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00:00:06,910 --> 00:00:30,390

"I'm Allen Chen; I'm the operations lead on the Entry, Descent and Landing team

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00:00:30,390 --> 00:00:33,640

for the Mars Science Laboratory project.

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00:00:33,640 --> 00:00:36,989

Right now I'm coordinating our preparations for entry, descent and landing.

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00:00:36,989 --> 00:00:40,790

We land in August, a few months from now and we're still hurrying to get all our

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00:00:40,790 --> 00:00:43,780

stuff ready to make sure that we're ready to take the plunge.

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00:00:43,780 --> 00:00:47,140

I'll be telling people exactly what the spacecraft is doing, you know roughly where

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00:00:47,140 --> 00:00:54,350

it is and what it's telling us is going on during EDL.

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00:00:54,350 --> 00:00:58,640

My parents always displayed an example that education never stops.

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00:00:58,640 --> 00:01:01,809

You always want to learn as much as you can and it doesn't stop when you leave the

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00:01:01,809 --> 00:01:02,809

classroom.

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00:01:02,809 --> 00:01:07,070

\hMy parents added new skills while I was still in high school and you know they got

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00:01:07,070 --> 00:01:10,480

other degrees and a lot of the times it was just for fun.

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00:01:10,480 --> 00:01:14,100

We have essentially a copy of the spacecraft over in a different building here where we

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00:01:14,100 --> 00:01:17,319

can try to get this virtual spacecraft to run through the motions it will go through

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00:01:17,319 --> 00:01:18,319

during EDL.

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00:01:18,319 --> 00:01:21,030

\hWe run trajectory simulations to understand its performance.

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00:01:21,030 --> 00:01:25,440

\hWe've probably literally run millions of simulated cases from the cruise stage separation

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00:01:25,440 --> 00:01:27,370

all the way to the ground to make sure we get to where we are going.

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00:01:27,370 --> 00:01:28,490

\hYou got to work hard.

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00:01:28,490 --> 00:01:32,860

\hThere's a lot of academics that you need to get to this point in your career.

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00:01:32,860 --> 00:01:36,860

\hBeyond that I would also emphasize that it's not just about science and math for

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00:01:36,860 --> 00:01:37,860

say.

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00:01:37,860 --> 00:01:40,730

\hIf you can't talk about what you are doing,  
you're not going to get very far in this.

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00:01:40,730 --> 00:01:41,819

\hYou're going to have to convince people.

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00:01:41,819 --> 00:01:45,979

\hThis is a type of mission and type of project  
and type of thing that we do here that no

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00:01:45,979 --> 00:01:47,100

one person can do by themselves.

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00:01:47,100 --> 00:01:50,870

\hSo you got to work with a lot people and  
learning how to work with those people is

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00:01:50,870 --> 00:01:54,550

just as important as learning those basics  
in science and math.

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00:01:54,550 --> 00:01:58,239

That's kind of the starting point but to  
grow beyond that you need to be able to work

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00:01:58,239 --> 00:01:59,239

with people.

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00:01:59,239 --> 00:02:02,480

There's a kind of exploration that we do  
here that can't be done anywhere else.

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00:02:02,480 --> 00:02:06,710

\hThere's certainly other places where you're

doing things to make money or you're doing

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00:02:06,710 --> 00:02:11,950

things related to exploration, but here the entire point of the place is about exploration.

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00:02:11,950 --> 00:02:16,410

So I think I finally came to that realization sometime in late high school or early college