

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/betterups-six-core-values>

BetterUp CEO and co-founder Alexi Robichaux describes the aspirations behind the venture's six core values of courage, craftsmanship, empathy, zest, playfulness, and grit. Among those aspirations: Make something that's relevant to a wide range of demographics, and create technology that advances human flourishing.



Transcript

- Sure, yeah, so I'll say, there are canonically at BetterUp, actually, this is one of the earliest things Eddie and I had the privilege of setting, and we haven't changed them.. And it's not that we're not open to change them.. It just seems like they still seem timeless, and employees and our customers still rally around them.. There's six of them, but before I do that, I'll say they really come from three core aspirations we had in building the company that were I think kind of the holding context for the values.. And the first is I had been in Silicon Valley, and remember, this is 2010-ish, a different era, right, the era of social, a lot of different technologies, you were here Toby, were in vogue then, and we were starting to see the rise of the gig economy.. I had grown up originally in Dallas, and for me, and for Eddie, who grew up in Peru, one of our first big aspirations about BetterUp is we really wanted to create something that would be able to be accessible for as many people as possible, right? And how do we create something that appeals to people from all different walks of life, both from a diversity standpoint, yes, across factors such as nationality, country, gender, creed, all that, but also cognitively, how people live and learn.. So that was the first core aspiration, and we really wanted to make something that would appeal to someone in Alabama as much as it could appeal to most of in New York City.. And at the time, there wasn't a lot of the new technology we found that my friends in Dallas, would have felt relevant to their life, maybe outside of Instagram, honestly.. And so that was a core inspiration and aspiration that involved our values.. The second is, and this is a little audacious, but for us, I'm a big believer in what I call the old Silicon Valley, the Silicon Valley of Steve Jobs and before, where it was like, the crazy ideas..

I think Elon Musk and a few other entrepreneurs exclusively do this today, but where are the true moonshots, like literally, get to the moon? We went through a decade of great innovation, but a lot of it was around entertainment, and that's great.. I started my career at Disney, love entertainment, but for us, there was this really aspiration of, you know, one aspect of the human experience we are not innovating around is maybe the most profound aspect of the human experience, which is how do we actually improve the human condition.. And if we can actually help people access greatest levels of flourishing, then that would be the zenith of technology.. And that sounds real whoo-whoop and really crazy, but as we talk more, there's a whole science around this.. This stuff has actually now been figured out how to do.. Just no one's doing it, right? So that was a huge aspiration.. We didn't wanna just make something like coaching more accessible, more affordable, sure.. We actually wanted to make it better, where if you're a coach or a therapist in BetterUp, you are more effective, you are more impactful, by using the technology than you would be in your private practice.. And then the third component of that is the opportunity to create a huge brand around making it cool and making it something that you identify with related to self-actualizing.. And so the values that came out of that were really six..

They were courage, both moral and what we all managerial courage and taking big bets, craftsmanship, we have to have a caliber experience bar if people are gonna trust us with their blind spots, their deep, dark fears, their hopes, dreams, aspirations.. This stuff can't look like a scam, right? It's gotta be really elegant.. It's gotta be really stately.. I always tell the team, when I was at Disney, the amount of energy and effort we would put into a churro cart is incredible.. But that's to sell churros.. If we're not putting 10 times that into an application where people are pouring out about their relationship with their spouse or manager, we've missed the mark.. Then empathy is huge, as you all know from the d.school.. Innovation starts with empathy.. As coaches, we're really in the business of empathy, and then zest and playfulness.. So those values today continue to really guide, oh, and grit is the other one..

Those six values continue to guide and shape the company...