

ALLIANCE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVES

BRINGING LEADERS TOGETHER

EXCHANGING STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

TAPPING COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE



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Since 1996 the Alliance of Chief Executives has been helping CEOs solve their most profound, strategic challenges.

As the premier organization for chief executives in Northern California, we gather leaders from virtually every industry and market sector to engage in confidential exchanges that typically wouldn't—or couldn't—take place anywhere else.

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Swinging for the Fences

Support, speed and a penchant for pressure are key

By Warren Lutz

For Alain Couder, the challenge was enormous. How would he take a company that was largely ignored in the optical components market – and bleeding cash – and create a major player in just a few short years?

Couder (Q200) had no choice but to go big. His company merged with a competitor to create a new company, Oclaro, which gained serious recognition. Now a recent merger with global competitor Opnext has made Couder's firm number two in the optical components, modules and subsystems market.

When growth demands it, CEOs need to pull out all the stops. But swinging for the fences is never easy. It takes wisdom, planning and support, and even then the

risks are significant. For Couder, the number one hazard was the potential impact on Oclaro's clients. "You have to choose a merger that will have a minimal impact on the customer and minimal product overlap," he says. "The difficult thing is if you have overlap and you discontinue a product, it may open you up to competition." The second biggest risk for Oclaro, Couder says, is blending different company cultures. In order for a merger to truly succeed, "you need to feel that the management of both companies enjoys talking to each



Alain Couder
Oclaro

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Robert Sutton: Scaling Up Excellence

Stanford's entrepreneurial expert describes the key issues



Robert Sutton
Stanford University

By ACE Staff

According to Robert Sutton, building an organization of excellence is not so much about speed as it is about spreading and sustaining a mindset.

Speaking at a Regional Meeting of the Alliance of Chief Executives in Santa Clara, Sutton, the author of "Good Boss, Bad Boss" and "The No Asshole Rule," illustrated his point with examples like Facebook. Engineers at the social media giant are run through a six-week boot camp in which they work for a dozen different groups and are allowed to "move fast

and break things."

Sutton also presented a series of "choice points" that CEOs must face. Is it important to go for "more" or "better"? Do you do things alone, like Pixar, or with others, like open-source Mozilla's Firefox?

And he also described scaling principles, such as linking "hot causes to cool solutions," "when in doubt, take it out" and the importance of living a mindset instead of talking about it. Research, he said, suggests that strong beliefs are created and sustained by what people do

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In Search of Breakthrough Ideas

Five factors often separate visionary leaders from the rest of the pack

I admit it – I’m fascinated by stories of breakthrough ideas that transform people, companies, industries and sometimes the world. Where did these brilliant ideas come from? Is it possible to create conditions from which breakthrough ideas happen more frequently and with greater impact?



PAUL WITKAY
FOUNDER

To answer these questions, I have read hundreds of books on innovation, creativity, strategy, neuroscience, behavior, group dynamics and leadership. I have interviewed the leaders of some of the most innovative organizations in the world and thousands of CEOs in most every industry. Although I still consider myself a student

of the innovation process, I will share my observations of the factors I believe are most critical to generating more “big ideas” more often.

1) Seek or You Won’t Find

The first requirement for finding new ideas is to actually look for them. This sounds basic but many great ideas are hiding in plain sight until a “genius” is able to see them. There are tremendous opportunities just waiting to be found. Most innovations are simply extensions or combinations of what already exists in one market that are used to create new products, methods or processes in another. Millions of people enjoyed the “Italian coffee barista experience” in Italy before Howard Schultz decided to import it to the U.S. and launch Starbucks. Because most great ideas don’t come along simply because we want them to, it takes tremendous determination and patience to persevere until you’ve found what you’re seeking.

2) Change Your Routine

Great ideas don’t typically come during your normal routines. The brain works most creatively when dealing with surprises. Fresh ideas happen when you’re faced with people who think differently, unfamiliar places and cultures, and new sights, sounds and smells that invigorate the senses. Go out, meet new people, and visit new places.

