



Stanford eCorner

Don't Kill Your Team

Julian Mann, *Skybox Imaging*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3098/Dont-Kill-Your-Team>

Using an illuminating anecdote from Skybox Imaging's early days, Co-Founder Julian Mann urges entrepreneurs to balance the demands of improving the product with the need to care for your employees and team.



Transcript

Rapidly iterate your technology to market, but don't kill your team in the process. And so right as we finished up the Series A financing, we had this reference point design for the satellite. Really it was back of the envelope conceptual design saying this might be feasible. And at the time the satellite was going to produce 2, 2.5 meter resolution not quite the quality that Dan showed up on the pictures on the slides a few minutes ago, but reasonably good. But we got out there and we started really talking to people and we found is we probably need something a little better. We probably need to get closer down to one meter resolution. And so we began this four, five month process where every two or three days Dan would walk in the office and say all right, like we need to figure out how to get just like 5% more performance out of the system. And we were just churning out new designs, new designs, new designs, running this kind of analysis, that kind of analysis and we proceeded and satellite kept growing and growing and growing and one day Dan walks in and he had the look on his face that I knew man we need 5% more out of the systems, so I grab and took him into the conference room, which was like in the middle of the window of this office. And said Dan, I understand what you're doing, I can take it, but Mike, our VP of satellite systems is going to have a heart attack if you ask for 5% more from the system one more time. And I'm pretty sure that was the last time the system grab.