



Stanford eCorner

Data is Overrated

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3207/Data-is-Overrated>

Serial entrepreneur Steve Teig describes how overzealous pursuit of data can paralyze an entrepreneur in making critical decisions. According to Teig, "The more complex the problem you're going after, the less data is going to help."



Transcript

Another thing I'll say in the hope of being the tiniest bit controversial is to some extent I think data is overrated. Now, obviously it may be a waggish about it: in a narrow domain you're trying to improve an algorithm of course data is fundamental, right, you take measurements how else can you tell how you're doing, but the more complex the problem we're going after the less data is going to help. If you're trying to make a big decision about the direction of your company, you cannot get enough data soon enough to make that decision well. And if you sit on your hands and wait in the hope that you'll get enough data to be able to make that decision correctly will be too late and you'll miss the market. At some level, you just need to go for it and see what happens. And yes, when the market response change course, be nimble clearly you don't want to have blinders on, but it's easy to get paralyzed by trying to gather too much data too soon and I think engineers as a community too easily fall into that really toxic trap.