3) Face New Challenges

New ideas occur when the brain is forced to deal with new challenges and situations. Most CEOs are wired to solve problems and they get great satisfaction in doing so. However, most problems are solved by applying the knowl-

edge that was gained when solving similar problems in the past. This “best practices” approach fails to produce fresh new ideas.

To generate new ideas, it’s best to challenge ourselves with situations we’ve never had to face. Since the Alliance was founded in 1996, we have continued to develop and refine the “Alliance methodology” that forces executives to address a wide range of unique situations which results in new ways of thinking. I have observed that many ideas happen when thinking about someone else’s situation and your brain naturally applies this new way of thinking to your own situation.

4) Make Use of Tools

I recently was asked to mentor a class of MBA students for their final strategic challenge, which was to provide real-world strategic recommendations for an industry-leading company. The students were asked to apply everything they learned in business school to decide what the company should do to build a long-term sustainable advantage in their industry. Although the “strategy consultants” were just students (albeit very bright ones), the company received some extremely valuable insights from their fresh, unbiased outsider perspectives. They used tools such as Michael Porter’s Industry Analysis, SWOT Analysis, Competitive Mapping and Value Chains to understand the company’s current position and develop a wide range of new ideas for their long-term success.

5) Take a Break

Just as our bodies need to rest after exercise, our brains must also rest. Great ideas generally don’t happen simply by thinking “harder.” Many ideas happen after sleeping on a problem or taking a vacation. The brain continues to work while we relax and is able to make connections that weren’t identified while under stress. If the big idea you seek just isn’t happening, it’s often best to step away from it for a period and just let your brain take a breather. Come back to the problem later and you might be surprised by what happens.

Please let me know if you have any of your own observations as to how we all can generate more breakthrough ideas more frequently and more consistently.

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How Mid-Market Firms Create High Performers

Research shows employee development, workplace environment are keys to success

For the last 12 years, Gallup polls consistently indicate that more than two-thirds of employees at U.S. companies are not motivated to be productive. They are either “not engaged” or “actively disengaged.” Even more important,



ROBERT SHER

companies with high “employee engagement” financially out-perform those with low engagement. Clearly, low morale is widespread – and costly. But how does this apply to middle-market companies?

A 2011 survey of 2,700 middle market companies by Ohio State/GE Capital’s National Center for the Middle Market found that one of their biggest concerns was about talent management -- the development of future leaders -- with 80% highlighting this area as one of their most pressing challenges. In addition, around three quarters were challenged in attracting top talent and providing development opportunities that increase retention.

So how important is it for mid-market companies to have employees who consistently strive to perform at high levels? Knowing that the atmosphere at every company goes through highs and lows, should mid-market CEOs worry when some employees are unenthusiastic with their work? The answer is an emphatic yes – if strong company growth is crucial. The OSU/GE Capital survey found that creating a culture of high performance can make a real difference for middle market companies. That survey grouped the best-performing companies into a category called “Growth Champions.” These firms tend to invest more in employee skill development, with 29% putting greater emphasis on employee training and education compared with only 17% for other companies. A larger percentage of the Growth Champions (24%) emphasize measuring employee performance through reviews, compared to 16% for the rest of survey population.

Members of the Alliance of Chief Executives agree. A February 2012 survey of 126 Alliance companies ranked a dedicated workforce as the third most important element of success. (No. 1 was a solid growth strategy and No. 2 was a cohesive top team.)

But even though they recognize the importance of strong employee morale, middle-market CEOs don’t make it an investment priority. In an April 2012 survey by OSU/GE Capital’s National Center for the Middle Market, only 4% of the 1,000 respondents said they would allocate an additional dollar of investment into increasing HR training and development. They considered other priorities – building up cash, investing and other capital expenses, making acquisitions and others – to be far more important.

Lack of investment in HR and training isn’t the primary cause of low workplace performance. A bigger factor is that many mid-market CEOs do not take a strategic and disciplined approach to shaping the workplace environment. The workplace environment is the sum total of what it feels like to work at the firm. Most CEOs I know feel responsible for achieving the company’s mission by using their management team and resources. *They need their team to perform.* But creating a highly productive working environment beyond the top team requires

Many mid-market CEOs do not take a strategic and disciplined approach to shaping the workplace environment.

