URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/skills-for-students-with-ai-goals

Andrew Ng, managing general partner at AI Fund, advises students who are interested in AI entrepreneurship to take technical classes to master the fundamentals, then practice those skills on use cases in other fields.

Transcript

- If you wanna pursue a career in AI right now, 00:00:06,238 and let's say your child was entering Stanford, what advice would you give them in terms of how to spend their time? - Yeah, so, there's one thing 00:00:14,640 that's actually really worth doing when you're a Stanford student, which is take classes, 'cause it turns out that I feel like there's actually one pattern I see for both undergraduates and graduate students, including PhD students, which is there's so much exciting stuff to do, you just wanna jump in and do it, right? In fact, I've seen undergrads in their freshman year, try to join a research lab and start doing work in AI.. That's okay, nothing wrong with that.. But it turns out that while project work is one way to learn coursework is, I think, an even more efficient way to learn, especially when it comes to mastering the fundamentals, because professors put a lot of work to organize the material in a way that's efficient to learn and digest.. So I would say, take classes in AI technology or in entrepreneurship and gain those skills.. I've seen students jump in, and then if you are trying to work in a research lab without strong skills, you end up, labeling data or something, which is fine.. You learn somethings, but you actually learn a lot from taking courses.. And then in addition to that, after you start to master the foundational skills, after you know how to use AI technology or then as you start to practice, find exciting use cases across campus.. I do a lot of work, over with people over in climate science or in healthcare to take my AI expertise and then navigate with a different discipline that I'm not expert in to find exciting applications.. And hopefully that type of practice will help many of you find exciting projects to work on as well.. - Do you need to take technical classes? 00:01:49,350 Do you think you need to take computer science classes if you wanna pursue a career in AI? - Need is too strong..

00:01:56,700 But I definitely encourage you to take technical classes.. I think we're moving toward a world where frankly, at some future point, I think everyone should learn to code or rather, I think it'll be useful for everyone to learn how to code, for a couple of reasons.. Everyone has access to data, right? This is different than the world used to be even a few years ago.. And especially generative AI, your ability to get something to work is much higher than ever before.. The barrier to entry is much lower than ever before.. And so, if you learn just a little bit of coding, the amount that you really accomplish is significantly greater than if you don't know how to code at all...