



Stanford eCorner

Context Switching is Not Easy

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3074/Context-Switching-is-Not-Easy>

Venture capitalist John Lilly discusses managing the daily challenge of context switching between activities, including the attempt to "live out of your outbox rather than your inbox," while still remaining responsive to those who need your help.



Transcript

So the question is how do I stay productive through context switches, and shit, I don't know. I find - it kind of depends on the day. Some days are better than others. And I'll tell you when I was an operating executive I would come home and my wife would ask me what I did and I'd say 'well, we did this and this and this other amazing thing.' And she asks me what I did now, and most days I have to look at my calendar and say 'I'm not sure.' Because the 8am meeting was 8 contexts ago. And so it's a tough challenge. So I think that my - the thing that I struggle with the most, and thing that I find other interesting - investors struggle with the most is like how do you - number one, how do you live in your outbox more than your inbox? So how do you decide, like an entrepreneur, how do you decide what the effect you want in the world to be, how do you find this is where the interesting things are and how do you go after them, as opposed to being reactive to everybody else who wants your time? But the trick is like how do you do that and still remain accessible and responsive to many, many people who want your help? So I would tell you that I think everybody good struggles with this. And I don't have a good answer yet.