

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/dealing-with-your-weaknesses>

Professor of the Practice Tina Seelig asks Steve Garrity, founder of Hearsay Systems, and Juliet Rothenberg, product manager at DeepMind, how they handle underdeveloped skills. Garrity suggests working to improve necessary skills and abandon the nonessentials. Rothenberg recommends surrounding yourself with people who excel in areas you do not to learn and improve.



## Transcript

- So I'm curious, though.. There's always this tension between do you play to your strengths or do you support your weaknesses, or do you say, these are my weaknesses and I'm gonna go surround myself with people who complement me? How do you think about that for yourself and for your team? I mean, if there's something I'm not good at, should I go, I actually have to go learn this and get better, or do I go, I'll never be good at that.. I just have to have people around me who help out.. - I think it's an and.. So for me, it's I wanna surround myself with people who are great at things that are not my core strengths, and I wanna consciously be watching them, and if we have a relationship with enough trust, which hopefully, if you're working closely on a team with people, you do, then I'll say, "Steve, hey, you're really great at this thing.. "It's something I'm working on.. "Can you coach me on it? "Can you tell me how you think about it? "Can you give me opportunities to test this out?" And that way, I'm not letting the team down, because Steve's there to catch me when I do a faceplant, and I'm also, I'm getting to learn as fast as I can from Steve.. - Yeah, I think that's right.. I think, I tend to think of it as a slightly different metric, which is how critical is this weakness to me and how much do I really need, like how much is it hurting me versus how much do I just not care about it? And so, if it's a really critical weakness that is impeding your progress, in whatever you're trying to make progress against, whether it's your career or a relationship or a sport or whatever it is, if it's killing you, you've gotta go work on it, and you can't just, there are some things you can't accept as weaknesses and still continue to be successful at what you're trying to do.. And then there are some things where it's not that big of a deal..

It's an easy skill to go recruit.. - Outsource to someone.. - Outsource to somebody, or also just something that like you just don't care that much about, like you don't wanna learn.. I'm a big believer in what Julia said earlier, which is you tend to learn the things that you enjoy.. And so if you don't enjoy it, and it's not killing you, just ignore it.. Work around it, and just be aware of it...