



SMALL BUSINESS CENTER

Listen for 'Thuds:' When You Know it's Time to Hire

By Damon Schechter

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By Damon Schechter, Founder and CEO, Shipwire [Product Fulfillment](#) and a blogger at <http://www.shipwire.com/blog>

As CEO, my job is to guide the company's strategic direction.

I make sure we have enough runway and staff to execute our plans.

Sometimes I think the hardest part of the job is actually the hiring. Clearly, some hires are obvious; but, in today's market

that is often not the case.

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There are many options that can add confusion to the decision of when to hire. Today you can use a consultant, outsource a function, or develop internal [employees](#) to take on projects and functions beyond their basic skill set. However, this blog is about hiring and a follow-up to my "Build the Road" post last month.

One of my Stanford professors once gave me a really great piece of advice that I still live by today: When there is too much to do, that is your notice to let a few things drop to the floor and hire additional hands to help move you forward.

I've found the advice really great to measure when and who to hire. Use this advice as you build your business and are juggling too many tasks. Some of the tasks are really important and others aren't. Some can only be done by you—but in most cases, they can be done by somebody else.

Early on with Shipwire as we began to offer [e-commerce product fulfillment](#), the workload became unmanageable. I had to initiate triage and went into hire mode.

By "triaging" I accomplished a few things. First, I made sure I took care of the things that had to be done for the company to keep going and not lose momentum. But many tasks and opportunities just hit the floor with a loud thud. That thud was actually very helpful. It

allowed me to look at what the next person was going to need to be able to do, essentially catch that ball before it lands with a thud.

SMALL BUSINESS DISCUSSIONS

Q: What is the biggest misconception about starting a business?

A: It's very different having an idea about something than actually building it. Building & scaling a company always takes about three times longer.>

Bob Casey and Rich Littlehale - founders of YouRenew

From: Phone Home - This Device Still Works
October 14, 2009 RE

Q: What do I need to know when creating and signing contracts?

A: Consult a lawyer if you need help. Make sure all deal terms and assumptions are written into the contracts. Pay attention to all language even boilerplate.



SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION

incredibly time consuming and something has to give.

Sometimes I think hiring is like construction—it's how you're building your team. Why wouldn't you have similar expectations of hiring as you would of a home construction project? Three times as long and twice the expense. Clearly, it's not always like that.

You can find a lot of very talented people to fill out the ranks of your individual contributors, so those positions are usually faster to hire.

However, for your core leadership team, or some of your chief technologists, the construction metaphor is pretty reliable. For these positions, you may need to employ recruiters, who aren't cheap.

The right candidates often take more than just time to hire, they take time to come aboard because they are typically not unemployed and available. They are good, so even in today's economy they are still employed. This means they need to be recruited and need time to wrap up prior positions. So when you "Stop, drop and hire" it will take three times as long as you expect and be twice as expensive.

Here are a few tricks that I employ to hire my core leadership teams.

First, go ahead and post to job boards or Craigslist--but don't spend much time filtering through the [resumes](#). These posts generate a tsunami of resumes. When I post, I usually put up an assignment or series of requests for any interested candidate. My rule of thumb is put in the circular file ("garbage") any response that doesn't follow directions and spend time on the submission. I find that the right people, especially for sales and marketing positions, will get to you through your network or hit you up via alternative means if they are very interested.

I also post to job boards, because they bring traffic to the site and business in the door--it's almost like advertising. Our marketing team can always tell when we post jobs, because inbound hits to the [web site](#) spike.

My second tip is to post openings on your corporate jobs directory. If a job can go under multiple distinctions, post all the names to your web site and link to them from your job post. For example, sales can be inside sales, account executive, telesales, account manager, etc. You never know. That hot-shot marketing leader may be the friend of the person who just looked at your jobs page for a customer service job.

Third, ignore almost all the job post resumes and use LinkedIn to recruit the right talent from similar [companies](#). LinkedIn is worth its weight in gold here. Use it to help articulate to recruiters who is ideal, or not. I personally reach out to interesting candidates with a simple script "Hello, I'm the CEO of Shipwire, might you be interested in our XXX Job or perhaps know somebody who you think would be a great fit. See all our positions here. Best, Damon." I can't tell you how well it works.

When overwhelmed, remember that it is time to stop, drop and hire.

About the Author: Damon Schechter is the Founder and CEO of Shipwire [Product Fulfillment](#). Damon also blogs about business growth at <http://www.shipwire.com/blog>

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