

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/hiring-as-you-grow>

Sophia Edelstein, co-founder and co-CEO of Pair Eyewear, shares how she and Nathan Kondamuri were hands-on with hiring for the first several years of their company, focusing on finding the best talent and ensuring shared values. As Pair has grown, they've remained close to the hiring process.



## Transcript

- What would you share with folks in the classroom 00:00:04,620 about how to get to the point where they can hire somebody who is so experienced? - Yeah, I think it really begins with, 00:00:13,890 you have this vision in your head for what you want the company to become.. And you have to really think through what are the skillsets necessary in order to get there? And then you have to be really honest with yourself.. Do I have these skillsets, or is this something that we're going to have to go out and find? And then once you've been able to recognize that and realize, okay, you know, at this point, you know, Nathan had a mechanical engineering background, but was he going to be able to actually manufacture, produce, file patents? No.. Probably not, right? Similarly, you know, I was really interested in marketing, but like was I going to be the person to figure out, from the ground up, how to, you know, run a budget of \$30 million a year, you know? Not necessarily.. There are people that had done it before and could start from somewhere that was way ahead.. We just had to go out there and figure out who the person would be and how they would fit into the culture and the overall org structure that (audio cuts out).. So I think that's a really important skillset.. And then, of course, we were very hands-on with hiring, up until probably a year ago.. So we would interview almost every single individual to join the company, I'd say, up until 120, 130 people.. - Wow..

00:01:54,930 for two years in order to get that value.. And then culture is really important.. You see, as the company grows, you know, you start out being the culture leader and everything kind of comes from, you know, how you lead and leading by example.. But after time, your managers become the culture leaders and, you know, one bad apple can completely change the culture of your company overnight.. So we were interviewing everyone 'cause we really wanted to ensure that, you know, everyone had the same values, such as, you know, innovation, testing and learning, being data-oriented in their decision-making ability, being very empathetic.. And that was really important to us And something else we thought a lot about.. And then today, we don't interview everyone anymore.. I kind of wish we did (laughs) 'cause now, you know, it feels like people walk into the office and you're like, who's this person and like? (interviewer laughs) But we interview everyone up until, you know, probably two degrees of separation from our reporting structure.. - Wow...