

# Intrapreneurial Intent

A Newsletter for Innovators at Large Companies

April 2010



## Academic Advisory

Q&A with Ray Marcinowski, Babson College



Ray Marcinowski is an adjunct faculty member at Babson College where he teaches a course in Corporate Entrepreneurship.

**Q. Ray, in your Corporate Entrepreneur course at Babson College, how do you define an intrapreneur?**

A. It's about two things - having an idea or a vision for how things can be done differently, and then executing against it. The easy part is coming up with the idea or vision. Most intrapreneurs fail because they can't effectively execute their ideas or vision.

**Q. What are the main differences between an intrapreneur and an entrepreneur?**

A. The big difference is that an entrepreneur uses their own resources and puts them at stake. Not all intrapreneurs are made out to be entrepreneurs. Some intrapreneurs aren't as inclined to find the funding, yet they may be equally as creative as an entrepreneur. They'd rather not have to worry about that aspect. Building things come first for an intrapreneur.

**Q. How can an intrapreneur improve the chances for success?**

A. It starts with building the right team and mobilizing your business partners. However, to do that you have to effectively communicate your value proposition. Along the way, it is important that you make timely decisions, deliver results, and share the credit.



Babson College, located in Wellesley, Massachusetts, is recognized internationally for its entrepreneurial leadership.

**Q. Does an intrapreneur always have the chance to choose their own team?**

A. Not always. The intrapreneur may find that they are already working as part of an existing team. However, any new effort will require new business partners that are outside their team. These partners need to be identified and mobilized. Typically, these business partners will provide needed expertise as well as other capabilities such as distribution and manufacturing networks. In this sense, the intrapreneur always needs to build a new team. If they don't, there's a good chance that the project will fail.

**Q. What personal characteristics are commonly found in an intrapreneur?**

A. Intrapreneurs and entrepreneurs share a number of common characteristics such as high energy, can-do-attitude, creativity, and risk-taking. However, to be a successful entrepreneur within a corporate setting requires an additional set of skills which include being flexible, perceptive, politically savvy, and building a broad network.

**Q. What experiences are most beneficial in qualifying for an intrapreneurial job opportunity?**

A. Since most intrapreneurial job opportunities involve building a new product, service, group or business, the broader the experience you bring to the job, the more you increase your chances for success. It is critical that you gain multi-function exposure which will allow you to develop more of a general management perspective. At the same time, developing contacts in all the functional areas will be tremendously valuable as you embark on



Prior to Babson, Ray spent over 20 years with Fidelity Investments, launching and growing businesses in the US, Japan and India.

Ray also spent 9 years with Exxon in a variety of roles covering sales, marketing, strategic planning and operations.

your intrapreneurial venture. Equally as important is establishing a track record of producing results as this will increase your visibility within the company and position you for that next opportunity.

**Q. What behaviors do you typically see in an intrapreneur?**

A. Successful intrapreneurs tend to be very good at promoting their ideas with confidence and enthusiasm. They enlist the help and involvement of the key stakeholders and they do it in both formal and informal ways. Intrapreneurs also align their initiatives to the broader company strategy and emphasize how their initiatives will lead to positive outcomes for the broader organization.

**Q. What are common roadblocks that get in the way of an intrapreneur?**

A. The roadblocks encountered by an intrapreneur are essentially the converse of the suggestions mentioned above.

- An unwillingness to reach out beyond one's own organization is akin to creating a self-made roadblock.
- Intrapreneurs that don't show early results jeopardize their ability to receive (or continue to receive) funding.
- Reluctance to engage in continual networking jeopardizes the effort.

In a sense, it all comes down to the number of people that you have to get on board to realize your idea. Entrepreneurs spend a good deal of their time chasing funding. Intrapreneurs, in their corporate environment, are chasing influence via networking within the corporation.

Both types of individuals are chasing funding! They are just doing it in a slightly different way.



## Corporate Speak

Q&A with Rob Masson, EMC



Rob Masson is the Director of EMC Research Cambridge and a Senior Technologist with the EMC CTO Office. Rob is heavily involved in global innovation in the United States and China.

EMC expanded its Cambridge Research presence in June of 2009.

**Q. Rob, what is your role in fostering innovation in Cambridge, MA?**

I facilitate the interaction between EMC employees and the large number of potential research partners in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Right now various EMC intrapreneurs are working with the MIT Media Lab and Harvard University. We're also planning for collaboration with local companies like Google, VMware, and Microsoft.

**Q. How does the average employee get involved with Cambridge research?**

There are a number of ways. EMC Engineers and Technologists ask to be nominated to the team provided they are able to come into Cambridge on a regular basis. Additionally we have been developing a lecture series where we bring in speakers from local partners and broadcast their presentation via a live meeting. We are going to open that series to the entire company and the general public in 2010 on the EMC Community Network. Joining the network allows for all employees to subscribe to events and new research as it happens.

