

C.H.A.L.L.E.N.G.E.S., inc

Working with Families in Business

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Happy Independence Day!



“Maturity is not conducive in family behavior”

“THE RECESSIVE TRAIT”

What is The Recessive Trait?

In a family business getting older does not necessarily mean everyone has “grown up.” Temper tantrums, foul language, name calling, finding ways to “get even” and the occasional fist fight, can happen between CEOs and COOs, Presidents and Vice Presidents, Board Members and Shareholders, and of course, family members. Even non-working spouses get into the act. They may act negatively toward other family members based upon the “bad feelings” and “unfairness” they perceive has been directed at their, working in the business, spouse. Age doesn’t appear to “uncover” the recessive trait nor does gender or generational differences. As long as the recessive trait remains, conflict, poor communication and unstable relationships exist in family businesses.

Beliefs!

Virtually all of the aforementioned traits can be found in most Family Businesses. Although, most families in business believe they are a professionally run business. Many have mission and value statements that would rival the best sermons at most churches.

By-Products of the “trait”

By-products of the “recessive trait” include a lack of visible trust and respect between family members which filters throughout the family business. This “filtering” creates an atmosphere of mistrust between employees and owners. Consider the following question; “Why would an employee trust or be loyal to the family or the company when they observe an obvious lack of trust between family members?”

Families who are openly disrespectful with one another will never be respected or trusted by their employees.

Result:

What eventually happens? Family businesses *go out of business*. Do you really think 2/3rds of family businesses fail due solely to low profits or poor management? When the family acts unprofessional toward one another they are viewed simply as that, an unprofessional company. When clients and prospects learn (and they will) of how poorly the family treats one another they will obviously question doing business with them based on

this lack of trust. Now, price becomes your only competitive edge until eventually you are no longer competitive.

What you can do

How can true *maturity* be awakened in a family business? It starts by “turning off” the immature behaviors. These include:

***Yelling, swearing and “getting mad”** at others because you didn’t get your way.

***Making all decisions win/lose situations.** Decisions should be made in the best interest of the company and family rather than creating an atmosphere where someone has to “loose.”

***Competing with siblings or other family members.** Sibling rivalry or trying to *outdo* dad is for children not professionals in business.

***Wanting revenge for past hurts from other family members.** Learning to forgive and to no longer seek revenge is the trait of a *mature* individual.

***Controlling your ego.** A family business is not a sole ownership. You have partners and you must be aware of their needs, desires and goals. They must feel comfortable enough to give their input on key decisions without being berated. Your way is NOT always the best way.

***Keep envy and jealousy in check.** Just because your brother-in-law drives a bigger car or lives in a bigger house doesn’t mean your family is being treated unfairly. He may simply choose to spend his money differently. It does not necessarily mean he is getting paid more.

In Summation

You get the picture. You know the traits needing to be “recessed.” You can be more profitable, more respected and more at ease if you take the time to evaluate what is and what is not working in your Family Business. We can help. We look forward to assisting you with the **C.H.A.L.L.E.N.G.E.S.** you face in your family’s business.

~Visit our new website, designed with Family Businesses in mind~

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