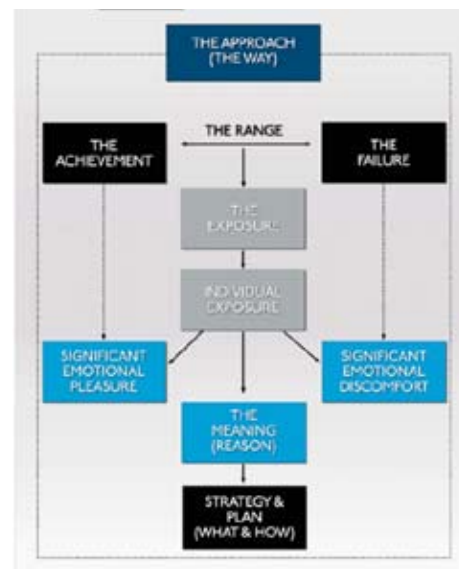
far more: a CEO and top team with a long-term commitment to create such an environment, and then a step-by-step plan to put it in place.

Paul Limbrey and Andrew Meikle of Elkiem, a firm that researches human high performance, spent 15 years investigating high-performance environments (workplace and otherwise). They found and developed:

- 1) a way of describing such environments,
- 2) a way of measuring those environments, and
- 3) an approach to changing the environment for better performance.

There are five common causes of low-performance environments.

1. The measures of individual and team performance are not spelled out



The High Performance Environmental Structure (“HPES”) Elkiem developed to depict how an environment can be represented.

and accepted. People aren’t clear about what they should do and how their success will be accounted for. Without good measures, people become political and try to stay on the boss’ “good side.” Only 7% of Alliance members believe they have completely clear performance measures. In fact, 60% do not measure employee performance.

2. The definitions of success and failure are not crystal clear. Even if measures are in place, people aren’t sure at what point they have succeeded and will be commensurately rewarded. More often, they aren’t sure at what level of poor performance —the failure point— they will they be dismissed.

3. Individual and team performance are not sufficiently visible throughout the organization. Without such exposure, low performers can hide behind their team’s performance without detection or peer pressure. Without enough team exposure, people may act selfishly and not

This story continues on the Alliance website, in our Forums. To go right to the page with the story, click on or type http://www.allianceofceos.com/forum/2012/how_midmarket_companies_can_de.php into your Web browser.

Robert Sher is an Alliance Director and principal of CEO to CEO. He may be contacted at rsher@allianceofceos.com.

Brian Pretti: The New Rules

ContraryInvestor.com editor discusses Fed policy

By ACE Staff

Alliance Members recently got an in-depth look behind federal monetary policy when Brian Pretti, Managing Editor of *ContraryInvestor.com* and Senior Economist for Mechanics Bank, joined us for our May 18th Regional Alliance meeting in San Ramon.

Sharing personal insights into the "real-world" state of the economy, Pretti discussed the current "hold the wheel and drive" strategy behind the actions of the Fed and pointed to key



Brian Pretti
ContraryInvestor.com

drivers of the economy and financial markets.

According to Pretti, federal policymakers have no road map for the current environment so policy making risk is high globally. Among his other observations:

- The Fed's actions can stimulate the economy in the short term, but they can also sow the seeds for the next economic "soft patch."
- The current economy is a "slow growth environment," as 2011 marked the slowest year to year GDP growth in a non-recessionary environment since at least 1947.
- The U.S. has not been able to achieve quarter-to-quarter growth over 3.8 percent, which has never happened in any economic recovery.
- Pretti also predicted global central bankers will print more money, guaranteeing liquidity.

Scaling Excellence

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more than what they say.

Scaling need not take a lot of manpower, Sutton suggested. He referenced the Hackman's rule, which holds that problems arise in teams with more than six people. He pointed to Apple Computer, where just two engineers wrote the code to convert Apple's Safari browser for the iPad.

According to Sutton, successful scaling requires being a master of both addition and subtraction. When you add something good, find unnecessary and bad things to remove to make way, he said.

