

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/translating-values-into-day-to-day-decisions/>

To translate Hipcamp's values into operational decisions, Hipcamp founder and CEO Alyssa Ravasio often emphasizes impact over financial performance when communicating with her team. For example, she stresses the metric of "total nights outside" rather than revenue goals, and cultivates a deep sense of environmental responsibility among both employees and hosts.



## Transcript

- For me, building a company has always been exciting 00:00:06,840 because of the chance to change culture and have an impact.. And I've always been really clear on what I want that impact to be, right, I want to live in a culture where people value clean water and the land and are connected with nature and we stop thinking it's fine to just destroy natural resources it took millions of years to develop in the course of a few decades.. Like I want to live in that world and I know we'll get there one way or another.. And so I think keeping that vision, keeping that vision really clear, and I think being, always being in that mindset of like I know where we're going, I know why we're doing this, makes it pretty clear when things aren't being done in a way that's gonna ladder up to that impact.. And so I think for me, having the focus on the impact and not having the focus be how much money are we making, how fast are we growing? Those things are of course, important right.. If you want to attract, especially outside capital, those things need to look good as well, but I guess, before Hipcamp, I was an unemployed surfer bum.. So like the big money is never really what was getting me going.. And I do think that that can be, I think if you're overly focused on the financial outcome it's a lot harder to stay really true to the impact that you want to have 'cause they often do diverge.. And so I think I've just always stayed really clear on why we're doing this.. I think within the company it looks like, it's little things, but you know what they add up..

So like we talk a lot about nights outside instead of revenue.. How many nights outside are we gonna make happen this year? Not how many dollars are we gonna make, that'll come.. How many people are we gonna get outside? How many people are gonna sleep under the stars? So that's been a focus.. And then just actually documenting our values has been really important.. That's something that I think a lot of startups wait too long to do.. That's probably something everyone's heard a million times now, but it's actually really helpful just to have that conversation with your team, even as a tiny team, I think it's amazing.. So for us, a core value has always been leave it better.. And that's really rooted in this idea of, you guys have probably all heard of Leave No Trace which is an amazing organization with lots of great education, and at the same time we don't think Leave No Trace is neither good enough nor realistic.. It's not realistic 'cause there's now seven billion and counting people on the planet.. So the fact that we wouldn't leave a trace isn't really a goal we're shooting for..

And then it's not good enough because we've already had a devastating impact on the environment and a lot of our ecosystems are in in free fall and collapse.. And so we need to be restoring, we need to be regenerating, we need to be having a positive impact at this stage.. And so for us leave it better is a great way to work all that together and really align on this core belief that people can have a positive impact on the environment.. We don't have to just be the problem.. We can actually actually be part of the solution.. And I think if you're gonna work in outdoor recreation, you've got to kind of believe that to some extent because you are getting people out into land that maybe hasn't had as many people in it.. And that is something we think about as well.. So values, goals, how you talk about goals, how you talk about the mission.. Whenever we hire someone, I'm always saying, "I'm excited to work with you to get more people outside." Right so just coming back to that mission again and again and then also programs, like we, this year, we built a program where we paired, just as a pilot, we started pairing landowners with scientists so that they could understand what species are on their land and how they can better steward their habitat to support certain watershed or a certain species.. And you know, that kind of stuff, is it gonna like really accelerate our revenue? Probably not..

Is it good for our brand, which ultimately is gonna be important for the health of our business? For sure.. That's not why

we're doing it, right? We're doing it because it's the right thing to do and how we can make sure we're really gonna have the impact we want to have.. So whether it's big things or little things I think you just have to always be keeping that in mind and keeping the vision of the impact you want to have really clear so you can know when your new drifting off course...