



Stanford eCorner

Knowing Your Uniqueness

DJ Kleinbaum, *Emerald Therapeutics*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/4222/Knowing-Your-Uniqueness>

DJ Kleinbaum, co-founder of Emerald Therapeutics, shares the unique beliefs and values core to the biotech-research startup. He stresses the importance of defining these "contrarian truths" and getting support for them early on. As the company grows, its leaders can point to them as the cornerstone of its culture, Kleinbaum says.



Transcript

- It's very important for your company to define the things that make you different from the rest of the world. So by definition, you're clearly thinking about things differently, or else, you know, someone else would've probably already done this idea. You've already said like, "I actually think this is a good idea." So that's sort of the first thing that makes you contrarian, but the other, it's important to establish what those things are for your company and to get buy in from everyone on those things. So I'm just gonna list the things that are our contrarian truths at Emerald, and you'll notice that there aren't any things here like quality first, because quality first is, that's a great mission statement to have, or a great thing to hold up for your company, but it doesn't actually make you unique. The point of this exercise, of sitting down with your early employees and saying, "What are the things that we believe in these four walls "that everyone else outside of them "thinks we're crazy for for thinking?" And that's a, it's a really valuable exercise and it's an important thing to point to as your company grows and matures to have this as sort of a cornerstone of culture.