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Owing the Organization, Not the Individual

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1782/Owing-the-Organization-Not-the-Individual>

According to Bronfman, decisiveness in a company is key, particularly in decisions regarding employees who are not pulling their weight. From his experience, odds are that employees in this position will not improve. Entrepreneurs must learn that they have a responsibility toward the company, not an individual.



Transcript

And one of the great problems I see with entrepreneurs is, there's a sense that once you get started, things will work out. People in the organization who are not pulling their own weight will somehow improve. In my experience, that doesn't happen. Once you've identified someone who is not doing what it is they need to do, as well as they need to do it, the overwhelming odds are that that person is not going to improve. Now, there are always exceptions to every rule. But you need to act very decisively; not only on beginning your operation, but on making sure that your operation sustains itself with high quality people and high quality products and high quality customers. And one of the great lessons that I've learned in my business career ... because it is very difficult to deal with people who you're close to, who you may have hired in, or who have been with you from the beginning, or been with the company for a long time, and you feel, even if you have to make a decision with regard to that person, it's very difficult to do it. And you owe them compassion, you owe them some time, you owe them a lot of things. And the truth is, you don't.

And it's a very hard lesson to learn. Because if you're leading an organization, you owe the organization first, not an individual. You've got to make sure that the organization survives. So then you can be as generous as is possible with that individual, you can handle it in the most compassionate way, depending on how you want to do it, but recognize that your responsibility is to the organization, not to any single individual. And if you have that perspective, I think it becomes easier to make the right decisions. So believe in yourself, listen very carefully to what you need to know, and then act. I think if you do that, and you continue to do that as the organization evolves, you can be very successful.