

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/career-development-2>

David Kelley, founder and CEO of IDEO Product Development, grew up in Ohio, where he survived on a diet of Velveeta cheese and white bread. He attended Carnegie Mellon and studied electrical engineering, but spent more time working on carnival floats. After graduation, he worked for Boeing on the 747. He learned early that in a large company, he didn't get to choose the people he worked with. He came to the Graduate Product Design Program at Stanford, where he discovered his passion—design. His first company was called the Intergalactic Destruction Company. One of the things he learned in graduate school was that you can use design in any situation in life.



Transcript

I thought I'd actually introduce myself a little bit.. I was raised in a small town in Ohio where I survived a steady diet of Velveeta cheese and white bread sandwiches.. I went to Carnegie Mellon University as an electrical engineer where I spent more time building spring carnival floats and not so much on circuits.. Then I went to work for the Boeing commercial airplane company where I was quite enjoyable working on the plane so I worked on the 747 SP.. But I worked in this room that this was the room with engineers and 250 of us in those little slits on the other end with light.. I also learned that I didn't get to pick who I worked with.. This was quite a rude awakening for someone was used to hanging with their friends in the summer and then they'd say you sit next to George and you work with George and I never worked before so that was kind of a rude awakening.. But I was there as you'll notice in your info, I was there to design a milestone in aviation history, the lavatory occupied sign for the 747.. So that whole introduction was just so I could get that in because I didn't want you to miss my major accomplishment there.. I came to Stanford for the product design program and really discovered my passion for design..

I then started my first company which was called the Intergalactic Destruction Company.. I was told by a guy like Tom who was teaching the class I took and said if you have a small company, have a very big name, but I particularly liked our logo for Intergalactic, this company.. There, I started building things and I realized my passion for making things or making stuff and it was all because of Stanford and so I'm still here trying to pay back my debt by teaching a few classes every year.. One of the things I learned as a student here at Stanford was that you could use design for all kinds of things that were useful.. This was a phone that I designed while I was here.. I was trying to get the attention of a particular woman who was on campus and I made her this phone.. This phone had the advantage that no matter what button you pushed, it calls me...