

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/convince-yourself-its-worth-it>

One Concern co-founder and CTO Nicole Hu explains her team's initial hesitancy about starting a company, particularly because two of the three founders were immigrants. Rather than rushing into a startup based on some initial prodding, they first engaged in some dedicated outreach to potential stakeholders, and built toward a conviction that their solution was worth their complete dedication.



Transcript

- Now we were taking a little aback cause we never thought of starting a company or creating a product.. And none of us had experience running a business before.. Two thirds of us were immigrants, myself and Ahmed.. And I'm not sure whether similar thought process, but when you're an immigrant, generally you come to Stanford, you know your thought process is work hard, study hard, get good grades, and then find a reputable place to go to so that you can then give back to your family who sacrificed so much to just make sure that you come here.. So when somebody came up to us and said you know you should not think about the idea this way, think about what a product could look like.. It was a little hard for us, because that meant that there was obviously going to be risk associated with creating a company and we didn't have any background associated with that.. So what we instead did is we tried to see whether what we're hearing from our professors and from the investors is that real new deal.. So we cold-called a bunch of different cities, a bunch of different emergency officials.. And we asked them like hey you know we are three graduate students here, we have this algorithm, we really don't know whether or not it will be helpful or not.. Can we spend a few hours with you to just understand is this really a problem and can we do something about it? And we're surprised that instead of them spending a few hours, they ended up spending several days with us..

The hope and the excitement we saw in the city officials, I think that was the final push to make us say that you know we have to do this.. It sort of came to light that it is a responsibility.. And if we don't do it, will anybody else think about this problem? Or will this problem keep repeating itself? So then all the three of us, the three co-founders, we had a really hard conversation.. At least actually several hard conversations.. About what we would have to give up in terms of our previous ideas and what does it mean to come into a mission? And what does it mean to come into a company? Now while I talk a little bit about you know my and Ahmed as immigrants, you know our problems, Tim himself was raising a family.. So you know, what would that mean in terms of his responsibilities? But at the end of those conversations, we said you know we are all in.. You know, we have to do this...