

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/focus-on-mindset-and-mechanisms/>

Referring to his *Harvard Business Review* article "The Era of 'Move Fast and Break Things' is Over," General Catalyst managing director Hemant Taneja argues that the vast majority of founders don't intend to cause social harms. Because most negative consequences of new technologies are unintentional, he emphasizes, it's extremely important for entrepreneurs to develop a mindset focused on understanding the second- and third-order effects of their businesses. With that intention in mind, he continues, founders should carefully monitor the consequences of the technologies they are developing, and seek alignments between their short-term business goals and long-term benefits to society.



## Transcript

- In the piece for Harvard Business Review 00:00:07,270 you said there are eight questions that folks should ask.. And I think you were speaking even to your VC community, you know with that very directly saying these are the kinds of questions.. More or less saying look, this is what we're asking.. Can you pick a couple of those eight 'cause I do encourage everybody to go read that HBR piece, it's free on their site.. So, but one of the, what are those two.... Well, how about this you wrote it probably three years ago, which two seem even more important today? - You know, I can say 00:00:38,300 you can bucket those questions into two things, mindset and mechanisms, right? And the mindset of the stakeholders that are working on the company, and that includes the founders, the product development team, the investors, everybody, are they thinking enough about the systemic change they're about to go create, right? Do they really understand all the stakeholders that are involved, that they touch, right? And not sort of immediately with second order and third order effects of as well to their business.. So that just brings intentionality to the whole body work.. And one example of a mechanism is are you looking for the unintended consequences that might be emerging from your innovation? So this goes back to what I have called algorithmic canaries.. Are you measuring the second and third order effects of your products on society? Because every time the challenge is around how do you make the right short-term decisions for your business that are fundamentally aligned with the longterm interests of society? So I think having that bigger picture and having that kind of a product development mindset probably are two important ones that you have to think about..