

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/balancing-inspiration-and-reality/>

Adrian Rodriguez, co-founder and CEO of Dreamlinks, tells the story of how a group of investors declined to fund one of his early startup ideas, and what it taught him about understanding business models.



## Transcript

- I was extremely idealistic through group theory, 00:00:04,620 and my dream actually was to basically have a consulting company that would have an internal tool for designing websites, basically like a internal IDE that would use tactile pieces and make it possible for people to go beyond templates and turn out hyper-accessible websites, 'cause there was a big demand in the market.. It hadn't really been as operationalized yet.. Now I think that making, you know, there's a lot of services for making accessible websites.. And I came back to Stanford, and I pitched a group of investors called the Farmers.. You guys may not have heard of them, but there is a group here of faculty and staff that together invest in very early stage companies.. And so I came and I pitched them, and they sat me down, and they said, "The business model of what you're pitching is a consultancy, and in order for those economics to work out, here is how much you would need to build." And I realized I really had a lot to learn, and they were absolutely right, that I was not talking about a Ventures Club business whatsoever.. And so I sort of just had to make peace and realize that this vision was not compatible with the economics of startups (claps).. And this was my first lesson, I think, in balance, right? In that you ultimately really do need to find the midpoint between your personal journey and the reality of the world, of the systems that actually drive us..