

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/avoid-pressure-to-compromise/>

Jessica Jackley, founder of Kiva and founder and general partner of Untapped Capital, observes that a company or nonprofit can have an incredible impact while creating a sustainable business model. She recommends paying attention to priorities and choosing collaborators who won't pressure you to compromise your values.



Transcript

- [Stanford Community Member] What I really appreciated 00:00:04,710 about your talk is I found that you have a very strong conviction to be, like, a very social entrepreneur and to make a lasting impact, and some might say that, like, within the Silicon Valley entrepreneurship scene, a lot of startup founders start off that way, like, really wanting to make an impact, but sometimes they still end up doing questionable business tactics.. So to summarize, my question would be, how do you go about growing up in this very profit-oriented space and still kind of staying with what you really want to do in the world? - I don't think there has to be a trade-off, in most cases, 00:00:52,560 between having an incredible impact and also having, I'll say sustainable.. That's the nonprofit word for it, but a profitable, right? (laughs) Being in the black.. I don't think that there's a trade-off between those two things.. I think those pressures come from either a shift in priorities, because at the end of the day, you do have to prioritize what, when push comes to shove, would be more important in each scenario, getting that extra dollar or maybe, right, impacting that extra percent.. If it comes to that in certain moments in time, you need to really know where you stand, or else, it'll be a slippery slope.. And I think the structure of the organization, in some ways, you know, it's just a vehicle to move forward.. It's a tax structure, not a religion.. Like, you can do great things as a business, obviously, and you can have a nonprofit that's not that efficient and could be doing a lot more and sometimes even damages the world.. Those are extremes..

But I think your investors and your supporters, whether they're investors outright or donors or whatever it is, when you bring them on your team, just don't make compromises because they will be the voices that eventually might pressure you to get off track in terms of, like, your commitment and your values...