Members throughout the Alliance are welcome to attend any of our keynote breakfasts and meet other members. Look on the back page for a list of upcoming events, or go to the "Events" section of the Alliance of CEOs website.

Welcome New Alliance Members!

Member	Group	Company	Website	Industry
Jeff Abramowitz	309	PowerCloud Systems	www.powercloudsystems.com	Wireless Networks
Ragu Bhargava	341	Global Upside	www.globalupside.com	Finance & Accounting Services
Stephen Brady	T115	3-V Biosciences	www.3vbio.com	Biopharmaceuticals
Kelley Corten	T110	Future US	www.futureus.com	Special-Interest Media
Steve DeVoe	110	Kelly-Moore Paint	www.kellymoore.com	Paint Manufacturing & Retail
Peter DiLaura	308	Second Genome	www.secondgenome.com	Microbiome-Modulating Therapies
Derek Eggers	121	Syserco	www.syserco.com	Energy Management Systems
Ted Elliott	272	Jobscience	www.jobscience.com	Talent Relationship Management
Brian Erickson	271	Mosaic NetworX	www.mosaicnetworx.com	Communications Service Provider
Ross Fernandes	308	Q Analysts	www.qanalysts.com	Software Quality Assurance
Roy Gilbert	Q300	Grockit	www.grockit.com	Online Test Prep & Education
Craig Horne	302	EnerVault	www.enervault.com	Energy Storage Systems
Joe Hyrkin	309	Wordnik	www.wordnik.com	Online English Language Dictionary
Eneko Knorr	210	Ideateca	www.ideateca.com	Video Game Development
Mathai Mammen	T115	Theravance	www.theravance.com	Biopharmaceutical Products
John Maydonovitch	310	MCE	www.mce.com	Custom Computing Solutions
Trent McIlhane	T115	Stanford Federal Credit Union	www.sfcu.org	Credit Union
Warren Nishikawa	302	Eoply USA	www.eoply.com	Solar Energy
Craig Santa Maria	111	Santa Maria & Co.	www.smcrisk.com	Business Insurance
Jeremy Tibbets	111	A-Plus Tree	www.aplustree.com	Tree Care Services
Jorge Titingier	Q400	SGI	www.sgi.com	Technical Computing
David Traversi	272	Traversi Capital Advisors	www.traversi.com	M&A Advisory and Banking Services
Michael Wakim	310	Fidus Systems	www.fidus.com	Electronic Product Development

To learn more about the Alliance of Chief Executives, including membership information, visit us online at www.AllianceofCEOs.com or call (925)942-2400.

CEO Roundtables

Strategic Outsourcing, Risks & Opportunities

As the economy slowly heals, firms are fighting for market share and resources are strained to support growth. Maximizing operational efficiencies can provide cash and profits to fund core competencies and increase differentiation. But what are the best strategies to improve operational efficiency? Outsourcing? Offshoring? Onshoring? Automation? The cost of natural gas in the U.S. has dropped significantly due to increased supply from new drilling techniques, and labor rates in the U.S. are significantly lower due to the slow economy. Combined, U.S. manufacturing is staging a come back as shorter supply lines and better logistics are having an impact on operational efficiencies.

At what point are we risking the security of our core competencies if we outsource them? Attendees brought their challenges to collect the wisdom from fellow participants at this Alliance CEO/Top Team Roundtable on April 26th in San Francisco.



Selling Your Business

Selling the business is a rare but monumental step that requires much planning and preparation. Whether it's your own business or the one you lead, it's your job to strengthen the business, to know possible buyers and to time it right. Although many of us only do this once, when we come together as a group we have a lot of wisdom. Attendees shared their insights at this May 30th Roundtable in Walnut Creek.



Alliance Spring Dinner

The Alliance hosts three All-Alliance Dinners each year to enable all members and their guest to meet other members from throughout the entire Alliance. Many Alliance members and their guests came from throughout Northern California to enjoy our 2012 Spring Dinner at the Silicon Valley Capital Club on May 24. You'll want to mark your calendars for the 2012 Alliance Dinners on September 27 in San Francisco and on December 6 in Pleasanton.



Startup CEOs feel constant pressure to hit the long ball

Continued from page 1

other and building a merged company together."

