FOR ACQUIRERS, PE PLATFORMS ADDING ON, AND THE FOUNDERS WHO JUST SOLD

The deal closed. Now two companies have to become *one.*

The model priced revenue, cost takeout and EBITDA. It assumed the org chart, the leadership team, the pay structure and the benefits plan were already done. They are the hard part — and where the deal is won or lost. Becoming One™ is twelve weeks inside the combined company doing exactly that part, run by the operator who has done it as the executive responsible.



UNITE · THE FIVE LINES A BOARD CHECKS AT DAY 100

HOW LONG	HOW OFTEN	WHO	FEE	SHAPE
12 weeks three gates of four	**Weekly** in the leadership meeting; on site at every gate	**One operator** Scott, personally. No bench, no hand-off	**$75,000 flat** invoiced by gate; a gate not met is not invoiced	**100–1,000 people** $20M–$250M · any sector

The gates — what you hold at each one

WHERE YOU ARE (two companies, one name) · GATE ONE · U (week 4 · one chain of command) · GATE TWO · N + I (week 8 · one week runs) · GATE THREE · T + E (week 12 · checked, not believed) · ONE COMPANY (day one hundred)

U
GATE ONE · WEEK FOUR · UNIFY COMMAND

One company has a chain of command.

The one org chart to the second layer, signed by the board, shown to both leadership teams in the same week. The leadership team decided seat by seat, each conversation held in person. Decision rights set in the bank, the ERP and the card program on both sides. The deal thesis as three to five breakthrough objectives with dates (Hoshin Kanri). The key-people list, named and talked to. The communication calendar through day 100.

N·I
GATE TWO · WEEK EIGHT · NAME THE DECISIONS · INSTALL THE RHYTHM

One company runs one week.

A charter for every seat that touches a customer or a dollar; every reporting line single. The seat ledger — needed, filled, doubled, open — with a decision and a date for each. One operating cadence, run end to end for a month. HR as one service: one owner, one employee master, the compensation analysis on one architecture, the harmonization rule decided and costed, one benefits plan with a cutover date, one payroll, one integrated employee handbook. One SOP per process the P&L depends on, the winning version chosen and the other retired. The close consolidated. The culture decision — how the company decides, escalates and disagrees — written and modeled by the top team.

T·E
GATE THREE · WEEK TWELVE · TIE MONEY TO NAMES · ENGAGE THE PEOPLE

One company that can be checked rather than believed.

One budget and one planning calendar, every line with an owner. The synergy register tied to the deal model — owner, target, date, budget line — with the dis-synergies counted beside it. Retention terms signed for the people the model depends on. The day-30/60/90 pulse, read and acted on. The hundred-day scorecard the board reads, and the monthly review booked.

Outcomes at day one hundred

- One org chart, one leadership team, one chain of command the acquired side can see
- One cadence, one close, one pack a director reads without a phone call
- One pay structure that can be explained with a straight face; one benefits plan
- Every synergy with a name, a date and a budget line; dis-synergies counted
- The people the model depends on still in their seats
- A hundred-day scorecard a board can check rather than believe

> *"Harmonization is no easy task. You are instantly the bad guy. It is a hard job — and I am willing to be the bad guy, so you don't have to be."*
>
> DR. SCOTT KIMBALL · AFTER SEVEN PLANTS AND 2,500 PEOPLE BECAME ONE COMPANY

How we work

- **Two companies, or several.** A merger or acquisition; a platform absorbing bolt-ons, the operating model built once and deployed to each; or a multi-company consolidation under one operating entity with centralized shared services. Scoped by entities and sites.
- **Hybrid, inside the building.** On site for each gate; in the weekly leadership meeting every week; with every leadership team, never the buyer alone.
- **Organization first.** Command, seats, decision rights, pay and cadence before systems and synergies — because they decide whether the synergies land.
- **Every gate closes with a page the board initials.** The chart, the charters, the scorecard. Not a status update.
- **The hard conversations are had,** in person, with authority.

We take on

- Org design and decision rights
- Leadership team selection and installation
- Policy deployment (Hoshin Kanri) — the one plan the building runs
- Operating cadence and one close
- HR as one service: comp analysis, benefits, payroll, one handbook
- Operating standards — one SOP per process the P&L depends on
- Key-people retention and communication
- Synergy ownership and the 100-day scorecard
- Culture, defined as how decisions get made
- ESG alignment, if the sponsor requires it

We leave to others

- IT and systems integration (we sequence it)
- Margin, pricing and procurement programs
- The deal: valuation, structure, legal, tax
- Building the financial or synergy model
- Interim CFO
- Sales and marketing execution

From the building

EVP through a sale to private equity, then Chief People Officer of the acquirer: six manufacturers, seven plants, 2,500 people made one company. Eleven HVAC businesses into one platform.

