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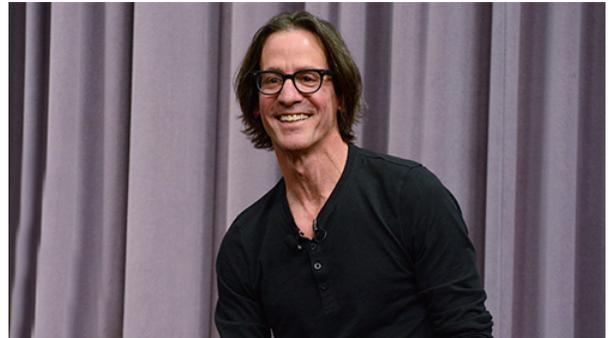
Taking a Cue from Kids

Brendan Boyle, *IDEO*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/4911/Taking-a-Cue-from-Kids>

Brendan Boyle, partner at IDEO and founder of the design firm's toy lab, demonstrates one of its inventions to show how observing user behavior is applied in product development. In conversation with Tina Seelig, professor of the practice in Stanford's Department of Management Science & Engineering, Boyle explains how rapid prototyping involves high-fidelity thinking and low-fidelity models, whether they're digital or physical.



Transcript

- What are the insights? Something has to be around insights. So we spent a lot of time going into kids homes, talking to Moms and Dads, and interviewing and observing, kind of what Tom Kelly calls the modern day anthropologist, sorta seeing what's happening and seeing behaviors, if you can take a behavior, and put that into something then it's gonna resonate. Which is really cool, can I show you a toy that shows some behaviors? - [Woman] Yeah, sure. - I brought some toys guys, this is, everyone might know or might not know the property, Dusty, which is a Pixar property, Dusty is a plane, it's kind of like the Cars property, but he's afraid of heights, so he's basically an RC car, for three year olds, so he doesn't really fly, so he goes on the ground, and a three year old, if you give them a remote control they don't know what they're doing, right? But how does a three year old pretend they're flying, can you guys act it out? Can everyone act it out together? Yeah. So we took that behavior, and then we give them these little wings, and then when he tilts this way, he goes that way and then when he tilts this way, he goes that way. I've got a big wingspan, a little three year old behind it is pretty cute, so. - [Woman] (laughs) that's so fun! So how did you come up with that idea? Or how did your group come up with it? - By watching kids, and some of them pretend they're flying and remembering they did it themselves, and so how do we incorporate that into a toy? And then the way we prototyped that was, we had that and someone behind the curtain, driving it, when the kid did this, we turned it that way, so that saved us some money on the prototyping so- - Well I love that idea- - And then, once we sold it, then we had to make it work, right so. - But that's what's really cool and I'm so fascinated, with the way you do that, is do these really really quick and dirty inexpensive prototypes, that test whether a concept will work, without actually spending any money or even putting any technology into it. So talk about that process. - It's a real tenet of IDO it's a real tenet of D Schools, it's like high fidelity thinking, low fidelity prototyping, 'cause you want to rough and rapid to get the idea out there so you can learn from it, not test to validate.

Get it out there to learn from it, and so you can make it better. For those of you who will start running companies someday, what you want is when you're CEO to have that sort of ability to squint and see the real thing through a rough and rapid model, 'cause we see so many cultures that the model prototype has to beautiful, before they show it to the CEO or management, 'cause they're gonna- "oh what's this piece of crap" and then, your whole culture then understands, ooo, we've got to make it look good and they're wasting all of this time. - [Woman] Right, and of course I understand that situation, you're much less likely to get feedback- - Yeah. - You now are fully committed to something, that might not work, so doing these really quick prototypes is really valuable. - It's a culture, it's a culture thing, and you can do that physical or digital.