

CASE STUDY



Taking The Reins

Most technology entrepreneurs have a technology background. They face many management challenges, but controlling product development is usually not one of them. A startup we worked with was at the other end of the spectrum. The entrepreneur came from the business development side of technology, and he was very good with relationships, the business case, and product concept. But his lack of experience with product development emerged as a serious problem when development slowed and eventually stopped altogether.

We taught the entrepreneur how technology product development worked, in practice, and taught him how to speak its language. We helped him understand what he was being told, using metaphors from his own business experience, and we coached him on taking the initiative in product development decision-making.

We provided him a template for prioritizing and tracking development progress, which he received as a revelation. Soon he and his partner had laid out a product roadmap using that template, and presented it to the development leader who, it soon became apparent, had been in over his head for quite a while. The development leader resisted direction and, as a result, was removed. This strategic setback permitted the entrepreneur to regain control of product development, which he did by quickly outsourcing it to a much more professional group, and under clearer terms of engagement. Once that transition occurred, the product took shape rapidly. It entered public beta testing shortly thereafter.

Client Benefits

- Restored momentum and accelerated pace for stalled product development
- Chief executive acquired product development management skills

Cultivating Creativity, LLC uses the techniques of creative leadership to help companies increase their increase their ability to perform and adapt. We consult with executives and entrepreneurs, blending strategy, collaboration, and creativity to restructure project portfolios, improve team and leader performance, articulate vision and values, and resolve interpersonal conflicts. We focus on effectiveness and adaptability by stimulating innovative thinking and removing systemic obstacles to innovative practice. Our success is based on an approach that integrates forty years' experience in project management, conflict resolution, product development, and the performing arts.