



Stanford eCorner

Everything Starts with the Right Team

Thomas Prescott, *Align Technology*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2537/Everything-Starts-with-the-Right-Team>

Thomas Prescott, CEO of Align Technology, used to believe a company was launched with a good idea and then a team was assembled to bring that idea to fruition. He now feels strongly that an "A" team must first be assembled, and then brilliance will roll out from their collaboration. Everything starts with having the right team around the table, and that team - including yourself - will always be evolving.



Transcript

I'll just call this hard-won experience. Every one of these that I speak about I've usually violated. So, if I just start with what I used to think about for strategic planning and the ideas, I used to think, "I will come up with a brilliant idea or the strategy. And then, I will hire the right people to help me execute it." The answer is, it's just the opposite. Everything starts with having the right people around the table, having the right team. And along the way, that team has to evolve. The people you started with may not be the people you can go to the middle with and may not be the people you can scale with because they have different skills and temperaments. They may have different things in mind. But at any point ask yourself, "Are these the right people with me? And by the way, have I changed? Am I working at the right place?" if you're in somebody else's company. But everything starts with the right team, whether it's a startup or it's an operating business or anything else.