

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/nail-down-your-focus-to-actualize-an-idea>

Most great ideas die not because they are bad, but because you broaden and expand the idea too quickly. Manish Chandra, founder and CEO at Poshmark, explains that approaching ideas with narrow focus allows you to execute with the conviction to see it through.



Transcript

- So I actually did an experiment.. So once I discovered that this phone this was happening, I gave up my laptop, and spent the next several months just working off of my phone and an iPad, which in 2010 was an incredibly hard thing to do.. I was trying to do PowerPoint on it, Excel on it, there was no native applications, and the form factor was this big.. So I did that for several months.. It was painful, but I felt like you could do that, right.. And so that proved to me that this platform which was sort of still embryonic, if it was this productive, and this sort of portable, then there's a probability that this thing is likely to succeed.. The second thing was actually what one of my mentors said, which is, as entrepreneurs we have this syndrome.. He calls it the YAFO syndrome, the entrepreneur's name is Kanwal Rekhi and he called the YAFO syndrome.. I don't know if you've read about it, but it's called yet another effing opportunity syndrome, right, and what ends up happening is that, when you get an idea, and you see its application, see it can be applied here, it can be applied here, it can be applied here.. I can do it this, and if I don't do this, somebody else will do this..

And so after a while you feel like you have to do everything simultaneously.. And most great ideas die not because they're not great ideas, but because you diversify and sort of broaden out very quickly.. Professor Barst taught me about crossing the chasm, which is about narrow focus, and crossing something with a lot of force around it.. So once I nailed down this focus on phone, I knew I only wanted wanted to focus on that one thing, because building for it will be so hard, that diffusing it will actually bifurcate the team, bifurcate the resource, and bifurcate the energy.. So the combination of those two things allowed me to build the conviction to go down that path..