

ABL Organization Brings Together CEOs of Healthcare and Technology Companies to Serve as Peer Advisors

Orange, CA, July 1, 2007... Each month, 160 chief executives of healthcare and technology companies convene throughout California, in eight separate round Tables, where they help one another grow their businesses through good times and bad. These Members of the Adaptive Business Leaders (ABL) Organization spend the morning listening to each other voice their concerns, and in return share invaluable, “honed in the trenches” recommendations for what they'd do – and have done – in a similar situation.

In 1983, the Southern California Technology Executives Network (SO/CAL/TEN) was formed to help emerging technology company CEOs deal with the “loneliness at the top” they felt. By the end of the decade, medtech chieftains wanted healthcare providers and payers to participate. That's when the Group's name changed to the ABL Organization, and Healthcare Round Tables, composed of providers, payers and medical suppliers, were formed in Southern California. By 1994, several healthcare CEOs requested that the Group open a Round Table in the Bay Area, which recently celebrated its 13th anniversary. Whether focused on healthcare or technology management, each Round Table is typically composed of around 20 Members, who serve as one another's “peer advisors” and “Strategic Advisory Board.” Because prospective members are screened to exclude direct competitors within the confines of the confidential, professionally facilitated sessions, the Members openly share with each other the tough issues that “keep them up nights,” as they pilot their companies through the turbulent marketplace.

In recent sessions, ABL members have discussed developing and managing their Boards of Directors, hiring the *right* senior executives – and getting rid of the *wrong* ones, raising growth capital, entering new markets, developing new product lines, mergers and acquisitions, and a wide range of strategies and tactics for managing sales, marketing, manufacturing, distribution, strategic and business development. Also in a typical monthly Round Table meeting, one Member makes a Powerpoint presentation about the most pressing opportunities and/or threats currently facing their company. Fellow Round Table members then provide feedback, acting as the Member's Strategic Board of Advisors.

Another unique feature of the ABL Organization is that it is headed by husband and wife team, Bob Kelley and Mimi Grant. CEO Bob Kelley is responsible for ABL's four Technology Round Tables, and President Mimi Grant the four Healthcare groups.

ABL's Round Tables are supplemented with frequent Focused Workshops and Conferences on topics of membership-wide interest, such as “CEO and Executive Compensation” and cutting-edge Trends in Technology and Healthcare. In addition to valuable information, these events provide Members with opportunities to meet and dialogue with respected industry speakers and other ABL Members from throughout the Organization. Notably, ABL's annual *Innovations in Healthcare*SM Awards Event has become a highly regarded ceremony that honors innovative, value-driven healthcare companies and leaders with ABBY Awards. “Leadership in Innovation” Award recipients and keynoters have included the VA's Ken Kizer, MD; Leonard Schaeffer, CEO of WellPoint; Kent Thiry, CEO of DaVita, Inc.; Molly Coye, CEO of Health Technology Center; and, most recently, Steve Burd, Chairman and CEO of Safeway Inc., who is pioneering an innovative approach to wellness – and lower-cost premiums – for their 28,000 non-unionized workers.

Membership in ABL Organization is open to CEOs, Presidents and Division General Managers of companies in healthcare (providers, payers, and suppliers) and technology industries. To learn more, contact Mimi Grant at (714) 245-1425 and/or mimi@abl.org.

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