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Silicon Valley's 108 Partners Launches Coaching Service for Middle Market CEOs

Menlo Park, CA, March 01, 2016 – Silicon Valley-based [108 Partners LLC](#), led by [James Bergeron](#), has identified an urgent need among startups and middle market CEOs for personalized guidance and created a new service tailored to the needs of those CEOs.

With the staggering growth over the past decade in the United States of [search fund CEOs](#), venture capital funding for start-ups and the rise of entrepreneurship programs offered by undergraduate and graduate colleges and universities, CEOs are becoming younger and younger. As a result, many don't have the necessary skills or judgment to not only navigate typical business challenges, but also the often tumultuous waters of co-existing with boards of directors and/or creating exit strategies when (and if) it comes time to sell their company.

Just how many first-time or "young" CEOs are there in the United States alone? According to the Global Entrepreneurship Report (GER), as of 2014, a minimum of 13% of U.S. adults are starting and running new businesses- a staggering number. While the majority of new companies fail, the ones that do survive, and succeed, likely have fairly "young" CEOs –either age-wise, lacking of substantial experience, or both.

While the technology and entrepreneurship boom, in Silicon Valley and across the U.S., is fueling the CEO youth movement, James Bergeron, a CEO coach and founder of 108 Partners, a business advisory firm in Menlo Park, Calif., believes "young" or first-time CEOs are also popping up across all major business sectors, including business services and even manufacturing. And from his experience, they need help.

"The reality is there is no formal CEO training and it can be extremely lonely," says Bergeron, a former CEO himself. "You can't go to school to learn how to be a CEO. But a coach can train you, focus you and help you reach peak performance."

Bergeron adds that unless you're part of the exclusive one percent CEO Club, the substantial majority of first- and second-time CEOs aren't getting the necessary one-to-one coaching needed to reach peak performance for



themselves, their shareholders and employees.

Most VCs and private equity funds only fund 1% of companies they evaluate annually and even then, only the top 10-20% of their portfolio's CEOs get the most and best attention.

What do first-time (or even second-time) CEOs do if they don't receive ample attention from their board or investors, have a disengaged board or no board at all?

After coaching more than 20 CEOs since 2013, Bergeron says "Most, if not all, CEOs don't, can't or won't talk candidly to their board of directors, direct reports or anyone for that matter about their deepest concerns, fears or critical issues within the business – unless they have a one-to-one CEO coach."

Bergeron is one of a few CEOs in the U.S. that has raised both private equity (also known as a leveraged buyout or "LBO") and venture capital to fund companies he has bought and built – before becoming CEO of both – with each eventually being acquired by either a financial buyer or large strategic acquirer.

Geoff Mobisson, Co-Founder and Board Member at Levementum, a customer relationship management (CRM) software provider, was a client, for about two years.

"James was instrumental in coaching [CEO] Doug [Guilbeau] and I by defining success in terms of getting the business ready, and even situationally on operational and strategic needs," Mobisson says. "108 Partners managed the entire exit/investment process. Essentially, they provided CEO coaching, consultancy and investment banking services all wrapped together. They are perfectly set up to help middle market tech or value-added growth companies."

About 108 Partners, LLC

108 Partners LLC is a Silicon Valley-based middle market business advisory firm that provides leadership and coaching services to CEOs, Boards of Directors and Institutional Investors. These services include, but are not limited to, CEO Coaching and Mentoring, Business Advisory and Consulting Services, M&A Advisory & Negotiation as well as preparation for Exits, VC/PE Outsourced Operating Partners services, Temporary CEO Assignments, Advisory Board Services and Independent Board Director Positions. 108 Partners, led by James Bergeron, engages deeply with each client to have a substantial impact on the business and drive superior outcomes for all stakeholders. For more information, contact James at james@108partners.com.