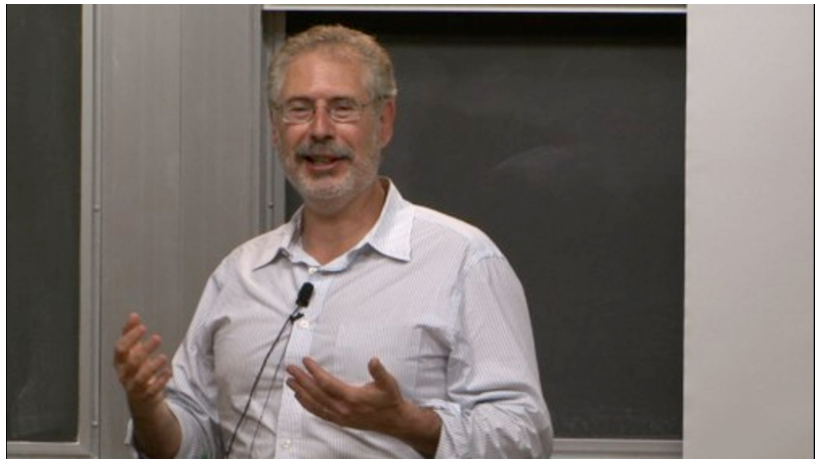URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/engineers-and-founders-the-first-sales-team

The most radical thing a new company can do is sell their product, says serial entrepreneur Steve Blank. He believes that the company founders – not the sales team – should be the first to try to turn a profit, as they will learn firsthand about their product's shortcomings and usability. Great engineers directly understand what their customers need.

Transcript

The most radical thing I make companies do is actually sell their product.. You know Web product, you could decide you're going for eyeballs, for users, you could go for ads or you can actually decide to do something radical and actually charge money for something.. Or for a physical product, that's almost a given.. Before we do anything, let's see if the founders could go out - not a sales team but the founders - can go out and generate some revenue with this company.. That's what I call "customer validation".. I want you guys to actually sell something.. How many of you were in engineering? OK, all right.. How many of you have actually sold something? OK.. Not just a pencil, not Girl Scout cookies.. You know, Tina asked me earlier, what was the best advice I think I've ever gotten or given..

And that was even if you are in engineering, if you decide you're going to be part of an entrepreneurial startup, if you've never been out trying to sell your idea or be part of a sales team, you will never ever be a great entrepreneur, ever.. I really want to get all of you angry who are great engineers or great architects.. That's great, but you'll always be dependent on someone else.. Great engineers understand what customers need.. I don't mean you need to learn how to go to dinner and drink or whatever, but you really do need to understand how people buy, why they buy, how they process information and how they think about your product.. And also, how they think about the problem you think they have...