Entrepreneurship in the Age of AI: Navigating Challenges, Seizing Opportunities

Leah Braddell,
CEO and Chief Data Officer, DataBiologics

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Faculty Host: Kati Martinez

Abstract

In this insightful talk, Leah Braddell will take you on her journey from biomedical engineering to commercial leadership, demonstrating how a non-traditional path can provide the critical experience needed for success in the age of AI. As the CEO & Chief Data Officer of DataBiologics, Leah leads a cutting-edge health technology company at the forefront of regenerative medicine, where she leverages AI to unlock the full potential of an early-stage technology startup operating in a fast-growing and controversial field of medicine. Leah will share her unique career path and challenges she faces in building a health technology company from the ground up, including navigating the complex landscape of funding, regulation, and innovation. Drawing on her engineering background and extensive experience in commercial roles, she highlights how this diverse skillset has been instrumental in driving the momentum of her data-driven business and in leading research in multiple emerging applications across technology and medicine. Leah's journey is a testament to the value of taking the road less traveled. She will explore why diverse experiences—combining technical expertise with commercial acumen—are increasingly vital in the rapidly evolving world of AI and healthcare. This talk will also touch on the various funding options available to entrepreneurs, from traditional venture capital to crowdfunding, and how choosing the right path and partners can impact the trajectory of a business. Whether you're an aspiring entrepreneur, a STEM enthusiast, or someone interested in the future of healthcare, this session will offer valuable insights into how embracing a unique path can lead to groundbreaking innovation and success in today's AI-driven landscape.

Biosketch

Leah Braddell is a dynamic entrepreneur and innovator with a distinguished career that spans over 20 years in healthcare devices, technology, product development, and commercialization. Leah's journey began with a solid foundation in biomedical engineering, graduating Summa Cum Laude with a B.S.E. from Arizona State University, where she was recognized as the Outstanding Graduate of the Fulton School of Engineering and as the Distinguished Senior in Bioengineering. As an undergraduate at ASU, Leah served as Chapter President for the Biomedical Engineering Society and was an active member in Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society. She also graduated the Barret Honors College with a 4.0 GPA. Her academic focus on cellular, molecular, and tissue engineering, combined with pre-medical studies, set the stage for a career deeply rooted in the intersection of engineering and healthcare. As a graduate student, Leah was awarded a Flynn Foundation Fellowship, further honing her technical expertise as a doctoral candidate in biomedical engineering, securing research funding and pioneering experimental designs in biotechnology for novel implantable chemotherapeutics. Transitioning from academia to industry, Leah quickly established herself as a top performer in the commercialization and sales of disruptive surgical technologies. She spent over a decade with robotics juggernaut Intuitive Surgical, where she played a pivotal role in the expansion and early adoption of the da Vinci robotic surgical system, later leading market access strategies, training, and sales efforts that exceeded $30 million in annual revenue. Her career trajectory saw her take on senior roles, including Director of Market Access and Custom Analytics at Intuitive Surgical, and later, as Sr. Director of Analytics at eVisit, where she architected innovative patient claims and product analytics solutions for the telehealth sector. In 2021, Leah founded STEMPowered Solutions, a consulting firm focused on strategic, go-to-market, and technical consulting for early-stage biotech and medical device companies. Today, as the CEO and Chief Data Officer of DataBiologics, Leah is at the forefront of regenerative medicine, leading the development of AI-driven solutions that leverage a specialized database to transform patient care. Her unique path from engineering to commercial leadership has equipped her with the skills and insights needed to navigate the challenges of building a health technology company in the age of AI. Leah's journey is a testament to the power of combining technical expertise with commercial acumen, and her work continues to push the boundaries of what is possible in healthcare and AI.