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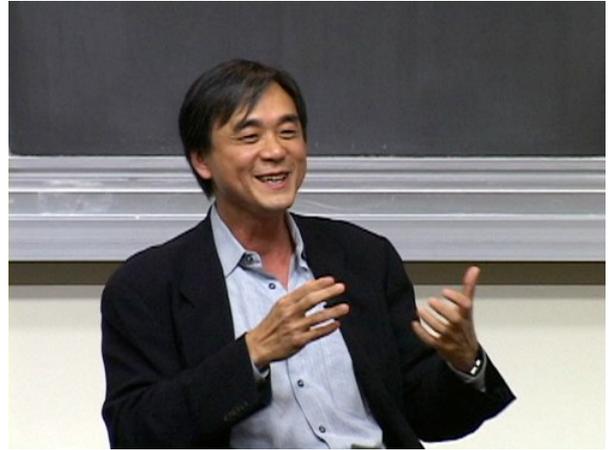
Silicon Valley Compared to the World

Dominic Orr, *Aruba Networks*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1870/Silicon-Valley-Compared-to-the-World>

Dominic Orr, CEO of Aruba Networks, compares Silicon Valley to other places in the world and argues there are many more similarities than differences. Indeed, Orr emphasizes only one difference between Silicon Valley and the rest of the world: a focus on speed. By contrast, Orr argues that there are many similarities, namely how hard people work. He suggests that people work so hard for three reasons: 1) People want to have an impact, 2) People want to be in an environment they enjoy and 3) People want to be rewarded and recognized. The key to motivating people then, is allowing them to obtain these three objectives.



Transcript

I would say there's one pattern that I see that is different, domestic in the US, particularly in the Silicon Valley, compared to the rest of the world. And then I would like to perhaps highlight some similarities. I think that there is more similarity than there is difference. The major thing that I think is different in Silicon Valley is because possibly, because of this emphasis on speed, we tend to, in business, be transaction oriented. We look at project at a time, one transaction at a time. If you look into Europe, look into Asia, people kind of have a longer time frame, and they emphasize more on relationship. And relationship, not only dealing with the people part, but even relation between two entities, even one as the supplier, and one as a procurer. A relationship in that sense, meaning a sequence of gives and takes in multiple transactions. So you don't push the guy to the limit every transaction, and declare that's a win. So I feel that there is generally more inclination in domestic market an operations to kind of look at one project: one transaction.

So that's kind of the major difference. The similarity. You know, I have only had the privilege to work in the scientific community when I was in the research and academia environment, and in the high tech industry. So I can only speak in that narrow field. I say, people are crazy. They work incredibly hard, unreasonably hard, to the point sometimes that it causes physical pain. Why? I was always curious why. When I go to different places, they all do. It's not just in Silicon Valley. You go to Singapore, you go to Kobe, you go to Shanghai, different places.

So I talked to engineers. I like to, after the normal work hours, you kind of just pick peoples' brains, have a beer and so on. I find that if I generalize why people work so hard -and of course, there are people who don't- -and I'm talking about when I talk to people who work so crazy hard, I find that there are only three reasons, common reasons, between a French engineer and an East Coast US engineer, and a Silicon Valley engineer, and the Japanese engineers. First, people fundamentally want to make an impact. They feel that this thing that they spend all this energy on makes a difference. It makes a difference for the company, most importantly makes a difference in the world. If you tell me that you guys finish this thing, you can ship a billion units, and they're all sitting in living rooms. They actually feel like that's an impact. So this making an impact thing is very strong, at least in the industry that I work in. Second is, people will work that hard only if they feel it's fun.

Fun, meaning not that particular moment that you really really have to fix this thing, I'm only giving you five hours. Fun,

meaning that this is a general environment that I enjoy. I enjoy the colleagues, and I think they're smart, and they're not obnoxious. And the people above me, below me, they are good people and so on. So they want to have fun, they want to have impact, they want to have fun. And finally, they want to be rewarded. And reward can come in two forms. Of course, first one is financial reward. I want to work so hard for the company, I get the stock and I want to get my mortgage paid out and so on. But the other part, it is less emphasized, but equally, maybe even more so, is they want to be recognized.

They want to be heroes, in a very small sense. A pat in the back, an acknowledgement in a coffee talk, they want to feel proud in front of their peers. And it goes back to all this dignity and things. So in a nutshell, I feel there are actually more similarities in those areas than differences in the area that I mentioned.