

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/a-personal-mission-statement/>

Virgin Hyperloop co-founder Josh Giegel shares his "personal mission statement" and explains how he developed it, how it has evolved over time, and its huge importance to his entrepreneurial journey. He strongly recommends every founder have one.



Transcript

- The other thing I was really on a path to was 00:00:05,790 the personal mission statement.. So, I will tell you right now, that I think this is one of the most important things you can have as a human.. It is what it is that you want to do on your limited time on this rock.. And so I went out with a few buddies, and I can assure you, as tough as we are trying to look in these pictures, we are anything, but that.. So we went out, we found enlightenment, I'll leave that to the reader.. But after a few days, I kind of arrived at mine, and it has been my guiding path really the last nine years, so I wanna kind of walk you through what it is.. So, I will change the world through the technology I built.. Each part was intimately crafted, it has specific reasons for that.. And so I use the word will because it's like will versus want.. I believe that I will be able to do it..

I don't want to, I believe I can do it.. And I talk about change the world, it's a used, commonly overused phrase, especially in entrepreneurship, but for this it's actually appropriate, because it's the scale of the problem I wanna solve.. I don't wanna solve something at local or national scales.. I wanna solve something of global scales.. Through the technology.. I'm a technologist, I'm an engineer.. I'm not a politician, a banker, or an artist.. Like, this is what I do.. This is how I intend to change what I, that change the world is through the technology I have.. And then that last word is the critical word in my life, which is build..

I need to do this through action, through building, through creating a physical thing.. And this is nine years old.. It's evolved.. I've become a manager, I came to lead teams.. I've actually thought a lot about taking the "I"s and replacing with "we"s because "we"s can do so much more than "I"s.. And that's, you know, a profound kind of shift.. One of the things it doesn't explicitly say is for good.. Change the world for good.. And when I presented this to the whole company a couple of years ago, that was some of the feedback I got.. And I asked myself, I said, "Why doesn't it say that?" And you know, you can think what you want about what I'm about to say, but, ultimately, I like doing really hard things..

If they happen to be for building weapons, I'd actually be okay with that.. But that's kind of the hallmark of a personal mission statement, is that it's authentic to you.. And if it's authentic to you, not to what everybody else thinks, then it's your true kind of guideposts, your true kind of guiding light.. And the last one that was a profound shift, is when I became a dad.. What if I can't do this, but my son can.. Is that good enough? That's putting a lot of pressure on somebody else.. Maybe coping

it out for me, but what if I create the environment for him to be able to do it? Or, as a manager, as a leader of a team, what if I create the environment for my team? And that's where it becomes, you know, particularly interesting...