A merger isn't the only way to score a home run. James White (Q100) just orchestrated a major turnaround at



James White
Jamba Juice

Jamba Juice, which is now in the midst of an aggressive growth initiative that involves new markets, new product channels and new customers. Planning began even before the turnaround was complete. In fact, the turnaround initiative, labeled the Blend Plan, paved the way for Blend Plan 2.0, an

effort to increase Jamba Juice's brand among consumers.

Jamba Juice entered the international market last year and now has 30 stores open in Canada, South Korea and the Philippines. It also created a new consumer platform, JambaGo, which consists of self-service kiosks in schools and other locations. The risks associated with these initiatives were offset by the company's recent decision to focus on franchising rather than owning its stores, which eliminated costs. "That was based on a philosophy of taking risk out of the business, to enable us to grow on an accelerated basis with far less volatility," White explains. "All of the growth efforts were premised on an asset-light, less risky strategy."



Chris Norris
Alta Devices

For its international growth, Jamba Juice partnered with master franchise companies that already had successful track records. Its South Korean partner, for example, is a \$3 billion firm and one of the most respected restaurant brands in the country. "We knew they could do

it, and we knew they understood real estate," White says.

White believes CEOs should be hardwired for growth and have the ability to attract team members capable of hitting homers themselves. "There's an opportunity for the CEO to be kind of the Chief Growth Officer, and to bring that sort of mindset," he says. "One of the ways to do that is to enable folks to really go for it within their respective responsibilities, and making that a core part of their job expectations. The CEO

must create an environment for prudent risk taking and innovation."

Chris Norris (Group 307) of Alta Devices agrees the CEO should be capable of big plays, but in a startup environment, the skill should be mandatory. "If you're not swinging for the fences, then you have no business running a startup," he says. "The only way you're going to get those returns is thinking bold and broad."

The pressure, however, is huge. Says Norris, whose company develops high-efficiency solar panels: "There's the pressure of taking people's money and fearing that you're not going to deliver. Then there's the pressure of recruiting. Lots of people come on board because they believe in you and what the company is doing, so there's a lot of responsibility to follow through."

The biggest concern is running out of

"In the business that I'm in, change needs to happen quickly. The longer you go without changing something, the more it's going to stay the same."

money. Because of this, Norris says it's important to be "completely transparent" with investors. "Don't oversell or undersell," he says. "Make sure everyone knows where we are at. My job is to make sure they have the same data that I have."

The burden can be constant. Larry Bawden (Q300) of Bloo Solar is also laying new ground in the solar industry – his company builds three dimensional solar cells that increase solar output by up to two times the power of normal solar panels. The pressure is always on, he says. "It never leaves your head, never," he says.

For Bawden, having lines of support is critical. He spends a lot of time listening to experts and leveraging the resources of the Alliance. He also gets "phenomenal" support from Bloo Solar's board members who are all very experienced in the venture markets. "If you don't have that support, you can't get it done," he says.

But in highly competitive markets, Bawden adds, there's only one way to

swing. Hard. "By the time you come out of the chute, the competition may have caught you," he says. "So I don't think you can swing hard enough or long enough, because the competition is dynamic and always moving."

Having an affinity to pressure-filled situations can also help. Jorge Titinger (Q400) of SGI, a provider of technical computing solutions that is currently in the midst of a turnaround, rather enjoys the pressure of swinging for the fences. "The opportunity to take a company like SGI and help bring it back to greatness is a great challenge and great opportunity," he says. "I thrive in that environment."

Titinger agrees that CEOs need to be able to swing hard, but they need to be swift, too. "The demand for faster actions and greater agility is getting higher and higher," he says. "In the business that I'm in, change needs to happen quickly. The longer you go without changing something, the more it's going to stay the same."

Swinging for the fences is not always an all-or-nothing endeavor. If the ball doesn't leave the park, it's still possible get on base or even notch a triple.

Menko Deroos (Group 302) of Xicato, which makes highly efficient LED modules for lighting fixtures, had plans five years ago to target the building and construction industry. Then the financial crisis hit, forcing the company to consider other paths to growth. Eventually Xicato found traction in Europe, where the market for its products is twice as big.