**Q. What is the general philosophy of the EMC Research team in Cambridge?**

Team members work with researchers on active fields of study and participate in various ways. They may provide Use Cases or insight into



EMC's Shanghai Center of Excellence has been located at the Knowledge and Innovation Community of Yangpu, Shanghai since November of 2007.



EMC's Beijing Center of Excellence strong research ties to local universities.

real-world challenges. They may also interact directly with the researchers to advance their work. They can change the original intent of the research. By involving EMC intrapreneurs that currently work on products, we believe we can close the gap between research and industry and thus accelerate innovation into our products.

**Q. You also manage innovation at EMC's Center of Excellence in Shanghai. What is the basic model that you use for collaboration?**

There are several ways that items get identified for the China CoE. Our Chief Technology Officer assigns new tasks to China. These tasks often represent ideas with strategic value to the corporation, and have included innovative new product ideas for cloud computing, semantic web search, and secure computing. Another common occurrence is that ideas get generated within a research team and then are explored in China as part of a larger strategic initiative. Additional external research may trigger a deeper exploration of an issue that is relevant to our products and technologies. Lastly we have ideas that come into the China pipeline through our corporate-wide innovation contest. Some of the best ideas from the contest are often initially incubated by our China software team.

**Q. What is the state of interaction between the China CoE and local Chinese universities?**

We currently have excellent relations with the local universities in Beijing. This is due in large part through the excellent work and background of Wenbo Mao and the staff that he has on his team. All of them are top notch researchers with ties back to their own academic teams and professors.

The research itself is very much directed towards having an impact and influence on our existing products and technologies. Our model is that the "pure research" occurs in the universities and then our teams will enhance that with a bent towards practical applications.

**Q. Any comments about the difference between being an intrapreneur at a large company versus an entrepreneur at a startup?**

I see two challenges and one large benefit. The first challenge is that EMC really is a world leader in storage as well as virtualization, security, document management, and archiving (to name just a few). That is exciting but also means that an intrapreneur has commitments to customers that must be honored.

When a new disruptive idea comes up they must think about how it affects our existing customers. The second challenge is simply scale. In a smaller company you can start up and get running with a "million dollar idea".

In a company the size of EMC, that kind of idea may not be big enough to be viable! Once an intrapreneur has discovered a critical customer need, though, they have access to some of the best and brightest people in the world to make it happen!

# Innovate with Influence

## A Guidebook for Intrapreneurs



*Innovate With Influence* is a handbook for corporate intrapreneurs.

### Steve Todd, EMC Corporation

Intrapreneur versus Entrepreneur? Both careers paths have their pros and cons. When considering which path to take, I am of the opinion that the intrapreneur choice presents a rather significant benefit: a global experience.

Joining a start-up does not necessarily mean that an entrepreneur lacks the opportunity to collaborate with global technologists. It is common for new companies to establish technology teams in two or perhaps three global locations.

A large, global company, however, should already have an established technology footprint throughout the world. Global product development for large corporations is a must-have. Diverse cultures create better products together. Purchase decisions in some countries are based on the presence of a local R&D center. Geographically distributed technologists have greater access to research at their co-workers' local universities.

Intrapreneurs can have much more global fun tapping into this network of innovation. As an example, let's explore the world-wide opportunities available at high-tech companies.



Steve Todd is a Distinguished Engineer at EMC Corporation and is the author of the book, *Innovate With Influence*.



Steve collaborates with EMC employees worldwide as part of an internal innovation contest.

Consider my corporation (EMC). I work in Massachusetts. I have access to local researchers at Harvard University and MIT. I'm building an information storage device with my co-workers in Research Triangle Park in North Carolina (highest percentage of PhD population in the world) and colleagues in St. Petersburg, Russia (frequent collaboration with local St. Petersburg universities). I joined with my co-workers in Shanghai, China and entered an idea in EMC's global innovation contest. Some of these ideas are on their way to becoming products.

There are additional EMC technology teams located in Ireland, India, Israel, France, and the Netherlands. All of them are tied together on a common social-media backbone known as EMC ONE. This type of global availability is fertile ground for innovation in a way that can't be achieved by a new start-up.

Take a few minutes and research the global reach and locations of other large, high-tech corporations, such as IBM, Cisco, and Microsoft.

“Globally collaborative employee” is certainly something that you want to write down on your resume; but it's more than that. It's an unforgettable way to deliver your ideas.

How can you make your voice heard in these types of globally expansive corporations? This is the essence of innovating with influence. Take an idea that you are passionate about, and reach out and network with employees around the globe. Global networking is a key driver for innovation.

## Connect with Us

Interested in working for EMC? Connect with us on these social media sites:



Job Openings

[www.emc-careers.com](http://www.emc-careers.com)



Facebook

[www.facebook.com/emccareers](http://www.facebook.com/emccareers)



Twitter – Entry Level

[twitter.com/emccollege](http://twitter.com/emccollege)



Twitter – All Jobs

[twitter.com/emccareers](http://twitter.com/emccareers)



YouTube

[www.youtube.com/user/emccareers](http://www.youtube.com/user/emccareers)

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