OLIVIER DE WECK: One of the first assignments that I ask students to do in the class is to write a team charter. Now what is a team charter? You can think of a team charter like a manifesto. It's essentially defining the identity and the goals that the team wants to pursue.

And in this kind of class, there could be many different goals. For example, as a team you want to learn as much as you can about the process of systems engineering and design and so forth. Another charter could be that you are very ambitious and you want to win the competition. So you want to score as high as you can. And the ultimate goal is to be as highly ranked as possible in the competition.

Another goal could be just to have fun, you know. To just have a good time, to learn, but essentially to really be together in this learning environment, to learn and have fun at the same time.

And so the flavor of each team is a little bit different. And rather than just letting it happen without much thought or discussion, the purpose of the team charter or project charter is to encourage these discussions early, such that the team is on the same page as they proceed into the project.