

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/set-a-high-bar-for-values>

One Concern CTO and co-founder Nicole Hu describes interviewing an extremely talented engineer with one problem - he didn't seem to respect the women he spoke with. Rather than overlook his attitude, the entire team agreed that they couldn't hire someone who didn't share their values of respect and inclusion. Culture, Hu reminds us, isn't something "light." Core cultural values should influence even the most serious business and technical decisions.



Transcript

- And make sure definitely that the bar you'd keep for your machine alignment is as high or may be even higher than the technical bar or the business bar you're looking for.. Don't compromise on that.. We've learned that the hard way that we should never do that.. I'd give you a quick anecdote of an interview we did in the early stages of one concern.. We had this really really smart engineer come to interview with us.. And we were really impressed by what he could do.. So I interviewed him and one of my other engineers interviewed him.. And he was very rude and condescending throughout the interview.. Didn't let me complete my sentences, and I was taken aback.. And after we did a debrief, the CEO came in, so Ahamed, and he was like no that guy was wonderful, he was very nice with me, he was very respectful..

So I don't know what was the difference.. After looking through our debrief notes, it was pretty obvious that the person who came in had a bias towards being respectful to you know men in particular.. And you know that was a complete, whether or not he was the most smartest engineer in the world, I couldn't have somebody come in and be disrespectful to my team.. And this was not just something I thought of, Ahamed, the entire team agree that this was something we would always stand by.. So culture shouldn't be something light.. You should be willing to not hire if somebody is not your culture and really stand by it...