Larger companies are now starting to knock on Xicato's door, but the company has much more to do, Deroos says. "We have a team that is completely committed, clearly understands the risks and wants to be a part of growing this thing through the roof."

"We don't call it swinging for the fences," Deroos says. "We'll shoot for the stars, and if we end up on the moon, we're super happy."

Warren Lutz is Editor of the Alliance of Chief Executives newsletter. He may be contacted at wlutz@allianceofceos.com.



Larry Bawden
Bloo Solar



Jorge Titinger
SGI

Members In The News

Sblend Sblendorio Honored by California Super Lawyers

July 11, 2012

Congratulations to Alliance member Sblend Sblendorio (Group 127) who was included on the 2012 list of Northern California Super Lawyers. Approximately 5% of the Northern California Bar receives this distinction, as determined by a poll of California lawyers and through independent research.



Liquid Robotics Featured in Forbes

June 21, 2012

Liquid Robotics's joint venture with Schlumberger to deploy ocean-going robots for offshore oil exploration was featured in Forbes. The wave-and-solar powered Wave Gliders are safer, less expensive and more environmentally friendly than traditional exploration methods. Liquid Robotics is led by Bill Vass (Q400).



Lisa Im Named Entrepreneur of the Year

June 2, 2012

Alliance member Lisa Im (Q200), CEO of Performant Financial Corporation, has been named a winner of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in Northern California.



Two Alliance Member Companies Receive TiE50 Awards

May 11, 2012

Two companies led by Alliance Members—Gild, led by Sheeroy Desai (Group 309), and Power Assure, led by Brad Wurtz (Q300)—were included on the 2012 TiE50 Awards which recognize the top technology startups from the following segments: Internet/Social Networking, Energy/Cleantech, Wireless/Mobile, Software/Cloud Computing and Life Sciences.



Coupa Raises \$22M

May 10, 2012

Coupa Software has raised \$22 million in a Series E round of financing led by Crosslink Capital, a new investor in the company. San Mateo-based Coupa's cloud-based software helps companies manage spending and procurement. Coupa is led by Alliance member Rob Bernshteyn (Q300).



Sutro Biopharma Closes Second Tranche of \$36M C-Round Financing

May 8, 2012

Sutro Biopharma closed the second tranche of a \$36 million Series C venture round, and is readying the infrastructure it needs to produce highly targeted, cancer-fighting antibody-drug conjugates. Sutro Biopharma's CEO, Bill Newell (Group 307), and VP Business Development, Lesley Stolz (T105), are Alliance members.



Nuevora Raises \$2.25M For Big Data Analytics

May 7, 2012

Nuevora, which aims to help customers make sense of the massive amounts of data their companies are generating, raised \$2.25 million in Series A funding from Fortisure Ventures, with another \$1.75 million in commitments from the firm. Nuevora is led by Phani Nagarjuna (Group 121).



AAA Chief Paul Gaffney Revs Up the Auto Club

May 4, 2012

San Francisco Business Times reporter Chris Rauber profiled Alliance member Paul Gaffney (Q100) and AAA Northern California, Nevada and Utah. Gaffney was named CEO in 2011 after the organization split off from the California State Auto Group to become a separate entity.



Bill Vass of Liquid Robotics gave his fellow Alliance members a tour of their facilities. From left are: Brian Steel, Jorge Titingier, Andy Ball, Scott Howarth, Paul Witkay, Loren Kimura, Robin Klaus, Bill Vass, Pete Nelson and Russ Harrison.

Get LinkedIn to the Alliance!

Our members suggested that we enable them to connect with each other on LinkedIn, a free online service that facilitates business networking (as opposed to social networking).

We setup an Alliance of CEOs group on LinkedIn and we encourage you to join the group.

To join the Alliance of CEOs LinkedIn group:

- Sign in to www.linkedin.com
- Click the Group heading in the list on the left side
- In the blue Groups Directory box on the right side, click on "Find a Group"
- Type in "Alliance of CEOs"
- Click the gold "Join the Group" button

Enjoy!

