of you, it would be kind of a company maybe with 100 or 200 employees if you want to think entrepreneurially. Not super small. But now is the time. Don't wait. It doesn't get easier.