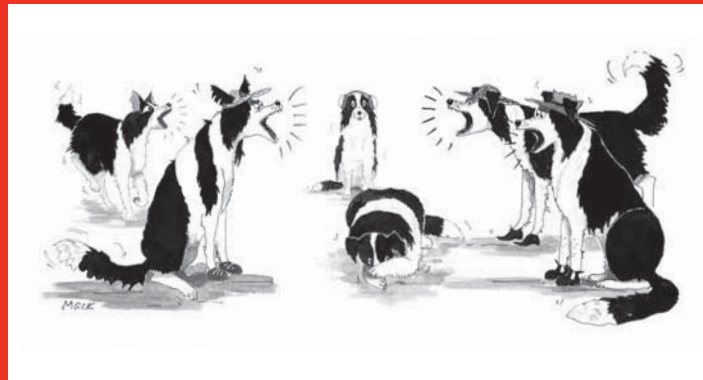


A GUIDE TO **Communication**  
for **Farm Families**



Australian Government  
Cotton Research and  
Development Corporation



Australian Government  
Grains Research and Development Corporation

**GRDC**  
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Australian Government  
Grains Research and Development Corporation



A GUIDE TO **COMMUNICATION**  
for Farm Families



*Compiled & written by*

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for the Grains Research & Development Corporation**

**Disclaimer:**

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We also acknowledge the time and efforts of the many people who gave valuable input and feedback, both in the initial and review stages of this publication. We also sincerely thank everyone who helped in other ways.

In researching for this publication, the authors consider it a privilege to have shared time with many families as they face difficulties and challenges in their businesses at different times. Not one of those families is reflected here; however elements of many have found their way on to these pages. For the generosity of all those families spanning almost 25 years - thank you!

We hope this publication is helpful to many others.

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## Foreword

Following on from the success of *A GUIDE TO SUCCESSION - Sustaining families and farms in 2007*, many people have asked: “So how do I get my farming family to communicate more effectively?”

Families are unique and often complex. The families in the case studies are real life examples of the challenges and outcomes facing a family business.

This booklet draws on family structures and plans emanating from family meetings, how they played out in reality and how they might guide future plans. It also provides usable tools to put into practice that will enhance communication. I am sure you will identify with many of situations and scenarios that are described here.

I have often been asked about *A Guide to Succession* and whether issues like succession planning and *A Guide to Communication for Farm Families* are core business for the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC). My answer has always been straightforward – it is a critical component of a healthy, sustainable industry whose most important asset is its people. For Australian grain growers to remain competitive in a constantly changing global grains market, it is essential that, as for any business, there are effective succession plans in place and the existence within enterprises and across the sector of constructive communication.

The key messages are to understand your own and others’ communication style; to act when what you are doing is not working (don’t keep doing it!) and to hold top-of-mind the importance of keeping family and business intact.

There are many great suggestions and ideas in this booklet and I recommend it to everyone living and working in a family business.



**Peter F Reading**  
Managing Director  
Grains Research & Development Corporation

# Introduction

## Read me first

The aim of this booklet is to increase understanding and to build communication skills among family members and their advisers.

In the years we have been working with farming families, numerous times we have heard people say, "They just need to communicate." If it were that simple, they would!

Effective communication is a skill to be learnt and continually practised.

Many factors influence how we communicate -

- Family history: hence the inclusion of the genogram with each case study
- Communication style: all individuals have their own style, and the styles in a family are not always compatible. We need to first understand our own communication style, and the styles of other family members. Hence the inclusion in the case studies of the personality ratings of each of the individuals (to discover your own style see Part 3).
- Self esteem of individuals
- The different styles of communication between the generations

The foundation for good ongoing communication needs to be reinforced at each of the three stages in the family business cycle.

The three stages are:

1. Communication between husband and wife or partners.
2. Communication with the children of husband and wife or partners (especially as they reach adulthood)
3. Communication with new family members (in-laws)

As families progress through these stages additional skills are required. Just as any significant change in a business enterprise mix needs to be researched, thought about and planned for, so it is with any change in the people component of a business. Failure to take the time necessary to do this may lead to damaged relationships and poor business outcomes. Often the real impact of this neglect may not be experienced at the point of change but smoulder away for years to reappear at some other point of stress.

A good communication strategy will encourage family business to have open discussion, to make consensus decisions and to deal with conflict while it is minor and manageable. This environment discourages discontent to thrive and avoid the tragic divisions seen in some family business.

### **Why is it so hard?**

- Potential gains or losses are high
- Differing opinions
- Varied and high levels of emotion are involved



When an individual has a strong desire for effective communication and it is not shared by other family members, this can be an indicator that the individual will struggle to have effective working communication and business relationships.

It can be a case of accepting, *this is how it is!* The decision may need to be: stay in the business and accept the reality and the implications, or alternately look for another opportunity that meets the individual's needs.

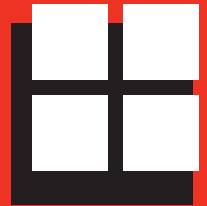
This booklet provides an insight from the experts in the *External Perspectives* section, some communication theory which may provide insight into why things may happen (see *Relevant Theories* section), and stories about what others have done in the real family scenarios in the *Case study* section.

We hope you will enjoy it, and find it helpful!



# External Perspectives

insights from professionals



---

Part one

1

## INSIGHTS FROM PROFESSIONALS

This booklet provides an opportunity to benefit from the insight of those professionals who work with farming families and to read about the things they may not risk saying directly to their clients.

- Recognise each business solution is different and unique
- Obtain professional legal, accounting and financial perspectives
- Communicate openly with family members and professionals
- Recognise difference in generational values within the family

The information provided in this section has been contributed by the following professionals who assist families in communication:

- Generational Consultant - Catherine Legue
- Relationship Counsellor - Merrie Carlshausen
- Family Therapist - Alana Johnston
- Family Meeting Facilitator - Karen Harper
- Lawyers - Lisa Anderson and Bill Thompson
- Accountant/Financial Planner - Vicki O'Connor
- Industry Consultant - Mike Stephens

Enlisting professional advice will ensure all aspects of the family and business are explored-legally, financially and in relationships. Using advisers also provides an opportunity to get an outside opinion and learn new skills. Some crucial points may be repeated by more than one professional.

When choosing a professional, understand that different approaches and personalities will suit different families. Talk to people you know who have used such services.

This section will help you identify the type of information you will need and questions you need to ask.

## **External Perspective - from a Generational Consultant**

Basic differences exist in values, communication styles and attitudes between generations and it is important to understand (although not necessarily agree with) these differences. They influence work ethics, world perspectives and management styles.

### **Veterans: pre-1946**

Veterans grew up at a time when unemployment meant hunger and work in a bank was a job for life. They came from the Depression and World War II. They are private people often referred to as 'the silent generation'. Members of this generation cannot be expected to share their thoughts immediately. They believe that 'your word is your bond'. They prefer face-to-face or written communication and do not appreciate others wasting their time.

### **Baby boomers 1946-1964**

The baby boomers are the 'show me' generation. Body language and an open and direct style of communication are important. Avoid language suggesting control, answer questions thoroughly and expect to be quizzed for the details. Present options to demonstrate flexibility in your thinking. They are doers, communicators, achievers; they figure that so long as they can think and talk, they can do the job better than anyone. Boomers have lived through incredible change and have adapted to (and in many cases created) the change. This generation are likely to remain in leadership positions for longer than any previous generation and their experience, combined with their adaptability, will keep them relevant.

### **Gen X 1965-1977**

They use email and SMS as primary communication tools. They are quick to accept change, but do not like to be micro managed or long explanations. Always ask them for their feedback and provide regular feedback in turn. They like to be 'kept in the loop', so share information on a regular basis. They prefer a relaxed, informal style of communication. Many have been late to commit to marriage (waiting to well into their 30s, far later than any generation before them). Generation X is the perfect bridge generation as they understand the work ethic and focus of the Baby Boomers and also understand the culture views and values of the Y Generation.

### **Gen Y 1978-1994**

Mobile phones, SMS, facebook and twitter are essential to them for a social life and networks. These forms of communication are carried with them so communication for them through these portable mediums is instant. When speaking with them use language that paints pictures. They like to be challenged. They resent being talked down to (as do all generations). Give and receive feedback frequently. They appreciate humour and prefer interesting, interactive learning environments. They have a great team spirit and enjoy socialising with colleagues.

### **Generation Z - born since 1995**

They have entered a world of information overload and are used to being bombarded with it day and night so allow only very well-targeted messages to pass through. They communicate in the social media environment using facebook and are always “on line”. Technology is a way of life to them. If they want opinions, they will more than likely text their friend rather than ask their parents. They are the most demonstratively loved generations around, are used to being driven to school, to being included in discussions and being told they are important, so feel valued. Their life has real purpose.





	<b>Veterans</b>	<b>Baby Boomer</b>	<b>Generation X</b>	<b>Generation Y</b>	<b>Generation Z</b>
<b>Communication Preferences</b>	Face to face or written	Open and direct. Like control	Email SMS Like brief explanations and being kept in the loop	SMS, Facebook, Twitter and instant	On line/social media Face book
<b>Education &amp; qualifications</b>	Least studied, least understood generation	Shaped the youth culture of the 1960s and 1970s	Most educated generation	Very techno-literate, most ethnically diverse	This is a way of life
<b>Business role</b>	Are firm leaders, empty nesters with decent incomes and growing leisure time	Primary leaders, looking toward retirement	Senior staff and middle management	Keen to be involved in all aspects of the business	The workforce of tomorrow
<b>Career</b>	First generation of women to move into the workforce at significant rates	Work long hours, children home alone; women into management roles	Committed to being available to their families and work/life balance	Thirst for knowledge. Expect to change jobs frequently	Still considering options, but used to part time work after school and having their own money.
<b>Lifestyle</b>	Place importance on human relations: many are involved in cultural and society issues, age not a barrier	Risk takers, value creativity, adventure, independence, may be permissive	Cynical, sensitive to hype and politics; Enjoy problem solving, flexibility and independence. Values teamwork, friends and are not intimidated by authority	Team players, strong sense of fairness and ethics, respond to humour, direct language, easily bored; respect earned not positional	Adopting principles of Gen X, their parents, interested in the global community
<b>Attitude to work</b>	Work first	Live to work	Work to live	Live, then work	Live life

## **External Perspective - from a Relationship Counsellor**

### **Communication in relationships**

When talking about communication in relationships, it doesn't only mean couples, but also relationships within families and business.

