**Mentor - Michael Beckman**

My name is Michael Beckman and I’m thrilled to become a part of the SME Mentoring network.

Right now I am working as an international corporate lawyer here in Ho Chi Minh City, but I have assumed many roles in many different organizations.

I worked as a corporate finance lawyer for Sullivan & Cromwell, one of the giant Wall Street law firms, in New York, London and Los Angeles. I worked on securities issuances for many kinds of corporations, including a whole spectrum of technology companies in Silicon Valley and elsewhere. I saw the joy on the faces of entrepreneurs when they finally reached their initial public offering. During my time at S&C I also participated in numerous mergers and acquisitions, some of them quite complex and multijurisdictional.

I left Sullivan & Cromwell to join McKinsey & Company, the global management consultancy. As a consultant at McKinsey, I worked mainly in the pharmaceutical practice group out of the New Jersey and New York offices. I helped with the global launch of a multibillion dollar blockbuster drug and advised pharmaceutical executives on strategic acquisitions for their pipeline of drugs in the biotech industry.

Eventually, I decided to start my own business and set up an investment management company that later became a group of hedge funds. I managed those funds and ran the management company for a decade, at the high point reaching 30 limited partners across ten states and $15 million in assets under management.

After working for such large professional service organizations, launching my own lean, little start up felt exhilarating and liberating, but also often terrifying. In the early days, I had no one I could ask for advice or rely on. I read every history of asset management firms I could find (and there are not that many out there), but I would have loved the help of a mentor from the SME Mentoring network in my early days as an entrepreneur. I’m sure I could have avoided many mistakes if I had a relationship with one.

In other roles, I have worked extensively with technology start ups and university spin offs, both as a lawyer creating their corporate vehicles and negotiating their deals with investors, but also as a strategic advisor, helping them figure out which ways they could best develop and grow their start up, how to position best themselves for different financing rounds from angel investors and venture capitalists.

I believe I can bring this wealth of experience to a one-on-one mentoring relationship here in Vietnam. Perhaps the greatest assets I have to offer are a warm heart and a ready smile. I can’t wait to start!