

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/in-brief/be-like-water/>

Rad co-founder and CEO Tony Mugavero explains why going with the flow is central to success both in entrepreneurship and in life. To avoid friction, he advises founders to approach challenges flexibly and collaboratively, and avoid assigning blame or sticking steadfastly to their original vision.



Transcript

Emily You have one other piece 00:00:05,780 of advice that I thought was incredibly powerful in another talk that you did for entrepreneurs.. You said that one of the most, well the most important piece of advice for entrepreneurs is to be like water and I was very touched by that.. Could you maybe give a little bit more meat to what you mean by be like water? Tony Yeah.. I mean, it's, just like 00:00:30,730 go with the flow, you know, path of least resistance.. It's not always about the least resistance, but it's just flexibility is so important and that kind of expands into empathy and understanding and, you know the people that you're working with, if something happens and something comes up and it's gonna be, you know a challenge to have to deal with that's okay.. You'll fit, you know, you'll figure it out and you start to figure it out together.. It's not about, you know, who said what? and when, and arguing about all of that.. When something comes up, start to figure it out and flow around it and lean into it and make it work.. And so, you know, over the last handful of years the core team of little stars, and now as we've kind of transitioned the brand to Rod.. As we go through those challenges, and you're in the trenches with people doing really challenging kind of decision-making in the moment, the last thing you want to have happen is for there to be friction, you're all in it together and it's okay to disagree and have like productive kind of proactive debates about things..

But everybody is understanding of each other's position and suggest things that, you know if something everybody's stuck on something you're suggesting something, there's ways to flow through any kind of issue that, you know taking that approach is like, just generally in life.. I mean, entrepreneurship, you need that.. If you don't have that, everybody blows up and the band breaks up and you know, the startup all the part and co-founders leave.. And, you know, like you just can't you can't operate that way.. That's, just in business, but in life, I mean if you approach all relationships that way and tend like in life just seems to get better.. It's like, instead of your, instead of everything that you do being contentious like, we'll figure it out how bad can simply be.. (Tony laughing) So yeah, I've, tried to take that approach more as you know, things have progressed in the last handful of years in particular, because earlier on, I thought that like you had to like stay hard and fast to something.. And if you know, you didn't than you were earlier and really that's like the counter to what you should do as somebody in, as an entrepreneur you should come up with a thesis, test it as fast as you possibly can figure out if you're wrong and go to the thing that closer to being right...