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You Take the Credit, or I Take the Blame

By Damon Schechter
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Damon Schechter, founder and CEO, Shipwire Product Order Fulfillment and a blogger at <http://www.shipwire.com/blog>

We're in the middle of an audacious product launch here at Shipwire, one that I hope to blog more about after it's out the door, and we've tested it with a group of our customers.

Rather than speak to the features or the launch process, I'd like to talk about inspiring a team to elevate ideas, even if they're risky or could potentially trigger a backlash.

I'd like to remind the reader that, as the CEO, I've tried to surround myself with people smarter than myself. In my blog, you can read tidbits from our sales VP, our board of advisors and other brilliant team members. This post is a puree of ideas I've gleaned from our team, my college roommate and a great quote from a mentor.

At Shipwire, I don't want sycophants or "Yes men" and I doubt any entrepreneurial CEO does. I want ideas to be fairly collected in data-driven discussions that lack any internal "political" agenda. But, how do I get ideas to percolate up from the bottom? How do I sponsor a culture of risk taking?

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Shipwire is like GSI Commerce for the SMB; so it was particularly powerful for me to watch Michael shed the board attire and go to work in the warehouse, load trucks and answer customer support calls.

How have you inspired ideas and risk taking in your enterprise?

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

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"Ask lots of questions and listen to the advice of others but make your own decisions. When I was in school I was never really afraid to ask for a favor. If a professor had the knowledge to help me out I would go and bug that professor. If there was a graduate student, I would go and bug that graduate student. When there were tutors, I would be in a tutor's office until they would kick me out. It was all about putting in the time for me."

- Perry Raso, Founder of Matunuck Oyster Farm

From: Young Guns - The Underwater Farmer
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Q: What happens if I need guidance on running my small business?

A: The U.S. Small Business Administration has plenty of advice, and you can find mentors with groups like SCORE (www.score.org).

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