

MONDAY
JUNE 27

Business Referral Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Pepper's Restaurant, 236 Town Center Road, King of Prussia. Presented by BNI, King of Prussia Chapter. Free. Call 610-792-2105.

WEDNESDAY
JUNE 29

360 Leadership: Leading Across Organizational Levels. 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., the Union League of Philadelphia, Meade Room, 140 S. Broad St., Philadelphia. Presented by Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. Cost is \$45 for members, \$40 for YPN members, \$80 for nonmembers. Visit greaterphilachamber.com.

Business Networking. 7:15 to 8:30 a.m., Holiday Inn, 4th and Arch

streets, Philadelphia. Presented by LeTip of Downtown Philadelphia. Free. Email jeff@americancommercialending.com.

WEDNESDAY
JULY 6

Networking Lunch & Speaker: The Taxes, They are A'Changin'! 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Maggiano's Little Italy, 205 Mall Blvd., King of Prussia. Presented by Professional Business Network. Cost is \$25. Call 610-792-2105.

TUESDAY
JULY 12

Business After Hours. 5 to 7 p.m., Villanova University, Villanova Pavilion, 800 E. Lancaster Ave., Villanova. Presented by Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. Free for members, \$35 for nonmembers. Visit greaterphila-

chamber.com.

How to Make Social Media Work for Your Business. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Sheraton Great Valley, 707 E. Lancaster Ave., Frazer. Presented by Exton Region Chamber of Commerce. Cost is \$25 for members, \$35 for nonmembers. Visit www.erc.net.

WEDNESDAY
JULY 13

General Membership Luncheon. 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn, 111 Hancock St., Westampton, N.J. Presented by Burlington County Chamber of Commerce. Cost is \$30 for members, \$40 for nonmembers. Visit www.bccoc.com.

THURSDAY
JULY 14

The State of Bucks County 2011. 8 to 9:15 a.m., Bucks County Community College, 275 Swamp Road, Newtown. Presented by LBCCC. Free. Visit www.lbccc.org.

TUESDAY
JULY 19

Business Card Exchange: A marketing visibility opportunity. 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., Gorman Optical Health Solutions Inc., 333 N. Oxford Valley Road, Suite 402, Fairless Hills. Presented by Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce. Visit www.lbccc.org.

WEDNESDAY
JULY 20

Young Professionals Network. 6 to 8 p.m., 777 S. Broad St., Philadelphia. Presented by Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. Free for members, \$20 for non-

SUBMIT ITEMS

ITEMS SENT to Networking must arrive at least 15 days in advance of publication. More lead time is better. To get an event publicized, please be sure to include the following: title of event; date; time, from start to end; location, with street address; presenting, sponsoring or hosting company; RSVP information, cost and contact information (phone, e-mail or Web site address). Events must be tied to a nonprofit organization or be free and informational.

E-MAIL ITEMS to Sharon Oliver at soliver@bizjournals.com.

members. Visit www.greaterphilachamber.com.

FRIDAY
OCTOBER 14

Relationship Fundraising: Finding the Personal Touch in an Impersonal World. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the Pyramid Club, 1735 Mar-

ket St., 52nd Floor, Philadelphia. Presented by the Nonprofit Center at La Salle University's School of Business and USAirways. Free. Call 215-951-1701 or email nonprofit-center@lasalle.edu.

Eight signs your business has outgrown its own bosses

In dark economic times, everyone longs for business growth. But when startup businesses grow, entrepreneurs discover that success often comes with predictable challenges that can make them question the value of growth itself.

The checklist below contains a number of statements I have heard from clients when their business was rapidly growing. I call it "The Growing Business Leader's Headache Identifier." If your business is growing, see how many are true of your experience. If it isn't, perhaps it will soon. This list will help you get ready for the challenges of growth.

1. As we've gotten better at competing in our market, competitors have proliferated. Sometimes, they threaten to (or actually do) beat us at our own game.

2. Due to the range of issues and opportunities facing my business, it's challenging to know where to focus, when and on what.

3. The ad hoc infrastructure and processes that got us to our current level of success aren't sustainable, but I don't know for sure where begin to make improvements: business processes, HR, IT, sales processes and accounting practices all call out for improvement.

4. Growth requires capital. I am won-



Perspective on People

Richard McKnight

dering if we should take on partners to help us capitalize our growth.

5. As we grow, we will need to hire new, really smart people, but I am concerned they will fit the culture we've built since we began. We can't afford "stars" who will disrupt the team. (We may have some already!)

6. Speaking of our top "team," the senior leaders aren't really a team at all; they act more like a collection of competitive individuals than as a productive unit.

7. The strategic plan that got us to our current stage of growth is not adequate to see us through to the next stage.

8. Growth itself is killing us — or threatens to — because each big new order/contract strains our ability to deliver on time, to spec, safely, etc.

If you checked several of these "headaches," the infrastructure that you've

been relying on is probably inadequate now and the business plan that got you into a high-growth mode has likely outgrown its usefulness.

Further, you may recognize a need to gather the leadership team and engage in some planning, but may feel like you have no time for this, or worse, that the members of the team don't work well together enough to plan effectively. Want some advice? Get over it and plan!

As a startup business, you can get away with ad hoc processes and even ad hoc planning, but if you wish to become a significant midmarket player, you must employ your assets more thoughtfully and bring more discipline to everything you do.

For one thing, the stakes are higher now. That shelf of best-selling business books behind your desk tempts you to think and behave like an undisciplined cook: Becoming a "great company," they would have you believe, is a simple matter of combining a cup of customer loyalty, and all you have to do is add two tablespoons of "Blue Ocean Strategy," fold in a dash of "re-engineering," and garnish with a pinch of "Six Sigma." Yeah, sure.

Growing your business results from hard work, careful thinking, persistence

and judicious investments.

Look back at the list. Which do you think holds the greatest peril for growing your business? Here's a hint: It's the answer to the question, "What is the biggest impediment to strategy execution?"

If you said No. 6, you would be right. Research into the field of strategy execution reveals that lack of alignment at the top is the biggest impediment to successful growth. When you have consensus of vision and interpersonal effectiveness at the top — how my business partner and I define top team alignment — you can deal far more effectively with other growing pains than when you don't.

As the old saying goes — and it's especially true in business — "None of us is as smart as all of us." Every minute you and your leadership team spends in planning — and it doesn't have to be more than a few hours each month — will pay off handsomely in reduced stress and sustainable business results over time, bringing you into greater alignment.

RICHARD MCKNIGHT is a principal of McKnight Kaney LLC, a strategy execution and organization design firm in the Philadelphia area and the co-author of "Leading Strategy Execution," among other books. For more information, visit McKnightKaney.com.

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The image shows a screenshot of the Philadelphia Business Journal website. The main headline reads "Cause it's your business every day". Below this, there is a section titled "People on the Move" with a submission form. The form includes fields for "Employee last name", "Current employer", and "Current position". To the right of the form, there is a list of recent submissions, including one for "Advertising & Marketing" from The Power Group, which promoted Emily Buerzow to managing supervisor and Antonette Vega to account executive, and another for Franklin-Spino Media Inc. which appointed Debra Decker as public relations director and Mark Barera as e-Marketing program director.