

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/reasons-to-start-a-company-part-1>

Steven Garrity and Clara Shih, founders of Hearsay Labs, talk about how they both knew they wanted to start a company – and with each other. A long-time goal for Shih, she recalls receiving an issue of BusinessWeek when she was 18 that impressed upon her how magical things can happen in Silicon Valley. Josh Reeves, founder of unwrap inc., adds that a start-up is the best place to learn many aspects of running a business.



Transcript

So, I actually have four motivations I wanted to start off with.. I wanted to start a company.. I was a Mayfield fellow and just really enjoyed entrepreneurship and thought it would be fun.. And so, I wanted to start a company and that was goal number one.. But then I went off and tried to figure what that was.. And goal number two became starting a company with Clara, who had been a good friend for five or 10 years at that point.. And then the rest solved itself.. Yes, and like Steve, the reason I came to Stanford in the first place was because when I was in high school, I was 18 years old, I was given this copy of BusinessWeek that talked about Silicon Valley.. And my eyes lit up and I felt like, what a wonderful and magical place where anyone with a good idea with a little bit of luck and a lot of hard work can change the world.. And so, I've always wanted to start a company..

And what caused us to really look at social media was seeing all the changes that companies like Facebook and Twitter have caused us to have in our daily lives.. And we felt like there was a huge opportunity to bring those same transformations into the business realm.. I definitely agree with the points that Clara and Steve made.. I guess one I would add is, in my view a startup is really one of the best possible environments in the world to learn a ton of information, a ton of new experiences, mostly because you are thrown into a situation where you either have to learn how to do it or you're not going to be successful.. And I really had the ambition to try to learn as much as I could.. I had just left a startup where I had worked for about three years.. It was doing really well but I was ready to be in a position where I was a bit more uncomfortable, a bit more chaotic and also a bit more challenged.. And so, that's why I left Zazzle, which is the company I had been on previously, to start a new company.. And the first thing I think, again, what Steve mentioned was who am I going to work with.. And the funny thing I thought I would mention for Stanford students was my co-founder actually I met in IHUM freshman year..

So, for all the techies in the room, there's actually a benefit to IHUM.. You might even meet your co-founder there.. For reference, I also met Jeff in IHUM.. IHUM is a humanities class.. It's a requirement for all the engineering students to take a humanities class.. It starts with people.. Wayne and I were really the foundation.. He had been in Google for three years.. And then from there, we started focusing on a couple of different product areas that we're excited about..