

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/a-good-story-builds-a-movement/>

Girls Who Code founder Reshma Saujani reflects on how important storytelling has been to her success as a founder. She emphasizes that the ability to tell a great story allows founders to inspire people and build a movement, rather than simply building a product.



Transcript

- I was never trying to build an organization, 00:00:04,630 I was trying to build a movement.. And I saw a nonprofit as just a structural way to basically go about doing that.. And because I've been an organizer since I was-- I led my first March when I was 13.. That allowed me to figure out how do you build a movement? And by building a movement, what I mean is like, I think to be a founder, you have to be able to tell a good story.. You gotta be able to stand up and like, basically tell a story about what you're doing and what the world is going to look like.. And you got to inspire other people to move along with you.. And so with Girls Who Code with everything, the colors we picked, the t-shirts that we had, the logos that were-- the story was always about the girls and what would happen if girls learned how to code, that they would be healers, that they would be teachers, that they would be presidents, that they would be everything and anything.. And once you told that story, people were like signing up.. Where do I write the check? Where do they mentor? Where do I volunteer? And so my experience in law politics, and just quite frankly, public speaking helped me become a really good storyteller.. And that's my superpower..

And that's why even in the second movement that I've built, Girls Who Code has about 80% global name recognition, which is insane after 10 years, Marshall Plan For Moms has 50% global name recognition after nine months.. Right? Which is really hard to do, but I knew how to do it because I did it before.. And so that I think is like really like, and I wouldn't have been able to know how to be a good storyteller, how to be a big movie builder, how to bring people along, how to inspire them into action, had I not had a career in law and politics..