



## Stanford eCorner

### Cultivating Next-Generation Leaders

Jensen Huang, *NVIDIA*

April 08, 2009

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2229/Cultivating-Next-Generation-Leaders>

NVIDIA Co-founder and CEO Jensen Huang reports that most of his time on the job is spent brainstorming with managers and leaders and helping them brainstorm through tasks and opportunities. He believes it is essential to train talent to effectively control a different product line, a new geography, or even to take his place. Succession planning of a closed set of hand-picked individuals is a toxic process, says Huang. It's best to treat all employees as a next generation of leaders to build a better environment and long term stability.



#### Transcript

One of the primary roles of a CEO, in order to grow the company, in order to make NVIDIA one of the most important technology companies in the world and make significant contribution to society. In order to do that, you have to cultivate new leaders. So that they can have new ideas and grow new businesses and maybe run a different geography, run a new different product line. And so I spend most of my time these days sitting with our general managers and sitting with our leaders and helping them think through strategies and helping them think through challenges and helping them think through product road maps, helping through transitions and team building, organization creation. How to manage, how to create processes that last the test of time. So you know this things are lessons that I'm supposed to pass on, and I do. And I spend a lot of my time doing that. I believe this: That succession planning by a priori, picking out three people that the board should consider in the case that I get run over by a bus, is a toxic, toxic process. I know it has been thought of as a methodology for leadership, a succession planning. But I think it's just very toxic for the environment because everybody is trying to figure out who got selected and who didn't.

I think that is a much, much, much better process to focus on ultimately developing the next generation of leaders. So that in the case that something happens or I'm not the right CEO anymore there are many choices for the board to choose from including outside. I think the company building process focusing on that is the positive way of thinking about succession planning. A good question.