



Stanford eCorner

Dutiful Delegation

Jeff Housenbold, *Shutterfly*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1988/Dutiful-Delegation>

Success is not how smart you are; it's how you can get people to do what you want. Learning to delegate and to build a team was one of the hardest lessons for Jeff Housenbold, the CEO of Shutterfly, to master early in his career. With the insight of hindsight, he now sees effective team leading as a critical step in learning the right balance between career and self, and keeping the ego and ambition in check.



Transcript

Probably the biggest mistakes I made early in my career and I think a lot of first-time managers make, this is not delegating effectively. You want to do a good job. You kind of like to be in control and you just go and do it instead of building your team up. And success is really not how smart you are, but how can you get people to do what you want. And you don't have to be the smartest person to do that, so delegate effectively, build great teams. There are times, particularly early in my career, where I let my own ego and my ambition get in the way of my own success. So step back, find people who are going to tell it to you like it is. When you're not wearing any clothes, people are going to say, "You know what, I want to let you know this is what's going to take to succeed and let me help you get there." And then also realize it's hard when you're in any particular, kind of, period in life. It's not about the money because every study you can read is money doesn't drive happiness, right, and that life is really short. If we're lucky, we'll live until our 80's and 90's.

But too often, life ends before that. And so make sure you're creating balance in life, having good friends, good family, spirituality, and then also feeling good about what you're doing every day. And that's hard, right? Because we're all ambitious and hardworking, but make sure you find time for the balance in life.