Communication is a life skill that we learn and the more we do it the better we will get at it.

Some of the common communication difficulties encountered are:

- Not placing enough importance on communication.
- Not taking responsibility for responding to what is being communicated.
- Not taking an equal share in the actual communication.
- Electing to withdraw or pursue.
- Avoiding difficult conversations.
- Reacting to what is being said rather than taking responsibility to pause and respond effectively.

The following principles support effective communication and relationship building:

1. Agree to a discussion. For example, "I would like us to talk about ... is it okay for us to discuss this now? If not, when will you be willing to have this discussion?"
2. Start practicing communication skills with topics that are safe. Commit at the beginning to finishing the discussion in an agreeable way, even if this means when things become challenging to agree to postpone it at that stage and agree to come back to it. "I think we are getting into territory in which we are struggling to contain our emotions so let's agree to take a break."
3. Seek to understand and validate the other person's position before putting forward your own. This does not mean you need to agree.
4. Choose a place to discuss things which isn't associated with prior conflict or discussions.
5. Have conversations with the person directly, not through other people.
6. Respect yourself and others.
7. Use 'I' language. For example, "I feel ... I think ... I believe ... I would like".
8. Desire to find an agreed outcome or solution and work hard on finding it.

## **External Perspective - from a Family Therapist**

### **We all face problems in life.**

Most of the time, most of us successfully solve our problems.

Communication problems can be the most difficult as they are very personal and can stop us enjoying our family and work relationships.

Most farmers are good decision-makers and problem-solvers – it's what they do every day. When they apply these same skills to communication problems they have their best chance of resolving them.

Whenever you find yourself with a problem, especially if it is with a person, it is important to try to find a solution as soon as possible.

People who 'get stuck' with unresolved problems often experience stress, health issues, drinking problems, depression and relationship breakdown. Having good ways to address problems and make good decisions keeps us healthy and happy.

### **WHAT GETS PEOPLE 'STUCK' WITH PROBLEMS?**

- **BLAMING:** You can get into the habit of just blaming something or someone for your problems. Even if you think another person created the problem, hanging about, waiting for them to change isn't doing you much good. Accept that you can't make other people change but you can change how YOU handle things.
- **FINDING THE CAUSE :** You can get 'bogged down' trying to find out what caused the problem. Although it can be important to understand why problems have occurred, don't become so focused on searching for the cause that you just get 'problem saturated' and don't focus on finding solutions for the future.
- **JUST DOING THE SAME THING:** How you communicate with people is established early in life and tends to become automatic. Communication problems are often like a CD that keeps getting played over and over. You just continue saying and doing the same thing and can be totally unaware of it. Whole families can operate like this. If you have an unresolved problem with someone, accept that what you are doing IS NOT WORKING and do something different.

## WHAT TO DO INSTEAD:

As you do in farming every day, accept that solving problems is up to you. Take charge and take action. You will get nowhere if you let the problem get on top of you, expect the problem to resolve itself, or wait for someone else to solve it.

- Know how you usually make decisions and what works for you. Ask yourself this question - when I have made good decisions and successfully solved problems, what do I do? Do you think things through? Do you take time to 'cool off' or 'settle down'? Do you write stuff down? Do you list the pros and cons? Do you seek advice? Do you talk it through? You know how to be a successful problem-solver, so what do you do?
- If your problem involves another person, find out how they usually successfully solve problems and make room for their style. Perhaps they are the sort of person who needs more time to think than you do, or perhaps they need to talk more than you do. Ask them what they usually do to successfully solve problems.
- Be aware of what you don't do so well. Are you the sort of person who reacts without thinking, gets defensive or angry, are quick to blame someone, doesn't listen to other people's views, doesn't make space for other people's way of solving problems? Accept that this is only learnt behaviour that you can change. No-one is making you play that same CD all the time!

## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED?

Ask yourself this key question – if this problem didn't exist or was solved, what would I/we be doing or saying to each other?

Have a vision of what you want things to be like and then decide what steps you can take to make it happen.

Perhaps you would be simply speaking nicely to each other or perhaps you will be sharing a meal together.

Small steps can make a huge difference. Don't just remain feeling hurt or powerless, or angry or resentful; don't wait for someone else to take the first step.

Take that step yourself. If it works, do more of it. If it doesn't work, try something else.

Sure, it can fail but the only real failure is the failure to learn.

You can't change other people but only you can decide how you are going to deal with the situation.



***Be the Change You Want to See Happen.*** Mahatma Gandhi

## **External Perspective - from a Facilitator**

Emotion is the stuff life is made of. The facilitator's role is to manage the emotion and prevent it becoming something destructive, escalating and making it impossible for the family to focus on the business at hand. These skills, need to be developed by family members themselves, over time.

Working as a facilitator allows you to observe family communication patterns, often at points of change or conflict. Family meetings with structure and held in a controlled environment often allow more comprehensive communication. People get to speak to a neutral person about their fears and concerns, without being interrupted. This flow of communication sometimes allows people to express things they have never had the opportunity to say before.

The controlled environment also allows the listener to really hear without defending themselves or attacking the other person. Sometimes it is valuable for a facilitator to first sit back and observe how the family "normally" communicates prior to "stepping in". It is often then clear to the observer where the family's communication patterns break down.

The controlled environment often allows people, particularly children in the family business, to express themselves as adults and to display to their parents their real potential. Such an environment often allows the parents to explain the logic or experience behind their suggestions allowing their children to hear them from a non-parental or critical position. It is so easy when we are communicating with those close to us, to slip into patterns that are neither relevant nor productive.

The facilitator may also bring focus and clarity to specific conversations and help resolve conflict that has increased gradually over time by drawing attention to unhelpful communication patterns. A facilitator's experience enables families to introduce a structured communication process as part of their ongoing business and thus prevent business communication problems affecting family relationships. Families are then more able to meet as a family, free from the need to talk business.

In an effort to maintain relationships, tricky questions are often avoided for fear of causing damage to relationships, it is the facilitator's role to ask these questions.

## External Perspective - from a Lawyer

The key to successful succession planning is communication. Farming families need to understand their goals and aspirations, both for themselves and the farm business and be able to talk about them.

Discussion needs to be ongoing. It should start as each family member joins the business (and probably well before this too). It should deal with difficult topics like involvement in the business, transfer of assets, and Wills, and the day-to-day activities and problems. It needs to be regular (agronomy discussions frequently; budget/financial discussions monthly; planning discussions annually).

When differences are not resolved the end result is litigation. A court process takes time and costs money. No one wins; often everyone is unhappy with the result.

### Key issues for family to consider

- What do family members want? What is realistic and feasible? What is fair?
- How do you balance security for parents and a future and motivation for the farmer?
- Understand your business structure. How can it be changed to accommodate new members (or exiting ones)?
- If the farm can support more than one family, what are the retirement possibilities?
- If the farm can only support one family, what benefit can be obtained with pension planning?
- If there are concerns - address them. It's likely these can be taken into account and a solution found.
- **DO IT NOW – if you die tomorrow would you leave a disaster behind?**
- Review it regularly.



## External Perspective - from an Accountant/Financial Planner

### Keys to communication:

1. Clear shared vision
2. Don't leave it to "over the fence" discussion
3. Listen to each other
4. Celebrate success

### What Is Communication?

Communication is defined as a process by which we assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. This process requires a vast repertoire of skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analysing and evaluating.

### Seems simple doesn't it?

It is the difficulty facing business today – and is identified as the reason for staff turnover.

When family business gets it right, the rewards are great. If the business doesn't get it right, the penalties are significant. The risk for family business is that you may be damaging the family relationship – and damaging to an extent that is not repairable.

### What are the keys to family business communication?

Have a clear, shared vision of where everyone wants the business to be.

What is it you are hoping to achieve? It does not matter if this vision changes over time, as long as the members of the business understand the change and had some contribution to it.

New members joining the family business need to understand what you are trying to achieve. It does not matter that you might not know how to get there. You want them to help with planning the journey anyway.

### **Build a formal process of communicating**

Do not leave communication to an “over the fence” discussion. Make it a planned process. One business leader I knew took time each Sunday afternoon to note all that had happened in the previous week which needed to be communicated to the team. He then went to his weekly meeting the next day fully prepared. The result – nothing was forgotten and the communication did not miss anything or anyone. It does not matter if your meeting is once a week or once a month – being fully prepared will make it a success.

### **Listening is essential for problem solving**

You do not have to solve all the problems. Let the team solve some. Even if the solutions are not perfect in your mind, try them and make them better as you move forward. Studies have shown the most satisfied staff are those who are encouraged to help solve problems, whose solutions are implemented and who are given credit for them.

### **Celebrate success – establish the habit of acknowledging**

Many businesses do not celebrate the success of the team and the team members. Maybe it is a simple, “Well Done”, from Dad to Son. Other times it might be to send them off for a week-end away. Don’t forget that a parents’ “Well Done” – so often not done – has incredible power to motivate the family.





## External Perspective - from an Industry Consultant

The American Mathematics professor, satirist and songwriter, Tom Lehrer, remarked that “I wish that those people who spend hours bemoaning the fact that they can’t communicate, would shut up”.

In theory, communication is simple. The sender codes a message and sends it through communication barriers to the receiver who de-codes it and acts or sends feedback. Alright, if the communication is clear and concise and both sender and receiver speak the same language. and are acting cooperatively all will be well. But in family businesses and family farms (many of which are not run on business lines) the messages are often unclear, confused, lengthy, ambiguous and in language which works for one generation but not others.

Instruction to two Jackaroos: “Can you get in the race and drench the sheep from both ends?”

