



Stanford eCorner

Entrepreneurship as Problem-Solving

Daniel Ek, *Spotify*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2965/Entrepreneurship-as-Problem-Solving>

Spotify Co-Founder Daniel Ek shares his very early experiences with entrepreneurship, which came about due to a need to solve problems. Ek also provides his definition of an entrepreneur, as "someone that has an itch for a problem, and is annoyed enough by that problem to seek a solution for it."



Transcript

Well, so first to begin, I never really thought of myself as an entrepreneur. I thought of myself as there was always interesting problems around the world and I kept being annoyed at them. You know, I was - there was things around - that happened around me in the world that was annoying me. And I was constantly talking to people about it and I realized there was more people other than me that was annoyed by these things. So I asked them, so what are we doing about it? And no one was really doing anything about it. So eventually I felt that hey, I have to do something about it myself. So, when I started my first company when I was 14, I never really thought of it as a company. Again, there was a need at that time, this is 1997 where webpage was still - there was consulting firms charging 50 grand, at least in Europe where I'm from, to create a webpage. And I said that's not really that hard and I kept telling people that. So, they were like well, can you help me do it? So eventually I started doing that and this is as I was pretty much in elementary school.

And what I realized is I did one and I got a bit of money from it and I was like okay, this is pretty good and I kept doing more and more and more, and eventually what ended up happening is everyone that was pretty good at math, I taught how to program HTML and all the ones that were really good at drawing, I taught Photoshop. So we ended up having the whole class pretty much producing work after school hours and building web pages for people. And that was my first company. Not that I really cared about the fact that it was a company, I cared about the fact that here is a problem and people kept telling me about that and I wanted to deliver great results. So, that's kind of how I started. So, my definition of an entrepreneur is someone that has an itch for a problem and that you're annoyed enough by that problem to actually go out and seek a solution for it.