

Topic 3: Family Values

It's clear that people differ in their values and beliefs, even in the closest of families. So it's important that through the transition planning process we understand where we agree and disagree. Values are important and lasting beliefs or ideals about what is good, bad, desirable or undesirable. Values are developed early in life. They have a major influence on a person's behaviour and attitude, and serve as broad guidelines in all situations.

Why is this relevant?

Whether or not we are aware of or acknowledge our deepest values, they will motivate us in our decision-making. Individuals joining the family may find your family's values very different from their own. These differences are neither right nor wrong and understanding where people are coming from creates tolerance and accommodation. Values are important in harmonizing the family and business systems because, if individuals working together have different values, they need to be recognized and dealt with.

How will this aid in transition planning?

1. Prioritizing and discussing values to use in guiding business decisions can be a very positive experience.
2. Identifying and committing to values will help family members with leadership (within the family and with employees).
3. Identifying and committing to values will encourage employees to understand their roles and deliver optimum performance.
4. Setting values provides context for making management decisions. For example, a farmer has the option of 'using' volunteer canola. How does this align with the farm's values?

Instructions

Below is a table with two opposing value statement pairs on each line.

1. Have each individual family member involved in management fill out a separate exercise.
2. For each value statement pair, have them circle the number on the scale they think best describes the strength of the **family's** values and beliefs (the overall family culture)?
3. Collect each individual's answers and include a discussion at the next transition planning meeting.
4. Compare and contrast each individual's answers, looking for areas of agreement and disagreement.
5. Store the documents for future reference.



EXAMPLE:

As you compare and contrast each family member's answers note:

1. Are there major differences that could lead to conflict or act as a stumbling block in completing your transition plan?

Freedom is defined by rules.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Freedom is defined by personal choice.
An overall leader is essential.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Groups can provide their own leadership.
Trust others with great caution.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Trust others until they prove unworthy.
Security more valued than adventure.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Adventure more valued than security.
Experience is more valued than creativity.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Creativity is more valued than experience.
Hard work is the key to success.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Planning is the key to success.

How does this apply?

- Every farm has one or more values, whether the people who work on it are consciously aware of them or not. Another way of saying it is that a value is a statement of the farm's intention and commitment to achieve a high level of performance on a specific factor. In a company, the ownership group or board of directors determine what values will become core to the organization. For farms, it is the family members' (who are actively involved in the farm) personal values that essentially become farm business values.
- The exercise and resulting family discussion should help members gain a better understanding of each other's views of the family's overall value system.
- You may refer to this exercise in creating your farm's vision.



PLANNING POINTERS:

- There are no right or wrong answers to this exercise.
- Family members actively involved in the business should complete the exercise.
- Family members who might be actively involved in the business at some point in the future should complete the exercise.
- Family members who are not currently actively involved, or who do not plan being involved in the business, can optionally be included in the exercise.
- Remember, the examples you see in the guide are based on the case study found at start of the guide pages d-j and also in the appendix on page 213.



WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

- Consider using an external facilitator if you are concerned about some potential for conflict during the discussion.
- Enter your answers from the perspective of the farm in its current state, **not** how you think it should be.



EXERCISE: Go to the forms appendix at the back of this guide for a copy of the Family Values exercise on page 213.

Next steps

Congratulations on completing this topic. You are now a step closer to having a transition plan for your farm. Please proceed to the next topic area on your Transition Plan, but don't forget to add any assigned tasks that were generated by working through this topic.

Planning progress



Family Values

For each value statement pair, think of your extended family, and circle on the scale which one of the statement pairs is more descriptive of the family's values and beliefs (the overall family culture)?

Freedom is defined by rules.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Freedom is defined by personal choice.
An overall leader is essential.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Groups can provide their own leadership.
Trust others with great caution.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Trust others until they prove unworthy.
Security more valued than adventure.	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	Adventure more valued than security.
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