



## Stanford eCorner

### Teams Are More Important than Individuals

William A. Sahlman, *Harvard Business School*

May 01, 2007

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1813/Teams-Are-More-Important-than-Individuals>

William Sahlman, professor at Harvard Business School, asserts that although individuals are important, teams are the central unit of entrepreneurial success. Indeed, Sahlman argues that the reason why many companies succeed is because of the team, not any particular individual, and so entrepreneurs should think carefully about breaking up teams as well as the effect that replacing an individual has on a team.



#### Transcript

But I guess what I was really trying to get people to think about is, the individual is a terrific unit. And we hire individuals, and we think of our organization as individuals. But the reason why Endeavor works, the reason why companies work is not because of single individuals. It's because teams make things work. And so it's just an appreciation, as you think about changing people's responsibilities, that you worry a lot about the team that you're breaking up. And you try to replace the person with the team in mind. Not so much about the individual characteristics. We care a lot too much about individuals.