Most of the poor communication I see in family farms stems from:

- Unclear roles and responsibilities.
- Inappropriate or unclear employment relationships (including the terms and conditions of employment).
- The belief that “My” partner/spouse is putting in more than others – because the roles and responsibilities of all need to be understood.
- People being forced to do work they don’t enjoy.
- Inadequate time is set aside to discuss issues – and there is failure to allow separate time for strategic, tactical and operational meetings.
- Meetings held without clear notice or agenda, agreed chair, minutes and actions list (what, who and when).
- Avoidance, People tend to disappear rather than confront issues and discuss them.  
“I can’t talk now because I have to move the irrigator/check a sick cow/check the water/check the lambing ewes ...” Avoidance never fixes the problem.
- Finally, there is a tendency to encourage people to say what they think but in the wrong way. The response must be about ideas, actions, situations or plans, not what they think about other people. This type of communication can be very damaging. Talking freely about an individual’s behaviour can be helpful; loose talk about the individual only adds to the problem.

# Relevant Theories

---



Part two

2

## RELEVANT THEORIES

There is an enormous amount of information on communication available in any bookshop.

For Section A, we have chosen elements of communication theory we have seen work well at a practical level.

In Section B, it is accepted that in all families and at all skill levels, things can go wrong. We attempt to explore the common causes.

### Section A

#### Making it work!

- Talking and Listening
- Are you a good listener
- Communication Hierarchy
- Transactional Analysis
- Family decision-making
- Regular operational meetings
- The Family Meeting Agenda

### Section B

#### When it goes wrong!

- Mismatch of Expectations
- Karpman's Triangle
- Misunderstanding the Intention
- Cumulative Resentment
- Conflict
- Mapping the Conflict



## Talking and Listening

### Receiver/Listening:

Getting the message

- Be clear!
- What do I want for me?
- What do I want for them?
- What do I want for the relationship?
- Both individuals need to be involved and making an effort.

### Effective Listening means we:

- Stop talking.
- Allow the person to talk; take time and be attentive and encouraging.
- Look, be interested, not distracted.
- Develop an understanding by asking questions and clarifying.
- Don't judge; it is OK for each of us to be different.
- Give feedback and get facts.
- Don't blame, get angry or impatient.
- Observe tone, expressions, volume etc.
- Clarify what is being said to help understand the message.
- Stop talking again!! We cannot listen when we are talking!

### Barriers to Effective Listening happen when we:

- Allow ourselves to be distracted by our own values, interpretations, judgements.
- Not waiting your turn!
- Hearing only part of the message and jumping to conclusions.
- Being defensive.
- Thinking 'I know better', patronizing.
- Thinking I have to help, find a solution for this person.

To build communication skills we need to practice and we will sometimes make mistakes. That's okay. Acknowledge the mistake and learn from it.



## ARE YOU A GOOD LISTENER?

To see how effective you think you are in practicing good listening techniques, answer these questions about yourself.

**Remember: Be ruthlessly honest with yourself!**

		Almost Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
1	Do you let people finish what they are trying to say before you speak?	4	3	2	1
2	If the person hesitates, do you try to encourage them ....rather than start your reply?	4	3	2	1
3	Do you withhold judgement about the person's idea until they have finished?	4	3	2	1
4	Can you listen non judgmentally even if you do not like the person who's talking?	4	3	2	1
5	Do you stop what you are doing and give full attention when listening?	4	3	2	1
6	Do you give the person appropriate eye contact, head nods and non-verbals to indicate that you are listening?	4	3	2	1
7	Do you listen fully regardless of the speaker's manner of speaking? (grammar, accent, choice of words)	4	3	2	1
8	Can you listen fully even though you think you know what they are about to say?	4	3	2	1
9	Do you question the person to clarify their ideas more fully?	4	3	2	1
10	Do you restate/paraphrase what is said and ask if you got it right?	4	3	2	1
	Add up each column	----	----	----	----

**Your combined total:**

**Total Score .....**

36 – 40	Outstanding; truly attentive and trying to listen. Probably have the reputation of being a good listener.
30 – 35	Very good. With some effort, you could move into the upper range. Probably need to put more effort into attention and judgemental evaluations
26 – 29	Need work. Identify your lowest self-ratings and ask why you see yourself that way. Does it interfere with your work? What would the pay-off be if you could improve?
25 or below	Most of all ask yourself ...was I really serious about this quiz? If you were, then examine your behaviour. What are you getting by answering the way you did? What would you gain if you could answer each question more positively?

## About Conversations

About 12% of communication is verbal, i.e. the spoken words.

About 88% is conveyed to the receiver in non-verbal communication, which involves:

- The tone and volume.
- Body gestures.
- Facial expression.
- Body posture and more.

Non-verbal messages can be picked up both consciously and unconsciously. Confusion can occur if we say one thing (verbal) and do something different (non-verbal/act).

Most people respond to what they are seeing and hearing, not to the actual words

### Useful hints for effective conversations:

- Use “I” statements.
- Be honest with yourself and with others.
- Keep in mind, “How do I show respect for myself and them?”
- Be clear about what you think and feel.
- Be patient and don’t get angry.
- Know opinions are valuable and can be heard & respected.
- Care about the other person’s feelings.
- Avoid using broad sweeping statements such as always, never, all men/women, everything, nothing and everywhere.

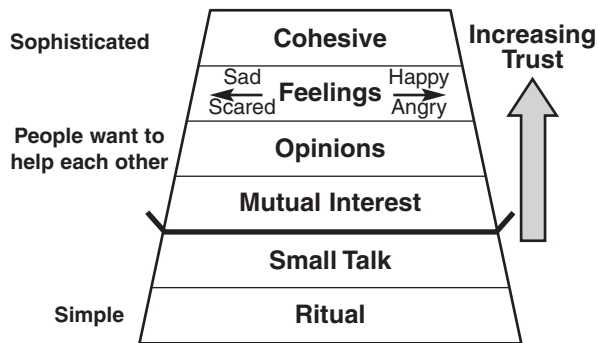


## Communication Hierarchy

Communication happens at levels – “Simple”, through to “Sophisticated”.

If we are not on the same level, there is a chance that what we have said will be misunderstood or misconstrued. This can create conflict and make it difficult to reach agreement. Knowing your level and the level of people you are speaking with can be helpful in enhancing effective communication. Look at the diagram below and see if you can recognise where you fit on occasions, especially when conversation does not work out as you envisaged.

Like any hierarchy, start at the bottom (Ritual) and work towards the more sophisticated levels (Opinions and Feelings).



Good family decisions are a result of effective communication at all levels. This will be achieved when trust levels are high.

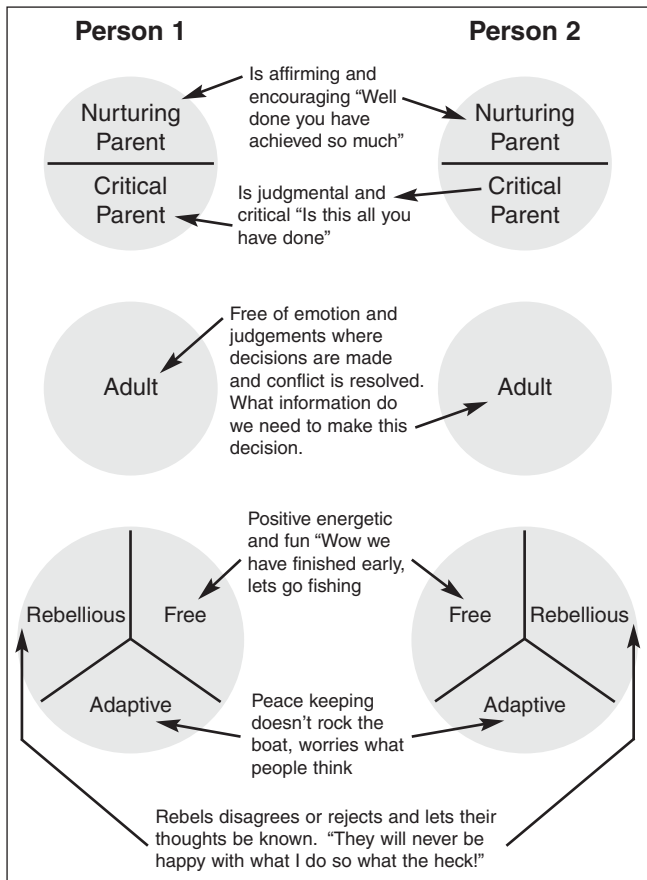
Trust will increase as communication moves from Ritual toward Cohesive.

Many families when discussing sensitive or difficult issues fail to have the skills to hear and accept opinions different to their own.

Interaction may vary depending on the topic, family members involved and how high the stakes are.

Avoiding difficult conversations and anxiety may see people commencing the discussion at the Opinions level, rather than starting at the base and working up. Time usually makes the difficult conversations even more difficult.

Understand that emotions are a response to a person, place or situation. They are not caused by someone else. It is helpful to be clear which of the four primary emotions - sad, angry, scared or happy - is influencing our communication. “Am I closest to sad, angry, scared or happy?” Our response may well be driven by emotion rather than clear thinking.



Adapted from Transactional Analysis, E Byrne

## Transactional Analysis

When we look at how we communicate there are three different levels. We need to aim to both be on the same level, this requires both insight and skill

### Destructive Conversation

Son – from Adult

*I would like to trial an area with minimum till*

Father – from Critical Parent

*We will stick to what we know works*

Son – from Adaptive Child

*What's the use of having an opinion*

### Constructive Conversation

Son – from Adult

*I would like to trial an area with minimum till*

Father – from Adult

*How about you draw up a plan about how and when and give me sometime to think about it*

Son – from Adult

*Thanks I will have a plan to you tomorrow*



## **Family Decision-Making**

One of the common areas of concern in family business is decision-making. Who decides what, how and when? It is important for families to decide how the business will make decisions. Some family members may make decisions without considering the impact of these decisions on others, some force decision on others, some want all members to be involved in decisions with the goal of reaching consensus.

Looking at the different decision-making methods, each is appropriate depending on:

- Time available.
- The level of relationship.
- The need for commitment.
- Type of task involved.

## **The Four Methods**

### **Command**

A command is a decision made by someone in authority. This can take a number of forms and can be:

- a decision without consultation.
- a decision after consulting with others individually.
- a decision after listening to a group discussion.

### **Consult – decision by minority**

In a consult, decision makers invite other to influence them before they make their choice. You may consult with experts, a representative population, or everyone who wants to offer an opinion. Wise leaders, parents and couples frequently make decision in this way; they gather ideas, evaluate then make a choice and inform those who need to know. This process can run the risk one person or the group may control the discussion and or the ultimate decision.

