



## Stanford eCorner

### Accept Defeat and Commit

Bob Sutton, *Stanford University*

November 10, 2010

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2570/Accept-Defeat-and-Commit>

Stanford Professor Bob Sutton suggests two strategies for dealing with team disagreements. Never knock down ideas during the brainstorming stage. And if a team decides to go with a decision you disagree with, be the hardest worker during the idea's implementation. By committing yourself to helping make the idea a success, if it does indeed fail in the end, you will know that it was indeed a poor idea.



#### Transcript

Two other things about fighting. You don't fight in the early stage of idea generation, like when you're brainstorming. You don't start shooting things until you get a bunch of ideas around. And the other thing, and again, at least having taught at Stanford for a long time and been a faculty member, one of the hardest things for us as a community is this thing to stop fighting, to accept defeat gracefully, and to help implement the idea you may disagree with. And here I think Andy Grove has some good advice in addition to this idea of 'disagree and then commit'. His argument is that if you disagree with an idea, you should work especially hard to implement it well, because that way, when it fails, you know it was because it was a bad idea, not a bad implementation. So sort of like a twist in logic.