

The **HARD** part of building a
strong innovation culture

Jeff Standard

Jeff Standard



Current Role: COO and VP, Product Management at Drivemode

My expertise

- New product development
- Startups
- Building teams for fast innovation
- SV and Tokyo perspectives



Software
engineer and
PM for FinTech





Software engineer and PM for FinTech



Founded first company at 26



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Software
engineer and
PM for FinTech



Founded first
company at 26



MBA from
Kellogg





Software engineer and PM for FinTech



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MBA from Kellogg



Founded 2nd company



Safe driving app



Global HQ





Software engineer and PM for FinTech



Founded first company at 26



MBA from Kellogg



Founded 2nd company



My company acquired by Honda Motors

crunchbase news

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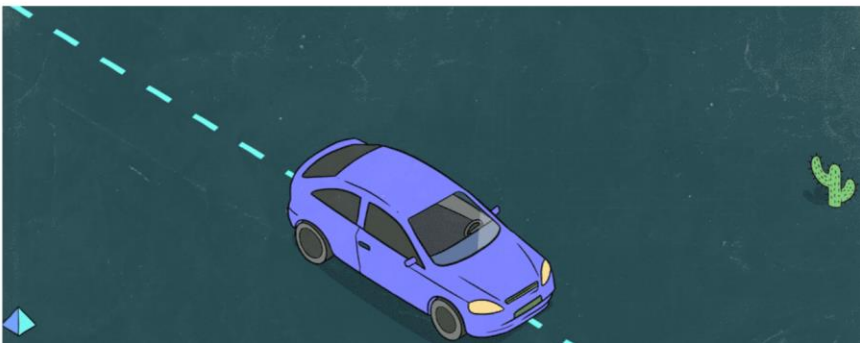
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Mary Ann Azevedo October 9, 2019



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速報 > プレスリリース > 記事

プレスリリース

企業名 | 産業 ホンダ | 自動車

ホンダ、本田技術研究所が米Drivemode社を完全子会社化

2019/10/7 11:40

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ドライバー向けスマートフォンアプリの開発会社 Drivemode社を完全子会社化

Hondaの研究開発子会社である株式会社本田技術研究所（本社:埼玉県和光市、代表取締役社長:三部 敏宏 以下、本田技術研究所）は、デジタル・コネクテッド領域における新

Please feel comfortable to ask questions **during** the presentation.

Speed of Jeff's brain
in **English**



Speed of Jeff's brain
in **Japanese**



Innovation Culture

Build Innovative Products



Strong Innovation Culture



What does this actually mean?

Characteristics of a Strong Innovation Culture

The FUN stuff

1

Tolerance for failure
失敗への耐性

2

Experimentation
実験

3

Psychological safety
心理的安全性

4

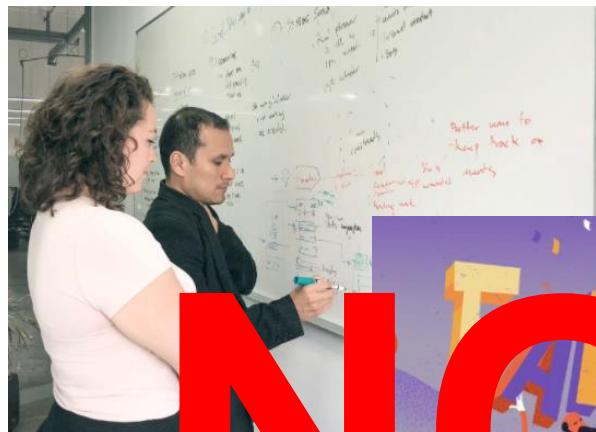
Collaboration
コラボレーション

5

Flat hierarchy
フラットな組織階層

6

Learning
学び



Characteristics of a Strong Innovation Culture

The FUN stuff

The HARD stuff

1

Tolerance for failure
失敗への耐性



Low tolerance for incompetence
無能を許さない姿勢

2

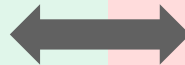
Experimentation
実験



Discipline
規律

3

Psychological safety
心理的安全性



Brutal honesty
率直さ

4

Collaboration
コラボレーション



Individual accountability
個人の説明責任

5

Flat hierarchy
フラットな組織階層



Strong leadership
強いリーダーシップ

6

Learning
学び



Execution
実行

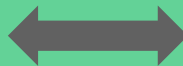


Your innovation culture needs to be **balanced**.

You can't achieve results without a mix of the FUN stuff and the HARD stuff.

1

Tolerance for failure
失敗への耐性



Low tolerance for incompetence
無能を許さない姿勢

It's okay to fail!

That means you are trying to new things and pushing your limits.

But fail in a smart way.

Learn from your mistakes and share your learning with the team.

Don't keep failing from the SAME mistakes.

1

Tolerance for failure
失敗への耐性



Low tolerance for incompetence
無能を許さない姿勢

What we do at drivemode

Teach employees our culture from their first day during onboarding.

Cultural equations

DONE > Perfect

- Do not endlessly polish
- Bias for action
- Confirm the need first, invest later, if needed

DATA > Emotion or Opinion

- Separate fact and opinion
- Disagreement is healthy
- It's most important to find a way to move forward, even while disagreeing

SMALL START > Endless Planning

- Startup culture, move quickly
- Never assume full knowledge
- Build to learn

 drivemode
A HONDA COMPANY

10

*Actual slide from Drivemode onboarding

Make cultural fit an important factor when hiring.



Tell me about a time you failed.

I failed when... it was part my fault and part someone else's fault.



Hmm.. this person did not seem to learn good lessons from their failure. They may not be a good cultural fit.

3

Psychological safety
心理的安全性



Brutal honesty
率直さ

You should **feel safe** that you can **share your ideas** and thoughts.

You should also be able to give and accept **constructive criticism**.

3

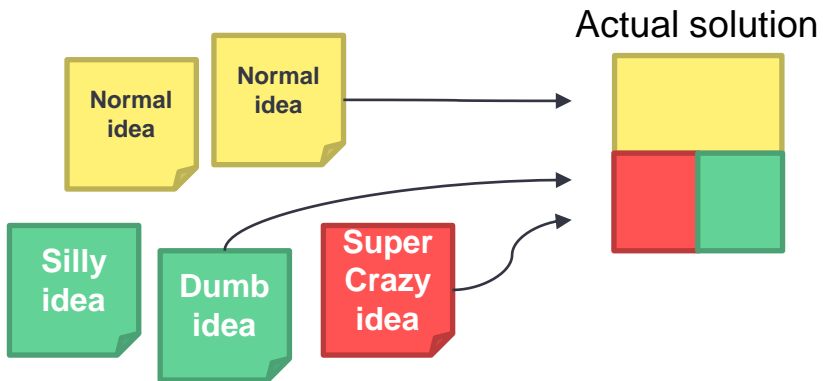
Psychological safety
心理的安全性



Brutal honesty
率直さ

What we do at  drivemode

When brainstorming solutions, we encourage to put **ANY** idea out there.



What I tell employees

I only care about the best solution.
I don't care if it's my idea.
If my solution is bad, please explain so I can learn.
If your solution is bad, I will tell you so you can learn.

We only hire low ego people.



1. A strong innovation culture needs both the FUN and the HARD stuff to be successful. Evaluate how your culture is doing.
 2. Building a strong culture doesn't "happen naturally". It requires specific effort and investment, especially from senior leadership.
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Thank you!