## Vote

This process is best suited to situations where efficiency is highest value. Those involved realise they may not get their first choice but don't want to waste time talking the issue to death. When facing several decent options, voting is a great time saver but should never be used when people don't agree to support whatever decision is made.

## Consensus

Basic consensus is where everyone has had an even chance to influence the decision and even if they don't fully agree with the final outcome they are prepared to support it. Unanimous consent is where everyone agrees completely on the course of action to be taken.



When choosing among the four methods of decision making, consider the following questions:

1. Who cares? Determine who wants to be involved, along with those who will be affected. Don't involve people who don't care.
2. Who knows? Identify who has the expertise to make the best decision. Encourage them to take part. Try not to involve people who contribute no new information.
3. Who must agree? Enlist those whose cooperation you might need, those of authority / influence. It's better to involve these people than to surprise them and then suffer their open resistance.
4. How much time have you got and how many people is it worth involving? Your goal should be to involve the fewest number of people, while still considering the quality of the decision as well as the support they will give it. Ensure there are enough people to make a good choice. Will others have to be involved to gain their commitment?

DECISION TYPE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<b>Command</b>	Quick and convenient	People may be frustrated by lack of inclusion Resources not fully used Depends on ability of leader to provide the right information Individuals may lack commitment to the decision
<b>Consult</b>	Quick method of dealing with an uninformed group When the group trusts the leader	May create resentment and opposition later Resources not fully utilised Can break group cohesion May lack commitment
<b>Majority</b>	Fair, quick and convenient	Creates win-lose situation May lack commitment by minority
<b>Consensus</b>	Increases commitment through involvement Uses resources fully / gets more ideas / better solutions Increases understanding of the decision When issue is complex Individuals skills increase	Can be time consuming and inconvenient Requires members to have group interaction skills

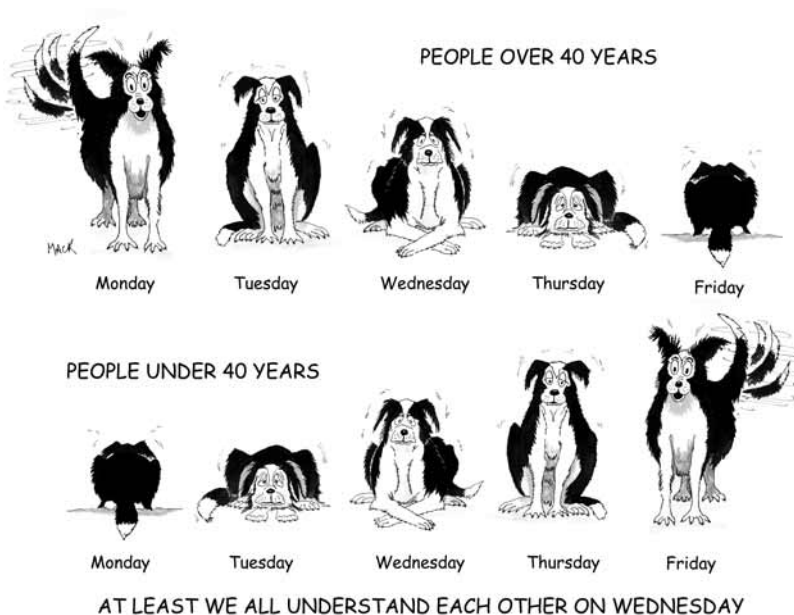
## Regular Operational Meetings

The need to have very clear boundaries separating family and business communication is important if both are to function well.

Establishing a family business meeting process is essential.

Develop the habit early if you are going to be in business with your family.

An important part of preparing and implementing a communication strategy is setting aside time for the 'pause' of meetings – both strategic and operational.



Time needs to be put into finding suitable meeting times that allow the greatest opportunity for people to function at their best.

Some people function better in the morning, some in the afternoon, as well as at different times in the week (see cartoon).

What will be the trigger for the business to have a strategic meeting?

How often will the business have operational meetings?

What day and time will these meetings be held?

How and who will chair the meetings and will this role be shared?

How and who will record the meetings and will this role be shared? This could be in the form of minutes or action notes.

How will tasks be delegated?

How will timelines be applied?

## Family Meeting Tips

Effective team meetings can:

- add structure and discipline and encourage positive habits
- build team dynamics and strengths
- develop shared understanding and trust within the team
- Increase efficiency, productivity and creativity of the team
- Give the ability to effectively plan (strategic, business, family, succession).

Effective team meetings can be made possible by taking some simple steps:

- Develop a set of guidelines. For example, one voice at a time, share the air and all have a right to pass
- Develop a team agreement together
- Ensure all people are involved
- Set a date and time of the day that suits everyone
- Develop an agenda (see next page)
- Allow last minute agenda items to be added at the commencement of the meeting
- Alternate the chair
- Take minutes of the meeting
- Share the role of secretary
- Have a process for decision-making
- Bring in 'experts' if you need more support, information, ideas
- Include fun and humour
- Conclude by clarifying the achievement/actions/unfinished business of the meeting
- End on a positive note
- Have an agreed conflict resolution process (conflict is normal)
- Stick with it for at least 6 months to see benefits
- Stick to operational issues for operational meetings and strategic issues at strategic meetings

The above is simple information, but can be difficult to carry out.

A professional can help set up the environment for future success – sometimes in one meeting.

## The Family Meeting Agenda

Emotion often clouds family meetings and having a formal agenda to stick to ensures discussion stays relevant and on track.

Following are tips to use when planning your agenda and examples of the types of items discussed.

- Start the meeting positively; note things that have worked well since the last meeting.
- Address action notes from last meeting.
- Talk about day to day management tasks.
- If including gripe sessions (which can be valuable), set a time limit (say, 60 seconds); ensure the person states the issue (not attacks the person); give no right of reply; and, if the gripe is brought up three times at separate meetings, consider it a conflict and deal with it accordingly.
- Allow time for bright ideas. Seek feedback/agreement. The person who introduced the new idea can then have the responsibility of progressing it by bringing more information on it (details and budgets) to the next meeting.
- Be aware of the Karpman's Triangle at all times. Take notes/Minutes.
- You may choose to include budget and actuals at a meeting once a month, or once every three months.
- Decide how and when you address strategic issues.

### Conflict Strategy

- If issues arise three times, the people involved need to meet outside of the meeting to sort it out.
- No triangles.
- If the issue can't be resolved, employ external help (and do it!).

### Communication Strategy

- A typical weekly operational meeting can take between one and 1.5 hours.
- Quarterly reviews with budgets and advisers commonly take up to four hours or more.
- Allow a day annually, or biannually, for a facilitated review.

## Section B

### When it goes wrong!

- Mismatch of Expectations
- The Karpman's Triangle
- Misunderstanding the Intention
- Cumulative Resentment
- Conflict
- Resolving Conflict
- Mapping the Conflict



## Mismatch of Expectations

Everyone in the business or family will have expectations. These expectations are at different levels of consciousness and are influenced by our past. They can be:

- expectations we know we have talked about
- expectations we have not talked about
- expectations we do not realise we have (until they are not met)

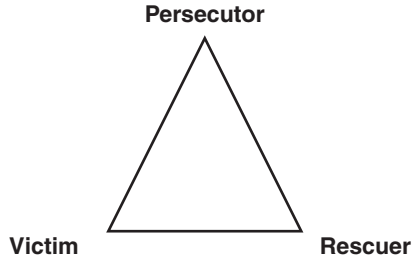
Aim to have as many expectations known and expressed as possible, to avoid mismatches. Sometimes we are not clear about our expectations and skilled questions can help us gain clarity.





## The Karpman's Triangle

The biggest escalator of conflict can be a third, often well meaning, person, who is referred to here as the Rescuer. The concept of what happens when a third person becomes involved in an issue is explained by the Karpman's Triangle, named after its creator, Steve Karpman.



### About the Persecutor –

- They pressure and coerce.
- They believe they are right and have the right to correct/punish the others and it is important to do so.

***The Persecutor can change by: listening to others, consulting more and stop blaming and criticising***

### About the Victim –

- They allow themselves to be victimised.
- They believe their problems are caused by others and circumstances beyond their control.

***The Victim can change by: taking responsibility for themselves, seeking support and understanding others also have needs***

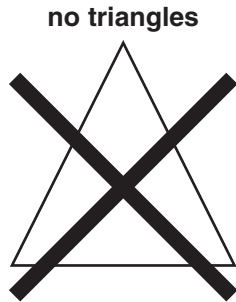
### About the Rescuer – “Let me help you”

- They believe they are only worthwhile as long as they are looking after and helping other people.
- They actually escalate the dispute.

***The Rescuer can change by: learning to support with respect, learning to facilitate and by encouraging others to help themselves***

Each role is played to different extremes and most people move between all three. We all have our favourite or preferred role that we tend to revert to when under stress.

Example



### A typical example of a destructive Karpman's Triangle:

**Father (Persecutor) to son:**

*"You did not put the sprayer back in the shed"*

**Son (Victim) to mother:**

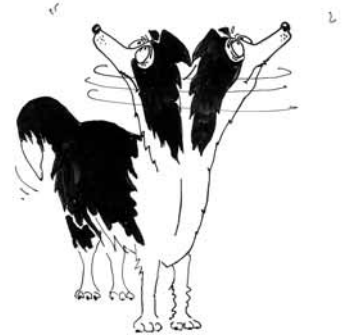
*"Dad's on my back the whole time"*

**Mother (Rescuer) to husband:**

*"You need to encourage him more and not be so negative with him all the time"*

**Father (Victim) to wife:**

*"You always take his side, I just wish he would listen to directions, we waste such a lot of time"*



**Mother (Rescuer) to son**

*"You need to listen more carefully when you are asked to do something so you don't waste time"*

**Son (Victim) to mother:**

*"You always take his side"*

Etc., etc., etc.

