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FAMILY OFFICE

Case Study

Preparing the Next Generation for a $150 Million Legacy

"The concern was not whether assets would transfer. The concern was whether the knowledge, values, judgment, and sense of responsibility would transfer alongside them."

The Smith family (name changed for privacy) had spent decades building a substantial multigenerational legacy through disciplined investing, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy. With approximately $150 million in assets and four generations of family members involved in various aspects of the family's affairs, they faced a challenge common among successful families:

How do you prepare future generations to steward significant wealth responsibly?

The family's senior generation understood that wealth transfer is about more than assets. It is also about transferring values, judgment, leadership, and a shared sense of purpose. While some family members were actively engaged in family decision-making, others had limited exposure to the responsibilities they would one day inherit.

The family wanted confidence that future generations would be prepared not only to manage wealth, but also to preserve family harmony and continue the legacy they had worked so hard to create.

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INITIAL CHALLENGES

As families grow and wealth becomes more complex, preparing future stewards often becomes one of the most important—and most overlooked—aspects of long-term family success.

Without intentional preparation, families can face:

- Uneven financial knowledge across generations
- Limited engagement in family governance structures
- Unclear expectations regarding future leadership roles
- Difficulty preserving family values and culture
- Increased risk of conflict and decision-making challenges

The family's concern was not whether assets would transfer. The concern was whether the knowledge, values, judgment, and sense of responsibility would transfer alongside them.

OUR APPROACH

Education

Rather than relying on generic financial education, learning experiences were built around the family's actual circumstances.

Family members explored concepts such as investing, risk, philanthropy, and governance using the family's own investment portfolio, philanthropic initiatives, and decision-making structures as real-world teaching tools.

Mentorship

Rising-generation family members participated in individualized mentoring conversations designed to provide a safe environment for discussing topics such as responsibility, identity, leadership, and the opportunities and challenges associated with significant wealth.

Governance Readiness

The program helped family members better understand the purpose of family meetings, committee structures, and governance processes while developing the skills needed to participate meaningfully in future leadership roles.

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SIGNS OF PROGRESS

Over time, meaningful changes began to emerge across the family.

Before

- Varying levels of financial literacy and preparedness
- Limited participation from younger generations
- Uncertainty surrounding future leadership roles
- Family discussions focused primarily on information sharing

After

- Increased engagement in family meetings and discussions
- More thoughtful participation in investment and philanthropic conversations
- Rising-generation family members assuming committee responsibilities
- Greater confidence in future leadership transitions
- Stronger alignment around shared family values and long-term objectives

THE OUTCOME

Today, the family approaches the future with greater confidence and clarity.

Family members share a deeper understanding of both the family's wealth and the responsibilities that accompany it. Rising-generation family members are more engaged, better prepared, and increasingly equipped to contribute as future stewards of the family's legacy.

Most importantly, the family has established a stronger foundation for continuity across generations—not simply preserving financial capital, but preserving the relationships, values, and leadership capabilities that support long-term family success.

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