

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/the-underappreciated-role-of-diversity-in-googles-early-success>

Ulu Ventures managing director Miriam Rivera, who joined Google when the company had only 160 employees, highlights the underappreciated role of diversity in its early success. She notes that multilingual hires allowed Google to expand into 80 countries within three years and stresses the incredible value of gender-diverse teams. Her own path, she adds, involved bringing those insights about the importance of multiculturalism and gender diversity into venture capital.



## Transcript

- Silicon Valley draws the best entrepreneurs 00:00:07,580 from throughout the world and that's one of the passions that I have just starting from a kid.. Like when I was in middle school, I went to a public middle school that had 60 different languages red spoken at home, right? And so that really gave me an early access I think to what was happening in the country.. That many people didn't quite realize that, you know, we were shifting from in 1950, a predominantly white community with some African-American presence to one of the most multicultural countries that's ever existed on the face of the planet.. And I always saw that as a real strength in terms of, one, being able to connect with other people, being able to understand the world.. And when I went to Google, I came to understand how vital it was to actually building a big business, right? We were in 80 different countries in about year three of the business.. Obviously some of that was just completely remote, but we had physical presence in 16 different countries at that time, and that is something that I realized that my background was actually really helpful.. So some of the kinds of things that we did, were we brought in attorneys that could read, speak, and write Japanese, or could read, speak, and write Chinese, or, you know different languages where we were going to expand the business.. It was so much faster to do business at the speed of the native language than it is for somebody who can only speak English.. - Interesting.. 00:01:49,340 - So and I realized that nobody really was commenting on, 00:01:50,280 they were commenting a lot about how Google was so successful and they kind of miss some of the underlying fabric of what made that possible in that diversity..

We also had of the 13 original VPs and founders.. We have three women on the team.. We gone really remarked on and every team eventually came to have, and unfortunate it shouldn't be this particular way but it was typically a senior male and then a right-hand person who was a woman on the team.. And I saw that and I realized that that was really an important part of how we got to be so fast growing, and I wanted to do that in venture because I realized that at that time, you know, 2% of the dollars were going to women.. It's still not that much more today, 13 years later.. And that we were having people like from Google that were engineers, that would go back to their home countries to try to raise capital to start a company.. I just thought that was insane..