**An example of how this scenario could have been improved:**

**Victim**

**Son** – *"Dad is driving me crazy, I just cannot work with him like this!"*

**Rescuer – Facilitator**

**Mother** – *"You need to talk to your father about this"*

**Victim**

**Son** – *"I can't, I just get angry and it drives me mad"*

**Rescuer – Facilitator**

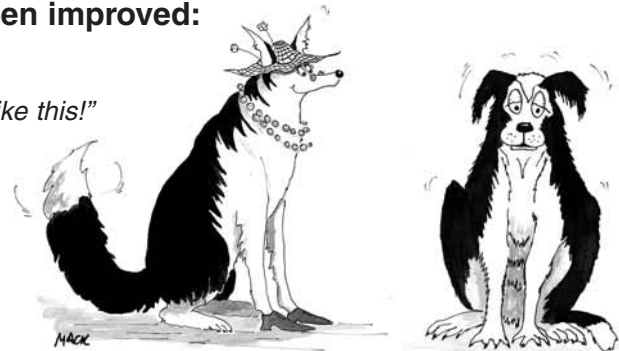
**Mother** – *"It is important to talk these things through with your father so it does not fester. Work out how you can do this calmly"*

**Victim**

**Son** – *"I cannot do it now while I am mad"*

**Rescuer – Facilitator**

**Mother** – *"I agree. Cool off and make a time when you are calm to talk it through"*



## Misunderstanding the Intention

Often something is said with the intention of being helpful but the impact can be heard as something very different.

It may be heard as destructive, critical or sarcastic.

How will you know if your intentions have been misunderstood?

If you get a reaction you don't understand – check!!!

What can you do if you realize there's a mismatch between your intent and your impact?

First: ask yourself these questions:

- What happened?
- What did I do?
- What can I do to fix it?

Secondly: take action to fix the situation quickly

- Clearly say what you were intending.
- Check what they thought your intention was.
- Apologise for the misunderstanding.
- Discuss how you could have handled it differently.
- Take responsibility for your actions.



As you communicate with others, pay attention to the signs that there's a mismatch and take immediate action!

## Cumulative Resentment

One of the many communication challenges faced by family businesses is getting the balance between complaining about little things and ignoring them and resentment building.

Resentment is when you feel bitter, angry or irritated by someone or something.

A good rule of thumb is:

If the thing happens once, think of it as an isolated incident. If it happens twice, it may be coincidence. If it happens three times it is likely to be a pattern and there needs to be communication with the person involved to prevent long term problems developing.

Many families fail to do this, fearful of causing a problem. Not doing so is really the problem. Resentment is cumulative and what is a minor issue the third time it happens is a major issue the 300th time it happens. Act early to avoid resentment accumulating to a point where relations are no longer viable and few options remain.

A conversation avoided today will only be more difficult tomorrow.

Don't put it off in the hope that it will get easier. It will only get harder.



## **Conflict**

Conflict comes from differences – in needs, values and drives. These differences can complement each other, other times they will cause conflict. Conflict itself is not a problem; how we manage it may be a problem.

It is important to act as conflict consumes our energy. Unresolved conflict uses tremendous amounts of our attention, it is exhausting, achieving a resolution invariably gives an energy boost. Resolving conflict requires skill.

Conflict resolution skills enable us to bypass personal differences and to open up to shared thoughts and possibilities. Conflict resolution skill can draw us closer to others, as we search jointly for fair solutions and balanced needs. It requires a powerful shift from adversarial to cooperative partners and this shift is to each person's benefit.

These skills are also the tools for building friendship and intimacy. A whole new level of trust develops as people learn “we can work it out”.

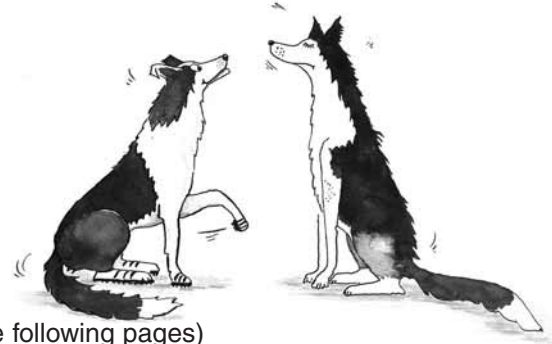
Relationships become more fulfilling and supportive.

## Resolving Conflict

Acknowledge the problem exists and what it is.

### What do I want?

- Be clear
- Separate the person from the problem
- Attack the problem, not the person
- Establish what you want for:
  - yourself
  - other person
  - relationship
- Discuss the feelings triggered by the problem



### Negotiate on needs not position (use the conflict map on the following pages)

- Start with an open mind
- List shared needs
- Work hard to negotiate to solve the problem together

### Identify outcomes for mutual gain

- Never assume there is only one solution
- Work together to develop options
- Try to understand and put yourself in the other's shoes
- Agree on solutions for mutual gain rather than mutual loss

### **Agree on criteria for outcome**

- Agree on acceptable conclusions
- Be fair
- Agree to test the outcomes
- Do not yield to pressure
- Work on the positives, not the negatives

### **Do you need a neutral Third Person?**

- Could a neutral third person help you to understand each other?
- Will such a person help you build your own solutions?

### **How can you both win?**

Work towards solutions where everyone's needs are respected.

### **Why improve conflict resolution skills?**

Conflict in families is normal, conflict in business is normal. Resolution in both situations is a skill. As life and business becomes more complex the need for these skills is greater as the likelihood of misunderstandings becoming conflict is greater. Add to this the different ages, genders and personalities in a family business conflict resolution skills are an essential risk management tool.

Highly developed conflict resolution skills provide improved outcomes in areas of:

- giving and receiving feedback and criticism
- resolving disputes with a win-win outcome
- resolving team unrest by reaching common goals
- managing resistance to change by dealing with our own and other's obstacles
- implementing directives that are clear and understood
- achieving change with long term positive outcomes



## Mapping the Conflict

This page is designed to help you work through conflict when it arises. It is called, "Mapping the conflict". If you can first identify the **issue**, problem solving becomes much easier.

**Who:** write down the name of the person at the centre of the issue. Write his/her **needs** what motivates them? Then list his/her **fears**, concerns and/or anxieties.

Be prepared to change the statement of the issue, as your understanding of it evolves through discussion. You may need to draw up other maps of related issues that arise.

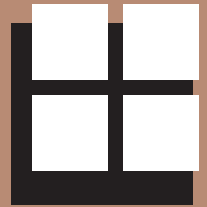
<b>Who:</b>  Needs:  Fears:	<b>Who:</b>  Needs:  Fears:
<b>Who:</b>  Needs:  Fears:	<b>Who:</b>  Needs:  Fears:

THE TRAIN WRECK



# Case Studies

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Part three

3

## PART THREE: CASE STUDIES

### Introduction

Each of the following case studies offers:

- An explanation of why the family has come together
- A Genogram (a diagrammatic representation of the family) giving the family “tree” displaying members’ ages
- Each family member’s expectations versus “reality”
- Each family member’s (Direct, Influencing, Stabilising, Conscientious) D.I.S.C. as a communication tool
- The family’s agreed future options following the meeting
- The thoughts of family members after meeting

The shown outcomes are those agreed to by families at family meetings. They reflect a range of views in relations to equity, viability and fairness and communication styles. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the authors or any of the experts who have contributed to this publication. These case studies are designed to encourage families to think about options. It is not meant to provide solutions or ‘recipes’.



## About D.I.S.C. - (Direct, Influencing, Stabilising, Conscientious)

People have a variety of preferred and habitual ways of behaving and responding. When communication is difficult, it can be helpful to tailor your approach to suit others' preferences and habits.

Within any behavioural style, people can be both skilled at getting the job done and getting along with others.

Once aware of areas needing improvement, people can often develop valuable new skills.

Which behavioural style pertains to you?

### BEHAVIOURAL STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

✓ Tick each statement that you believe is a fair representation of yourself.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gives priority to detail and organisation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Gives priority to achieving results          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sets high standards                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeks challenges                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approaches tasks and people with steadiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Approaches tasks and people with clear goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys research and analysis                | <input type="checkbox"/> Is willing to confront                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefers operating within guidelines         | <input type="checkbox"/> Makes decisions easily                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completes tasks thoroughly                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Is keen to progress                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses attention on immediate task         | <input type="checkbox"/> Feels a sense of urgency                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Likes accuracy                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts with authority                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Makes decisions on thorough basis           | <input type="checkbox"/> Likes to take the lead                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Values standard procedures highly           | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys solving problems                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approaches work systematically              | <input type="checkbox"/> Questions the current position               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Likes to plan for change                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Takes action to bring about change           |

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ Box 1

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ Box 2

- Gives priority to supporting others
- Enjoys assisting others
- Approaches people and tasks with quiet and caution
- Has difficulty saying no
- Values co-operation over competition
- Eager to get on with others\Willing to show loyalty
- Calms excited people
- Listens well/attentively
- Prefers others to take the lead
- Gives priority to secure relationships and arrangements
- Prefers steady not sudden change

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ Box 3

- Gives priority to creating a friendly environment
- Likes an informal style
- Approaches people and tasks with energy
- Important to enjoy oneself
- Rates creativity highly
- Prefers broad approach to details
- Likes participating in groups
- Creates a motivational environment
- Acts on impulse
- Willing to express feelings
- Enjoys discussing possibilities
- Keen to promote change

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_ Box 4

Add up the number of ticks in each box.

If you have the highest number of ticks in box 1, you are a Conscientious style.

If you have the most ticks in box 2, you are a Direct style.

If you have the most ticks in box 3, you are Stabilising style.

If your tick tally is highest for box 4, you are described as Influencing style.

