Stanford eCorner

Start Now

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May 11, 2011

Video URL: http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2743/Start-Now

"The hunger to build stuff and put it in front of people is really valuable in entrepreneurship," says Instagram Co-Founder Kevin Systrom. In this short clip, Systrom recalls a story related to this idea, from his days studying abroad as a Stanford student. He also encourages entrepreneurs to start right now to build out their ideas.

Transcript

And I think, really, there's no better time to start than now. Whether you want to join a startup or whether you want to do something yourself, I think the best thing you can do is to start. I remember... and I'll tell this story just because we're at San Fran and Tina's here. I remember studying abroad and applying for the Mayfield Fellows program. And I was so amped about learning how to make websites that I made this thing called the 'Tree List' which was a terrible knockoff of Craig's List for Stanford. And I was studying abroad in this little room and I was making the website in that room with no internet connectivity. But in order to push code out, I had to go in the snow... it was snowing in Florence at the time... across to the library that just eked out free WiFi out of their window and push the code.

And it went up. And I still remember people started using it at Stanford, and I was over there in Italy and there was this awesome connection with people. And what I realized then was just the hunger to build stuff and put it in front of people is really valuable as you get moving in entrepreneurship. And there's no reason you can't start. If you're studying abroad, there's no reason you can't start. If you know nothing about HTML or CSS or Javascript, there's no reason you can't pick up a book. If you're doing something outside of consumer internet, there's no reason you can't start thinking about the idea and interviewing people and meeting the people that are going to help that happen over time. Because in the end, it is a long slog. And what we've found is the thing that really has helped us along the way are those little skills we picked up by hacking on the side.