

Learning and Discovery Agenda Topics – Warsaw 2018

Even the best companies in Europe face ‘Hurdles to Growth’ our research shows. So through a series of clinics, workshops and seminars we are going to bring experts and business leaders together to innovate, solve and inspire. In the lead up to the event attendees will have the opportunity to book into the sessions they would like to attend.

- *Please note that the following topics are under discussion and may change or be amended ahead of the event, depending on the needs and requests of the audience, we may approach you to ask which topics would be of interest or most relevant to you in order to confirm the seminars and therefore speakers.*

Topics under consideration for inclusion:

➤ **The Scarcity of Talent and What to do about It.**

The shortage of talented people is the number one problem that holds back growth in most high performing companies. What can you do to get more than your fair share of the best talent out there?

What you will learn:

- How to understand the true nature of the shortage (is it the combination of skills shortages, the industry demand for those specific skills, etc.) and the likelihood of filling the gaps using existing strategies
- Effective tactics and strategies to source scarce talent
- What you should do before going to market to source talent

➤ **Selling in Hyper Competitive Environments – How to get a USP**

When customers have excellent visibility, information and a range of products that are all very good, it makes the selling process highly competitive. What can B2B organisations do to get ahead in these situations?

What you will learn:

- The case for making and selling a core competency and USP and where to start
- Is it possible to get away with average sales people?
- Simple strategies for building effective sales organisations for hyper competitive environments

➤ **People Engagement – the Growth Challenge**

Workforce engagement: Remuneration is only one hurdle in the challenge of creating engaged workforces. Other respondents cite that their excessive focus on the customer and their products can result in their workforce engagement strategies not receiving enough focus and resources. During a phase of strong

growth and workforce expansion, which places new demands on time, resources, management and delivery, companies can struggle to retain their initial unique and defining culture. This can cause a decline in workforce engagement.

What you will learn:

- How to figure out the real causes of low levels of people engagement
- What really matters and what is really not important in creating committed, engaged work forces.
- Strategies that are simple to execute and how to manage people engagement for high growth companies

➤ **Funding Growth – What, Why and Why Not**

GROWTH FUNDING CHALLENGES - ANALYSIS

Minimal growth: The historical data sets of the European Business Awards contain companies that have strong product sets, management teams and traction. What remains of intrigue however is the fact that, over time, numbers of these businesses didn't grow from €10m to €50m, or €50 million to €500 million, in revenue, given they possess many of the capabilities to do so.

In exploring this topic with our community, possible reasons ranged from appetite for risk, to lack of senior and/or middle management resources.

Risk aversion: What does emerge, and which is reinforced from the findings of our research, is that hurdles to growth can be even more immediate than already spelled out: the complexity and effort involved, as well as the potential risks and the opaqueness of the growth funding market, cause many companies in the first place to discount even the possibility of raising significant growth funding.

This in turn significantly constrains the scale of ambition of many of the businesses and stops them from reaching their growth potential. Instead, the majority of companies rely on retained profit, bank loans and existing shareholders for funding, and therefore adjust their ambitions for growth.

Growth funding: Generating a consistently high level of growth is dependent on a number of variables. Granting companies greater and easier to access levels of growth funding will not necessarily guarantee success, but it will enable more organisations to reach their potential.

To help companies navigate their options and understand the range of options open to fund growth we are running a series of clinics with experts from all parts of the growth funding industry from Private equity to tax specialists, representatives from the London Stock Exchange to Alternative financing providers.

Format: Clinics

➤ **Successful M&A Strategies**

Organic growth is tough to come by in most markets. Successful M&A strategies offer the opportunity to build scale and competence that accelerates both organic and overall growth. In this session we will look at trends and advances in M&A and how that potentially opens up new opportunities.

What you will learn/Outcome required from speakers

- How to figure out if an acquisition strategy would be a good one for your business

- The keys to successful acquisitions and integrations
- Funding M&A

➤ Digital Disruption - How to Capitalise on a Threat

With most industries facing disruption from rapidly advancing technologies, many will be recast over the next decade. For existing market players how do you turn an existential threat into an opportunity?

What you will learn:

- How established businesses, with set ways and processes should start to think about technology.
- Understanding and evaluating which technologies to bet on
- Understanding when to invest and when to wait – first mover or fast follower?

➤ Clever Ways to Protect Intellectual Property

Intellectual property: As European companies are rarely able to compete on the lowest cost of manufacture, often the value of a product or service is in the intellectual property. Thirty-one percent of companies felt that the lack of consistent intellectual property protection and enforcement was a significant issue for global expansion.

It is more difficult and expensive for smaller firms to get the right intellectual property protection.