Now read about what is known about your style:

		Introverted	Extroverted		
Task Oriented	<b>CONSCIENTIOUS</b>		<b>DIRECT</b>		Task Oriented
	<p><b>Behaviours</b> Reserved Systematic Pays attention to details Focuses attention on immediate task Likes clear guidelines Likes to plan for change</p>	<p><b>Needs</b> High standards Appreciation Quality work</p> <p><b>Fears</b> Criticism of work Imperfection Not having things adequately explained</p>	<p><b>Behaviours</b> Outgoing Challenges Keen to get things done Resists authority Takes action to bring about change Likes to have control</p>	<p><b>Needs</b> Results Recognition Challenges Control</p> <p><b>Fears</b> Challenges to their authority Lack of results from others</p>	
People Oriented	<b>STABILISING</b>		<b>INFLUENCING</b>		People Oriented
	<p><b>Behaviours</b> Reserved Works well in a team Accommodates others Maintains current position Recovers slowly from hurt Prefers steady rather than sudden change</p>	<p><b>Needs</b> Security Acceptance Teamwork</p> <p><b>Fears</b> Isolation Standing out as better or worse Unplanned challenges</p>	<p><b>Behaviours</b> Outgoing Leads by enthusing others Prefers a global approach Steers away from details Acts on impulse Keen to promote change</p>	<p><b>Needs</b> Change Acknowledgement New trends and ideas</p> <p><b>Fears</b> Disapproval Stagnation Detailed work</p>	
		Introverted	Extroverted		

Tips on how to communicate with people with the designated D.I.S.C. style:

Conscientious	Direct
<p>They speak thoughtfully, precisely with pauses for thinking. Don't interrupt.</p> <p><b>Use:</b> It's logical, reasonable, clear, precise, balanced...guarantee...specifically...judgement...critical...exactly...factual...qualified...professional...just...well thought out...planned detailed...quality...discerning</p> <p><b>Don't Use:</b> creative...risky...daring...generally...colourful...make it up...chaotic...experimental...fun...innovative...popular</p>	<p>They come to the point, in short, sharp sentences. They think and respond fast and have an impatient style. Don't bother with niceties, or tell them long stories.</p> <p><b>Use:</b> Yes...OK...now...I'll do this, will that be OK? True...solid effective...bottom line...ball park figure...asap...we'll get right onto it...deadline...be first...leading...initiate...get cracking...I'll handle it...can do!</p> <p><b>Don't Use:</b> I'll look into it...We'll have to discuss it...you must understand...I'll let you know...this needs a consensus decision...you'll have to be patient</p>
Stabilising	Influencing
<p>Generally quietly spoken, a little shy but friendly, approachable. Give them space, don't interrupt.</p> <p><b>Use:</b> How do you feel about it?...It would be helpful...I need...I'd be grateful if...Would you mind assisting us...It's fair to all...safe...gentle...quiet...modest...faithful...considerate ...most people</p> <p><b>Don't Use:</b> Do this...Next!...Now!...that's emotional rubbish...you could be the first person to</p>	<p>Bubbly speakers, friendly, informal, they use creative language. You can talk over them and they'll join in. Don't be critical. They're optimists.</p> <p><b>Use:</b> positive...bright idea...innovative...fresh...easy...how do you see it? Here are your choices...that's easy...big picture...the latest...it'll be fun...enjoy it!</p> <p><b>Don't Use:</b> No way! Show me your figures...tried and true...traditional...it's always been like that...I'm only doing my job</p>



## Negotiation Styles

Dealing with difficult conversations, resolving conflict making decisions, solving problems, all require negotiation. This guide may help you understand your own negotiation style and those of others and what you may be able to do to increase your effectiveness.

Conscientious		Direct	
<p><b>At Worst</b> Fanatic Cautious Machine Like</p>	<p><b>At Best</b> Discriminating Planner Evaluative</p>	<p><b>At Worst</b> Fighter Dominant Arrogant</p>	<p><b>At Best</b> Persistent Leader Confident</p>
<p><b>To Improve</b> Visioning Flexibility Consider feelings of others Knowing when to break rules</p>		<p><b>To Improve</b> Include the team Eliciting other's opinions Listening Delegating</p>	
Stabilising		Influencing	
<p><b>At Worst</b> Accommodator Hesitant Fence sitter</p>	<p><b>At Best</b> Facilitator Patient Diplomatic</p>	<p><b>At Worst</b> Impulsive Verbose Disorganised</p>	<p><b>At Best</b> Catalyst Spokesperson Optimistic</p>
<p><b>To Improve</b> Assertiveness Self Assurance Risk Taking Confidence</p>		<p><b>To Improve</b> Think first Be precise Hear feedback on proposals Be practical</p>	

You will see in each of the case studies, each family member's D.I.S.C. style is noted. The people we struggle to communicate with are usually those least like ourselves. For example, Direct (Extroverted Task) people can fail to understand Stabiliser (Introverted people) and Conscientious (Introverted Task) people can misunderstand the Influencer (Extroverted people).

Many things influence our communication. However, it has been shown to be helpful for many families to gain understanding of their own personality preference and those of other family members.

We have included the 1st (most ticks) and 2nd (second most ticks) preference of each family member in these case studies. When families understand "where others are coming from", i.e. their personality preference, it can make effective communication a reality.

#### **Examples:**

**A Direct (TASK)** person with a high score of 10 may appear abrupt or rude to a **Stabiliser (PEOPLE)** person.

**A Stabiliser (PEOPLE)** person with a high score may seem vague and slow to a **Direct (TASK)** person.

**An Influencer (PEOPLE)** person with a high score may seem ratty and impulsive to a **Conscientious (TASK)** person.

**A Conscientious (TASK)** person with a high score can seem obsessive and fanatical to an **Influencer (PEOPLE)** person.

*Preference can affect how we see the world, the choices we make and how we work with others.*

A Genogram is a tool utilised to provide information on a family and its relationships.

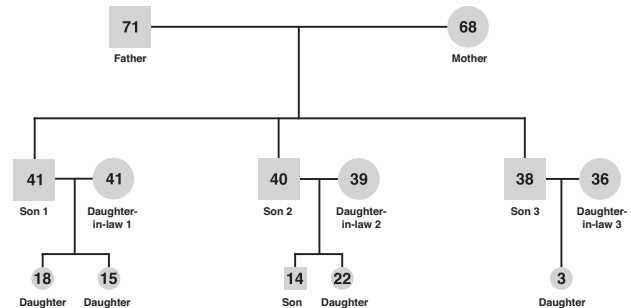
<b>AGE</b>	Circles are women	——	A line joining a circle and square indicates union like marriage	//	through the line indicates divorce or separation
<b>AGE</b>	Squares are men	- - -	Broken line indicates a partner or not married	×	through a circle or square indicates someone who has died

## Case Study 1

### Unhappy daughter-in-law

**Stage:** Including new family member in business  
**Trigger:** Daughter-in-law expecting first child

*This family came together as a result of increased conflict between those working on the farm and unrest due to succession planning not progressing.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Direct 8/Conscientious 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the same.</li> <li>He and son running the business.</li> <li>Everyone watch personal spending.</li> <li>Daughter-in-law to take similar role to wife.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Things have changed since son married.</li> <li>Not comfortable talking business to son's wife.</li> <li>Would like recognition of his achievements.</li> <li>Does not understand son's need for increase in wages.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Stabilising 8/Influencer 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be a mentor / friend to daughter-in-law.</li> <li>Have company from daughter-in-law when men working long hours.</li> <li>Grandchildren.</li> <li>To have another woman at the farm for support and to give support in return.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not know why daughter-in-law is so distant.</li> <li>Missing the communication with son.</li> <li>Not sure why daughter-in-law is not happy to stay at home.</li> <li>Not sure what she has done wrong.</li> </ul>

Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Son 3</b>  (Conscientious 9/Stabiliser 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things continue the same.</li> <li>• Happy family.</li> <li>• Wife comfortably integrated into family and business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is caught in the middle between parents and wife.</li> <li>• Both parents and wife don't think he is supportive – both unhappy with him.</li> <li>• Would like family meetings with both couples involved.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 3</b>  (Influencing 8/Direct 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be independent, have privacy and career supported.</li> <li>• Needs to feel financially secure.</li> <li>• Financial information to be transparent.</li> <li>• Open communication.</li> <li>• Maintain a standard of living.</li> <li>• Does not want to be involved in the business if it is going to affect her relationship with her husband.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to be clear about what is expected of her.</li> <li>• Needs privacy in her own home and time with husband.</li> <li>• Does not understand criticism of her paid work.</li> </ul>



### Agreed future options:

- Young couple to move onto same financial arrangement as older couple.
- Both couples to share a meal weekly.
- Will have a trial of monthly meetings.
- Women to explore the possibility of a shared activity they would both enjoy on a regular but not too frequent basis.
- With the exceptions of peak times work day to finish by 6pm at the latest.

Family Member	Comment
<b>Father</b>	Satisfied glad it is done and the family are happy.
<b>Mother</b>	Pleased family happy.
<b>Son 3</b>	Good, positive going forward.
<b>Daughter-in-law 3</b>	Relieved nervous about moving forward.

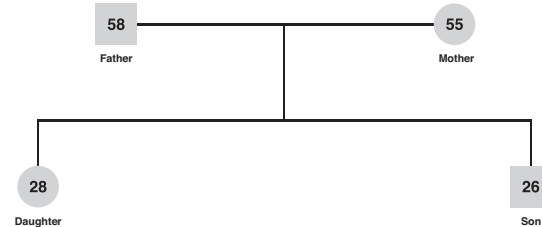
## Case Study 2

### Father feeling over-committed

**Stage:** Father wanting to get out of the physical side of business

**Trigger:** Other opportunities for the father to pursue

*This family came together as a result of the father feeling over-committed with the cropping program on the farm and an employment commitment he had elsewhere. The son has been involved with the business since leaving school and is also working for a producer locally. The daughter has been supported through tertiary education and is now in permanent employment. The mother has always worked off-farm.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Stabiliser 7/ Influencer 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As he got older he would be able to work at something else.</li> <li>Is a grazier, not so keen on cropping.</li> <li>Son would have taken over the cropping by now.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frustrated things are not moving along as quickly as hoped.</li> <li>Hard to have in-depth conversations with his son.</li> <li>No-one appreciates the amount of work in the cropping and how much he dislikes it.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Conscientious 8/Direct 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would be taking things a little easier.</li> <li>Both be able to do other things.</li> <li>Not to be tied to the farm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weary of the husband complaining.</li> <li>Not sure why husband and son are not making the decision to move forward.</li> </ul>
<b>Son</b>  (Stabiliser 7/Conscientious 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Father would say when he wanted to do less.</li> <li>People say what they think and want and do it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Father not saying what he wants.</li> <li>Father complains but keeps doing stuff.</li> <li>Gets the message that father does not trust him with the decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter</b>  (Influencer 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not expect to be involved in the farm decisions.</li> <li>Thought they had sorted it out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Father and brother should get together and sort it out.</li> </ul>



When we retire I would like to travel a little



When I retire I would like to potter about with a small flock

Family Member	Comment
Father	Good to move my son part way into the business.
Mother	We have made steps in the right direction.
Son	I now know what I am doing.
Daughter	Good to be clear.

