URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/ethical-science-is-better-science

Kim Branson, SVP and Global Head of AI/ML at GSK, argues that, rather than paying a penalty for holding themselves to high ethical standards, companies in fact benefit from strong ethical frameworks. Ethics-infused science, he finds, tends to generate more robust solutions and higher public trust.

Transcript

   - We kind of fundamentally believe 00:00:05,860 that ethical science, right, is better science.. And the reason why it's better science is those types of questions force you to engage more, "Well, this is the data I've got," forces you to engage more, forces you to understand how to collect the data, why there are structures to get the data.. It helps you involved in the patient's lives, it helps you to understand the systems that have that data in a real practical sense, which means you probably build a better solution, right? A better solution, right, we would fundamentally will win out in the market.. It's probably more robust as well, from a machine learning perspective that, and it can be used more.. So fundamentally it comes down to trust, right? Making an attempt to build the best thing you can for everybody.. And in the process of doing that, you engage more people.. You also make it a flywheel effect, right? You're solving problems, maybe understanding why people don't come into trial.. Maybe you can fix something to get the data that allow you more people in trials, and we actually can come up with better medicines, right? More representation.. So there is a flywheel effect of doing that properly.. For us, it's not as for us talking about sprinkling ethics about it..

   It's not about having the ethics police, right? So too often you see people trying to bring ethicists in on top of the team, as a regulatory thing, or something else coming after the fact, or things like that.. You can't do it like.... It has to be done at the same time, right? So you have to think very carefully about the ethical culture you create within machine learning people.. And that's something we're very keen to have, right, is the right kind of people.. So this is why we have responsible AI people and a VP of ethics and policy around these things.. 'Cause policy and ethics are actually kind of intertwined, right? That's why we have regulators, right? What are the regulators doing, right? They're actually enforcing a lot of the principles that Russ actually stated earlier, right? That's why we have regulators in society and things like that.. So there is a constant dialogue between that.. And I think that this is something we've thought very carefully about.. And so we have.... They're a fully fledged part of the team, but they're also technical people as well, and that's a very key thing...