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**HAMILTON BRADSHAW**  
Investing in people with passion

## How can I scale printing firm up to the next level?

**Ask James**



James Caan

*Dear James*

I LAUNCHED a printing company, and we have done quite well. What do I need to do to scale up to the next level?

*Ian Hammond*

ENTREPRENEURS are always looking for opportunities to move up to the next level but there are several factors to take into account.

Have you got the people you need? This is particularly important when you start growing – the team will need to expand but this makes the recruitment process even more important. Anybody you bring on board, particularly those at senior level, should have the ability to take a business forward to new heights.

You should constantly be looking at the needs of your customers to see where you can add value. On The Business Class last year, I came across a company called Shudl who have since done so well that eBay recently bought them. Their growth was down to understanding their customers from the start. This is why you must stay in touch with the staff on the ground; they know customer trends better than anyone.

At the same time, are you keeping up with developments in the printing industry? Everything from machinery to paper quality is constantly evolving and your knowledge has to be spot on.

Looking inwards is another option – restructuring a business to make it leaner can lead to big rewards. Of

course cost-cutting isn't the easiest process but in the longer term a successful firm will lead to greater staff engagement and involvement.

And don't compromise on what you offer. Too many firms forget what helped them to get where they are.

■ *The Business Class will be shown next Monday at 10pm on CNBC.*