#### Agreed future options:

- Son would take over the cropping enterprise and meet with the agronomist at the beginning of the season.
- Father would be an observer at that meeting.
- Father and son to meet before seeding and harvesting to plan cropping rotations to suit the stock.
- Both agreed to ask for help when they needed it.
- Son to call father on Sunday to inform each other of their off-farm commitments for the week.
- Agree to review, with a meeting every 12 months.

## Case Study 3

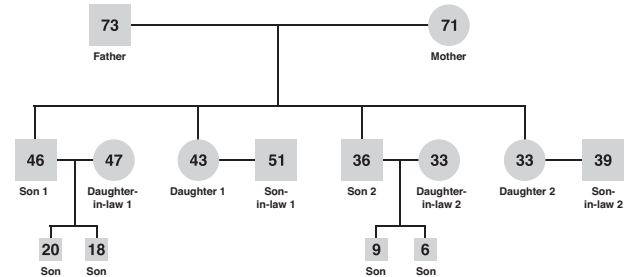
### Generational conflict

**Stage:** Older generation exiting

**Trigger:** Sons unhappy with the father's plan

*This family came together as a result of the working relationship between the father and sons not working well. Son 1 had been working in the business for twice as long as Son 2. The mother was concerned about the mental health of one of her sons. There*

*was a desire to separate and secure on-farm assets from potential legal attack from non-farming family members, as there was one family member currently estranged from the family. The children's education opportunities had varied. Both off-farm children have been given assistance to buy real estate.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b> (Conscientious 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business would go on in family name.</li> <li>• Sons would increase scale.</li> <li>• He would be proud.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not being heard.</li> <li>• Cannot get them to understand the impact of reducing scale.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b> (Influencing 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants a happy family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas and thoughts are not being shared.</li> <li>• Lack of discussion causing people to feel anxious and unwell.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b> (Direct 7/Stabilising 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would be in business for himself.</li> <li>• To have implemented the practices learned at training he commenced 10 years ago.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to discuss his need to work on his own for fear of offending.</li> <li>• Frustrated not doing things the way he wants to.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 1</b> (Influencing 8/Stabilising 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To offer opportunities to their sons.</li> <li>• To be in business for themselves in the future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tired of husband's discontent.</li> <li>• Wants to include their children in a business.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b> (Stabilising 8/Influencing 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The family would always be in business together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tricky when not everyone wants the same things, hard to express thoughts without offending anyone.</li> </ul>

Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Son 2</b> (Stabilising 9/Conscientious 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do as his father wished.</li> <li>Be in business with family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not understand why things don't just continue as is; it has always worked well.</li> <li>Very fearful about being in business without family.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b> (Stabilising 6/Conscientious 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would be financially secure in a family business.</li> <li>Would work together to make it happen.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worried husband will struggle with business if father and brother depart.</li> <li>Was such a happy supportive family when she came into it, now it is strained.</li> </ul>

### Agreed future options:

- Son 1 will leave business at the end of this financial year (as per previous discussions. All details with lawyer and accountant).
- Son 1 happy to meet regularly with brother and father for the first two years to provide support.
- Father will stay in business for the next two years and gradually hand over decisions to Son 2 as his confidence increases.
- Return to monthly Sunday lunches; family talk only.
- Son 2 agreed to have doctor's appointment to check for depression.
- Meet again in 6 months to monitor.

Family Member	Comment
<b>Father</b>	Congratulations to eldest son on his generosity, delighted with the boys' acceptance, thanks everyone.
<b>Mother</b>	Very positive, relieved everyone is happy.
<b>Son 1</b>	Timing was right, glad sister present, glad to be independent.
<b>Daughter-in-law 1</b>	Achieved great resolution, fantastic effort from everyone.
<b>Daughter 1</b>	Glad a resolution has been made, hope they can make it work.
<b>Son 2</b>	Thank everyone for getting where we have, thank mum and dad for generosity, hope we can make a go of it.
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b>	Happy with what is agreed, need to do the budgets to plan our way forward.





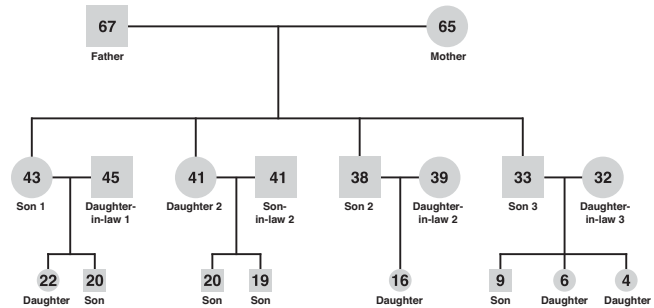
## Case Study 4

### Parents ready to retire

**Stage:** Generational change

**Trigger:** Parents had enough, want out now

*This family came together as a result of the parent's desires to move. Their son has worked in their business for approx 16 years; other members have worked short periods of time from time to time, always being paid for their efforts. All family members have experienced the same levels of education and been afforded similar opportunities to pursue their own interests.*



Perspectives	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Influencer 8/Direct 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expected to die young.</li> <li>Would not be in good health.</li> <li>Last year had a trip and enjoyed it – a surprise!</li> <li>Would like to do more.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants to maintain his relationship with everyone.</li> <li>Not confident that they will tell him if they were unhappy.</li> <li>Concerned about how he will let the farming son know when he did not want to help or be available.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Stabiliser 7/Influencer 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expects to live a long life.</li> <li>Needs to be financially secure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worried the family would think she is only interested in money.</li> <li>Needs them to understand that she may live for another 30 years and some of that time may be in care.</li> <li>Concerned that they may not tell her that she is becoming a burden.</li> </ul>

Perspectives	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Daughter 1</b> (Influencer 8/Stabiliser 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farm will always be the centre for family gatherings.</li> <li>What was happening on farm would be shared among the family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not want to be involved in decision about the farm.</li> <li>Would like to be kept informed.</li> </ul>
<b>Son-in-law 1</b> (Influencer 7/Direct 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be able to continue to pursue leisure activities with his children at the farm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned horse feed or care may become a problem.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 2</b> (Conscientious 6/Stabilising 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The family would continue to treat everyone equally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mum and Dad are making a huge effort to not only treat their children but their grandchildren equitably but may be missing out themselves.</li> <li>Worried what will happen when/if they are no longer able to do this.</li> </ul>
<b>Son-in-law 2</b> (Direct 9/Influencing 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have good relationships with the family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finds communicating with everyone easy.</li> <li>Hopes if anyone has a problem with him they would let him know.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b> (Influencing 8/Stabilising 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All communication would be open and honest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unsure what to do if the family shares concerns with him that they have not shared with the person concerned.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 1</b> (Stabilising 7/Conscientious 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Things will continue the same.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Her husband sometimes gets caught in the middle between family members who are unhappy with each other.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 2</b> (Direct 9/Influencing 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The family would continue to communicate openly and honestly.</li> <li>Family harmony was paramount in decision making.</li> <li>Parents' happiness and security was a first priority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some sort of communication protocol needs to be put in place in relation to the homestead.</li> <li>We have an early warning system if anyone is unhappy with anything or anyone.</li> <li>If family members have concerns about his business relationship with Mum and Dad how will they be dealt with?</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b> (Direct 10/Conscientious 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to maintain the atmosphere set by her mother-in-law.</li> <li>Expected everyone to come and go as they pleased from the other house.</li> <li>Does not want to offend anyone, can seem abrupt at times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned about how to keep everyone informed.</li> <li>Concerned that the family may have expectations of her that she is not meeting.</li> <li>Concerned she may be short with people when busy.</li> </ul>

Family Member	Comment
Father	Relief, thank advisers for their help.
Mother	Congratulations husband, my family are happy and I am happy.
Daughter 1	Great outcome, very creative.
Son-n-law 1	Positive, everyone wins.
Daughter 2	Fantastic outcome, great parents are cared for.
Son-in-law 2	Good process, impressed.
Daughter 3	Thankyou Mum and Dad, overwhelmed and appreciative.
Son-in-law 3	Constructive, generosity beyond belief.
Son 1	The feeling of freedom is wonderful, Congratulations Dad for sticking with it during the tough times.
Daughter-in-law 1	Best as it can be for everyone.

### Agreed future options:

- Daughter-in-Law 2 would email a newsletter every three months to everyone with information about what was happening on the farm and what the family comings and goings at the homestead had been.
- All agreed to discuss any issues with the people directly concerned and pull each other up if they diverted from this.
- A report from a financial planner to be distributed to all the family about the best way forward in order to secure income for their mother.
- To monitor the cost and time required for the non-farming horses for six months and then discuss what arrangements should be in place re the horses.
- Set up a Google calendar to improve communication with everyone. Organise a family meeting 12 months on to monitor progress.