Credentials & references

PhD, industrial-organizational psychology; Gallup doctoral internship. Operating partner inside a founder-led company today. Three references on request — two CEOs and a board chair.

TERMS

$75,000 flat · invoiced by gate
Mutual NDA and engagement letter. Scoped after the Integration Read. No success fee, no percentage of the synergies.

HOW TO START

1. The free UNITE check — five minutes, your bearing on the fifteen lines.
2. The Integration Read, $1,750 flat — Scott's red pen on your integration plan in five days, plus two working sessions.
3. Becoming One™ — twelve weeks.

CONTACT

Dr. Scott Kimball
scott@scalewrights.com
scalewrights.com/integrate
Intro call: cal.com/scott-kimball-scalewrights/scale-audit-intro-call

Flat fees only. Never a success fee, a percentage of anything, or equity for expertise. Scalewrights is an advisory firm, not a broker-dealer, investment adviser, or law or accounting firm.

HOW EVERY SCALEWRIGHTS ENGAGEMENT RUNS

Structure first. Stability second. Direction third.

Both offers run through the same three gates, because the failures run in the same order. The Integration Partner uses the gates to combine companies. The Operating Partner uses the same gates to build a company that runs better. UNITE and BUILT are the methods inside each gate; the gate is the page the board initials.

GATE 01

Structure

Put the right people, roles and decision rights in place.

"Do we know who is in charge, who owns each decision, and how the company is organized?"

GATE 02

Stability

Build the cadence, systems and behaviors that make performance repeatable.

"Can it operate week after week without reverting to old habits, the founder, or the legacy businesses?"

GATE 03

Direction

Align the organization, capital and accountability around the outcomes that matter.

"Is everyone moving toward the same priorities and economics, and can we see it?"



GATE	BECOMING ONE™ · INTEGRATION PARTNER · UNITE	THE SEAT · OPERATING PARTNER · BUILT
Structure weeks 1–4 for the integration	**Unify command · Name the decisions.** One org chart to the second layer. The leadership team chosen seat by seat and told in person. Reporting lines single; a charter per seat. Decision rights set in the systems on both sides. Key-people decisions and the pay and benefits comparison read before anyone is told. Integration governance and escalation paths.	**Boundaries · Installed team.** The owner's boundaries written: what the founder does, stops doing, and by when. The leadership seats filled, the number two named. The accountability map and decision rights set in the systems. The operating priorities on one page.
Stability weeks 5–8 for the integration	**Install the rhythm · Engage the people.** One operating cadence run for a month, legacy meetings retired by name. HR as one service: one master, one pay architecture, the harmonization rule costed, one benefits plan with a cutover date. SOPs chosen and the other version retired. Retention actions taken; the scorecard live; the culture decision written.	**Locked rhythm.** The leadership cadence with chairs and agendas; the recurring decision forums; the escalation rules. Seven numbers by Tuesday with an owner on each. The performance-management rhythm. By month three the cadence is chaired by the company's own number two.
Direction weeks 9–12 for the integration	**Tie money to names.** One budget, every line with an owner. The synergy register tied to the deal model: owner, target, date, budget line. Leadership and capital-allocation priorities for the next two quarters with performance commitments. The hundred-day scorecard the board reads.	**Unified plan · Tracked money.** The operating plan and the quarter's priorities, cascaded by catchball. Capital allocated against the plan; the thirteen-week cash forecast kept. Budget against execution reviewed monthly; owner-linked KPIs on the same page.

Structure without stability
A new org chart that does not actually work.

Stability without direction
A well-run company going nowhere.

Direction without structure
A strategy deck with nobody clearly accountable.

WHERE IS THE PROBLEM?

Structure, stability or direction. The free five-minute checks score the company on all three: scalewrights.com/integrate · scalewrights.com/operating-partner

CONTACT

Dr. Scott Kimball · scott@scalewrights.com
Book a 20-minute call: cal.com/scott-kimball-scalewrights · Flat fees only. Never a success fee or equity for expertise.