

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/the-advantage-of-a-complementary-team/>

Claire Hughes Johnson, corporate officer and advisor for Stripe, advises the founder of a new startup to assess where the company is at in its product development to figure out what kind of personalities it needs to hire. She observes that most teams have a collection of individuals who share norms but have different and complementary skills and strengths that help the team in different ways.



## Transcript

Speaker We have a startup.. 00:00:04,650 This summer, we're gonna start hiring people, and this is like the first time- - Exciting.. 00:01:04,380 and actually building something quite novel and will focus and focus and focus and solve that hard problem.. But you also will eventually need that more creative generalist builder.. And I think the question is just where are you in your product development, honestly? But yes, both, and just the order of that depends on where you're at with the product itself, I would argue.. How do you build, I mean, this goes back, I love sports analogies 'cause they're so apt, which is, most teams have a collection of individuals that have actually quite different skillsets, but some fundamental things in common.. Right, I mean, just think about any team you've ever been on.. And what those things are in common, the coach, the leader can establish, which is like, this is, you know, I have an expectation of this much sharing of the ball, for example.. Or the way we give credit, the way we give opportunity to score.. Whatever it is, your shared norms that I'm talking about, your foundational stuff you put in place is what creates the construct within which those two individuals are playing by the same rules on the same team..

And then, you have opportunities for them each to shine.. And there will be.. Because back to that thing where, if they really see each other, I think some of the best performing teams do an inventory of, "What do we have around the table? What are your special capabilities? What are your awesome skills? What kinda problems are you really great at?" And they actually can even assign work to one another because you've built that self-awareness.. And that's the best team.. Like you know, you've got, we're all watching the NBA playoffs, I assume, and you know, there's a person you give the ball to when you need a three-point shot landed.. And everyone on the team knows it.. And that's the beauty of sports, but you can create that in your own company too...