Upcoming Alliance Events

For an updated list of all Alliance events, go to www.allianceofceos.com/events2

The core of the Alliance is our private groups which meet throughout Northern California. Because the collective experience within the Alliance is truly extraordinary, we enable our members to come together in a variety of ways to "cross-fertilize" their diverse knowledge and experiences and connect in meaningful ways. If you would like to be invited to any of the Alliance events below, please contact Laurel Madal at (925) 942-2400 ext. 201 or lmadal@allianceofceos.com.

Keynote: Geoffrey Moore, TCG Advisors; Friday, August 3 in Santa Clara

Geoffrey Moore is a best selling author and chairman emeritus at TCG Advisors. His most recent book is "Escape Velocity: Free Your Company's Future from the Pull of the Past." Geoffrey has made the understanding and exploitation of disruptive technologies the core of his life's work. His other books, "Crossing the Chasm," "Inside the Tornado," "The Gorilla Game," "Living on the Fault Line," and "Dealing with Darwin" are best sellers and required reading at leading business schools. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at Techmart in Santa Clara.



Life Sciences CEO Roundtable: Wednesday, August 8 in San Francisco

The Alliance will hold an invitation-only Life Sciences CEO Roundtable to address the specific challenges and opportunities in an industry that continues to change. In addition to our private, confidential groups, Alliance Roundtables are designed to enable top executives from throughout the Bay Area to leverage the collective wisdom of our entire Alliance community. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at Sutro Biopharma in San Francisco.

Keynote: Soren Kaplan, InnovationPoint; Friday, August 17 in San Ramon

Soren Kaplan, the author of "Leapfrogging: Harness the Power of Surprise for Business Breakthroughs," will join us for this regional Alliance meeting to discuss "the power of surprise." Kaplan will reveal why today's leaders need to do exactly what they're taught to avoid: embrace surprise — the key to breakthrough innovation. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at the San Ramon Valley Conference Center.



CEO Roundtable: Why Isn't Your Top Line 30% Higher?: Thursday, August 30 in Oakland

Too many companies are stuck on a plateau. They have hopes to grow into a much larger company—maybe double the size or more—but year after year they're not. It's frustrating! At this event, CEOs come together to challenge each other—at a strategic level—about how they might break out of a pattern and achieve the growth they've always hoped for. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at Robert Half International in Oakland.

CEO Roundtable: How to Create & Integrate an Effective Business Plan: Wednesday, September 12 in Sacramento

A 2011 study by Ohio State University and GE Capital of nearly 1,500 mid-market companies found that those with the strongest financial performance were far more likely to have the core elements of a business plan than the rest of the companies. Come hear a brief presentation on why formal planning and accountability truly matter, then join other peer CEOs to share ideas, approaches and wisdom. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at Sutter Club in Sacramento.



CEO Roundtable: Leadership in the New World of Multi-Dimensional Cultures: Wednesday, September 19 in San Francisco

What moves should you make as a leader to optimize the attitudes and opinions of customers, employees, shareholders—given that nearly every move can be seen by all and discussed openly, 24/7? Add the increasingly multi-cultural mix of employees and companies operating and selling to many cultures to top off the challenge. Come share your challenges and opportunities with other CEOs. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at RHI in San Francisco.

Alliance Fall Dinner: Thursday, September 27 in San Francisco

All Alliance members and their guests are invited to attend our Alliance Fall Dinner at The City Club in San Francisco. Our wine reception and dinner is free for Alliance members and their guests! We host three "All-Alliance" CEO Dinners throughout the Bay Area to enable our members to get to know their fellow Bay Area CEOs. Event begins at 6 p.m. at The City Club in San Francisco.



CEO/Top Team Roundtable: Teaming Up for Successful Revenue Campaigns: Tuesday, October 2 in San Jose

Driving the top line upward requires careful coordination between sales, marketing, and the teams innovating new products and services. Delays, surprise competitive moves, uncertain market reception, supply shortages and team turnover often throw our plans out of synch. Top executives and CEOs from all disciplines will come together to tackle issues encountered when driving the top line upward. Event begins at 7:30 a.m. at Hoge Fenton in San Jose.



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