Interview Assessment #1

Name of Professional: William Boren

Profession/Title: Technology Advisor and Entrepreneur

Business/Company name: ViewExtend, ESports Connect

Date of Interview: 10/5/2021

Assessment:

      I went into this interview looking to expand my knowledge of artificial intelligence and machine learning. What I got out of it was much more than that.

      Most of my research so far has been centered around the recognition of objects through computer vision. While doing research to prepare for this interview, I saw that Mr. Boren's area of expertise was not in computer vision, but was instead on AI chatbots that companies could use to advertise their products. Even though this area of AI-Marketing wasn't necessarily my topic of research, there was still so much for me to digest and learn that could apply to any field.

      Some of the biggest lessons that I learned through this interview was about startups and creating a product for consumers. *The Lean Startup* by Eric Ries details a method that is used by many successful startups to stay financially stable and ensure that they don't run out of runway before their product really takes off. I also learned about minimal viable products, or MVPs, which are used to help potential customers gain an idea of the product while allowing them to customize it to their own needs. Why does this matter? If I ever end up creating something, I will need to be able to have a solid business plan that can attract potential customers without using up all of my funding on going straight to a final product. If that were to happen, it would be much more difficult for the product to be adaptable to the needs of customers, which would defeat the purpose of the product itself.

      Another important insight that Mr. Boren gave me was the importance of knowing the strategies of top companies in my field. If I thoroughly understand the solutions of the current

top ten most successful robotics companies, I will be better informed about which solutions work for the field and which ones may not. As a result, I can make better decisions when it comes to my own product and/or company and can apply the hard-learned lessons of top companies to myself as well.

Another important aspect of the interview was our discussion of data privacy. AI models need data to train, but in order to protect the privacy of customers, there have been stricter and stricter data protection laws that are going into effect. As a result, any potential products need to be designed with data privacy at the forefront instead of it being an afterthought. If I apply this, I could save myself a lot of future problems that could come out of data privacy violations, either by myself or by a customer depending on the product.

While designing a solution, it is important to have a clear product-market-fit, or PMF. As a result, especially for my final product, I need to understand the exact problem that I am trying to solve and the market that this impacts the most. This will help me fit my product to that market to allow it to have the greatest chance for success.

Startups may not always work out. As a result, it is important to have several projects that you are pushing out because it is likely that some won't work out. Pushing your product down multiple avenues can help account for this. In order to apply this principle, it may be a good idea to understand how my solution can apply to multiple markets and sellers.

However, one of the biggest takeaways that I had from the interview was Mr. Boren's insight that fluid communication with non-technical people is key. This is something that I could definitely work on, and is very important. If this type of communication is not done successfully, a lot of doors could remain closed off that could have allowed for further growth of the project. As a result, I think that fluid communication in general is a skill that I should continue to improve upon.

Overall, this interview was incredibly informative and really opened my eyes to the world of startups. Now that I have some places to start learning, I can gain a greater understanding of startups so that I can navigate the business world much better than before.