It is more essential than ever for businesses to find and work with intellectual property experts early in their product and service development cycles. Similarly, companies must think carefully about where and how they store and protect their know-how and IP. With cyber-crime on the rise, many companies will not even realise their IP has been stolen before it turns up on the market.

What you will learn:

- Overview of the best methods for protecting IP
- Alternative and additional strategies to trademarks and copyright protections
- How to make your know-how hard to steal

➤ Developing Middle Management into Executive Management

A product of the talent crisis involves executive management development. Finding great executive leaders is exceptionally tough, yet most organisations fail to surface the next generation from their middle management.

What you will learn:

- Why this is the case?
- What are the common mistakes
- What can be done about it?

Format: Seminar/Workshop/Clinic

➤ Replacing People with Technology and Vice-Versa- Simple Rules for Success

Technology is on a relentless march and offers opportunities to replace, improve, reduce and innovate in all areas of a business's operation. Yet these developments are causing seismic changes to many job roles and even the nature of work. This session looks at the role of people and work.

What you will learn:

- How is technology effecting employment and job roles?
- So how do you evaluate where to implement technology and where to invest heavily in people?
- The importance of reskilling and training for roles of the future

➤ Building a Peer to Peer Network

Our research into the Hurdles to Growth for mid-market business show that there are a vast range of challenges that the business leaders of successful growing enterprises face every day. To help shape, frame and deal with those problems most business leaders and entrepreneurs would prefer to speak to other business leaders who have been through or are going through the same challenge. This helps them frame the problem and the potential solutions. Because it is really hard to build a successful business and few accomplish it, most entrepreneurs and business leaders find that they have few people in their peer group to turn to that have faced similar challenges.

What we realised is that as the European Business Awards we have built up a community of some 30,000 businesses around Europe that have pretty much solved every problem/challenge an entrepreneur or business leader might face. With a single call to our consultants we can connect you with other entrepreneur or business leaders, to talk through your challenges, who have experience and knowledge in this area.

In this session:

- We will explain how the network will work
- What the benefits are for members
- We are looking for feedback on how and what you would like from the service and what you would find most valuable.

➤ Keys to Building Strategic Partnerships

More and more companies are seeking growth through partnerships where combining skills, products, knowledge and geographies offer opportunities to create significant value and growth opportunities. The reality in practice is that many partnerships fail or significantly under-deliver, the cause of which is often in the execution and not in the overall rationale. In this session, Luc Bardin, recognised as one of the world's leading experts on Strategic Partnerships and author of the 'Go to' book on the subject, 'Enduring Strategic Partnerships', discusses the pillars of building a successful partnership

The session will include:

- What are the absolutely unmoveable pillars that need to be in place for a successful strategic partnership
- The steps to getting a strategic partnership back on track
- The often overlooked minor details that cause major issues

➤ Working with Private Equity - Simple Rules for Success

According to Bain there is nearly \$2 trillion in funds that Private equity are looking to put into businesses to generate value growth. Mid-market and growth focussed businesses are increasingly attracting the attentions of Private Equity. So as an EBA National Winner it is highly likely you will be approached by Private equity, so what are the benefits to be had and what are the pitfalls, how do you tell who will be a good partner and who won't.

In this session we will hear from both sides of the fence. Those that have taken PE (and are unlikely to do it again) and from a couple of PE firms; we will look to answer the following questions:

- What is the case for PE?
- If you are going to work with a PE firm, what must you absolutely have in place to make sure you are likely to be successful?
- How do you tell good from bad money?

➤ Training and Reskilling Workforces to Adapt to a Changing World

Everybody knows it is important, yet most growth focussed businesses admit that they are not training and reskilling their workforces effectively enough to keep them crushing the competition. So what can be done about it?

What you will learn:

- What do the best companies do and how do they manage it lightly and efficiently?
- How to work out what to budget and what the return on investment calculation should look like.
- Why reskilling can be effective even for very technical roles

➤ Building Internal Start-ups - The Rules

Most successful mid-sized business become very efficient and structured machines. The business leaders are aware of opportunities and new technologies that are very promising and present high return opportunities, but the leadership of these organisations knows that putting the new ideas into place in a very established business is likely to end in failure for the company, for a multitude of reasons. So some forward thinking organisations are beginning start-ups as subsidiaries, giving them enough autonomy and flexibility to find their own feet but also giving them access to the client base, knowledge and funding, often seconding people to the start up.

The benefits can be significant and in this session we will cover:

- How to get started in corporate venturing
- What are the rules and keys to success?
- Some examples of very successful ventures
- Why even failures can be very valuable to the core business

- **What mid-markets can teach start-ups**
- **The impact of Donald Trump and Brexit on International trade, what should you know and do about it**
- **Why we go to work**
- **Executive compensation**
- **Value of brand building in B2B**
- **How to tell if you are the next Blockbuster**