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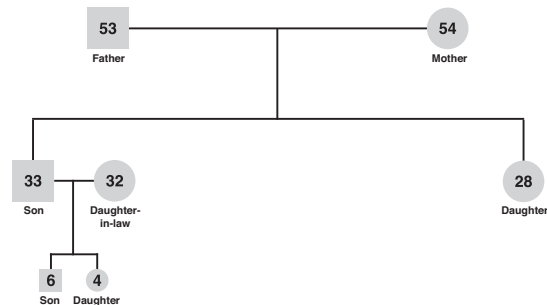
## Case Study 5

### Discomfort about debt

**Stage:** Increasing business scale

**Trigger:** Unable to reach agreement about borrowings

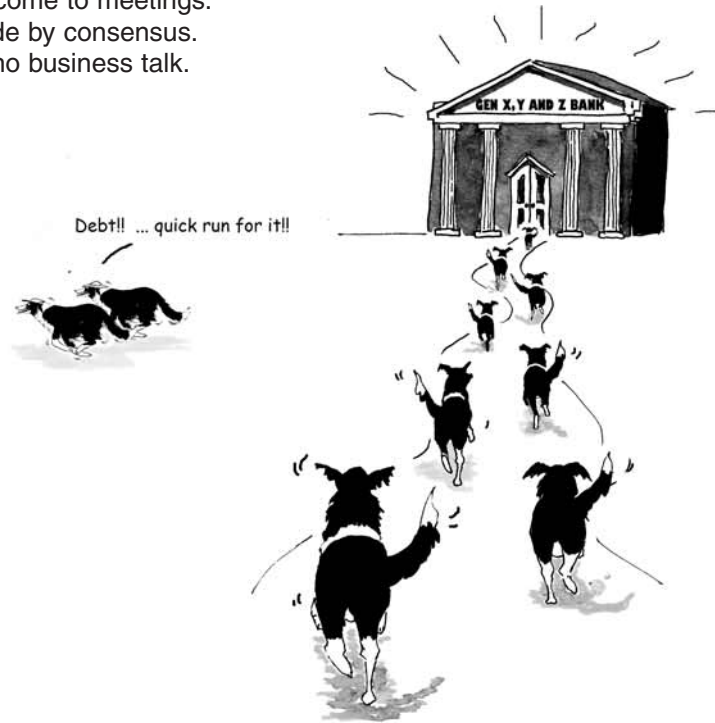
*This family came together as a result of conflict due to the father and children's wish to increase borrowings for new enterprise but the mother's reluctance to do so. There was also concern about asset protection in case of death, divorce or dementia.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b> (Direct 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop and grow business.</li> <li>Be able to enjoy developing new things with his children.</li> <li>Expected to always be in debt.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frustrated his wife does not trust him, unable to reassure her.</li> <li>Does not want to dampen children's enthusiasm.</li> <li>Excited by future, sad he cannot share with his wife.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b> (Conscientious 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not be in debt.</li> <li>Her needs to be respected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot help them understand the impact on me of my mother being left penniless in her old age.</li> <li>Hurt they will not take her needs seriously.</li> </ul>
<b>Son</b> (Direct 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be wealthy by the time he was 40.</li> <li>Have to take risks.</li> <li>His parents would be in agreement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frustrated with mum holding us back, don't like to see her upset.</li> <li>Worried what will happen if Mum and Dad separate, embarrassed to talk about it.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter- in-law</b> (Stabiliser 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone would agree.</li> <li>Open discussion and agreement would be the norm.</li> <li>The family environment would be supportive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands husband's needs and mother-in-laws; hates to see them at each other's throats.</li> <li>Wants to see some regular communication system.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter</b> (Influencer 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expected the whole family would work together.</li> <li>Thought they all would have the same long term vision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feels sorry for mum as no-one is on her side really.</li> <li>Don't know what to do when we all agree and Mum does not and everyone needs to be happy.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- All agreed mother’s security to be separated from the business.
- Mother to seek counselling in relation to unresolved issues from her family origin.
- Mother to tell family when she is feeling insecure and the family agreed to be more mindful.
- Wife able to reassure husband she trusts him.
- The families who are remaining in business together to have regular operational and strategic, meetings.
- Minutes available to all and all welcome to come to meetings.
- All decisions in the new business to be made by consensus.
- Have a regular weekly meal together, with no business talk.



Family Member	Comment
Father	I think it is a good plan if we all pull together.
Mother	Good to see everyone happy. Hope there will be no repercussions.
Son	I think it will work, look forward to us all getting on better.
Daughter-in-law	Happy, appreciate everyone’s honesty.
Daughter	Good plan, very excited.

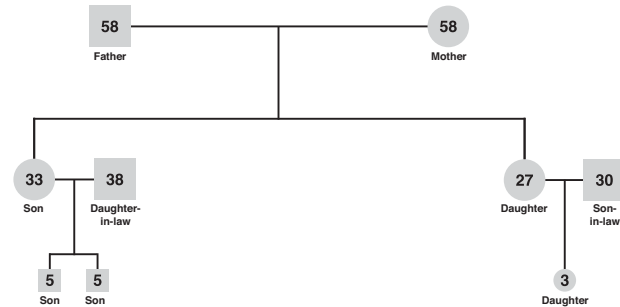
## Case Study 6

### Drought and wanting to sell

**Stage:** Daughter and son-in-law prepared to take on the farm business

**Trigger:** Father has had enough of farming

*This family came together as a result of extended drought. Parents had decided to sell but when they informed the daughters, one requested they sell to her.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Direct 11/Conscientious 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He would like the business to run how he has run it</li> <li>• Worried children may push it too hard.</li> <li>• Unsure as to what he and wife will do with themselves in the future.</li> <li>• Concerned children may want a lifestyle the farm can't support.</li> <li>• Concerned they will not utilise his experience.</li> <li>• Farm to be secure regardless of relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He does not know how to tell the children about why some things won't work.</li> <li>• Worried about how he is communicating to son-in-law.</li> <li>• Trying to protect them from making the same mistakes he made.</li> <li>• Worried daughter on farm trying to do too much.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Conscientious 10/Stabiliser 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will be strange for her husband to communicate with another male.</li> <li>• Worried there may be conflict.</li> <li>• Would like to stay living on the farm to be near to one of her daughters and grandchildren.</li> <li>• Concerned about how her daughter will balance all her roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does she state her concerns without sounding critical.</li> <li>• She has never challenged her husband on business issues, so her husband is not accustomed to being challenged.</li> <li>• Son-in-law doing things differently, her husband is taking it as a criticism.</li> </ul>

Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Daughter 1</b>  (Influencer 10/Conscientious 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For all to communicate directly about concerns.</li> <li>• Concerned she will get caught in a triangle.</li> <li>• Wants to be able to do things differently to how they have been.</li> <li>• Expects to have an active and vital role in the business.</li> <li>• Not sure if mum will be offended by her choice to be active in business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worried that doing things differently is being seen as criticism of past practices.</li> <li>• Being caught in the triangle between husband and father.</li> <li>• Feeling defensive when mother is critical.</li> </ul>
<b>Son-in-law</b>  (Direct 8/Stabilising 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excited to be having the opportunity to join the family business.</li> <li>• Wish to avoid conflict.</li> <li>• Need to plan</li> <li>• Everyone to be committed to the same long term plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to avoid conflict becoming any worse.</li> <li>• No planning.</li> <li>• No encouragement to introduce new practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 2</b>  (Influencer 7/Conscientious 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to avoid feeling on the outer not being involved in business.</li> <li>• Concerned off-farm grandchildren will be treated differently.</li> <li>• To ensure her children can experience the farm lifestyle.</li> <li>• Need to ensure parents are financially secure.</li> <li>• Business issues relating to the farm to be dealt with by those on the farm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are getting caught up with the grandchildren on the farm, mine are being left out.</li> <li>• Feels excluded.</li> <li>• Getting caught in a triangle between parents and on-farm siblings.</li> </ul>





**Agreed future options:**

- Younger generation when considering new practices to discuss with parents first, not necessarily for permission but in order to utilise their years of experience.
- Agree to all be aware of the Karpman’s Triangle i.e. to talk directly to the person you have concerns with, not to a third party.
- Have a plan for regular farm visits from off-farm grandchildren and children.

Family Member	Comment
Father	Hope we can make use of both generations.
Mother	Very lucky to have each other.
Daughter 1	Hope we can make a go of it.
Son-in-law	Keen to utilise parents-in-law’s experience, good to have plan as to how that can happen.
Daughter 2	Good to have had a chance to express concerns. Hope it works well for them.



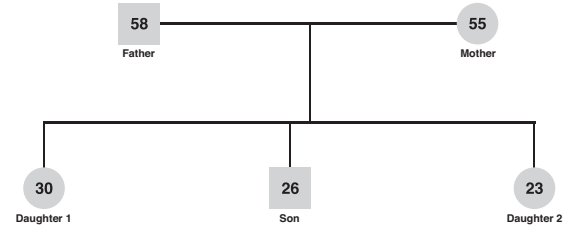
## Case Study 7

### Poor family history

**Stage:** Planning for the future before next generation comes along

**Trigger:** Recognising that past experience was not good

*This family came together as a result of attending a succession planning workshop and recognising the family's history had not been good. Parents decided to have a family meeting to plan a path forward, in order to avoid mistakes of the past.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Conscientious 8/Stabilising 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants his children to have good relationships with each other unlike he and his siblings who are alienated because of a dispute, despite his parents' best intentions.</li> <li>Would like to have family relationships like his wife's family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trying to deal with concerns before resentment accumulates.</li> <li>Needs a process in order to gauge if any discontent is building.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Influencer 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Like her children to pursue any opportunity they choose.</li> <li>Would like relationships to be healthy and happy, both family and business.</li> <li>Ensure good working relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No process to keep everyone informed about what is happening on the farm.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b>  (Direct 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants to ensure her young sister who is on-farm does not feel trapped.</li> <li>Wants her to understand that if she decides to do something else that is okay.</li> <li>There will be a plan for communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dad is working too hard.</li> <li>There is never time to communicate.</li> <li>Meetings not given priority.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b>  (Influencer 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not expect to be involved in the decisions relating to the farm.</li> </ul>	
<b>Daughter 2</b>  (Stabiliser 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have an opportunity to be involved in farming.</li> <li>To maintain good relationships with everyone.</li> <li>To have regular meeting with her parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not making time for regular farm meeting.</li> <li>Not ensuring discontent is managed.</li> <li>Not agreed on a decision making process.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- Regular operational meeting Monday 7– 8 am.
- Check each Monday at start of meeting for any discontent.
- Decide on how decisions will be made.
- A Strategic meeting to be held once a year with the whole family to provide a check on how things are going.

THE TRAIN WRECK



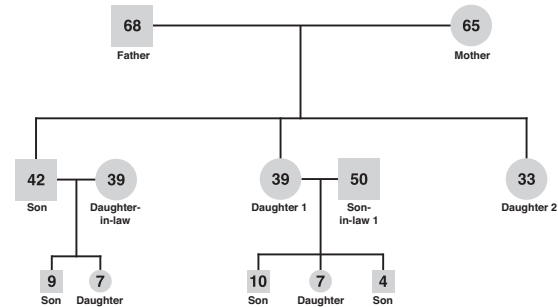
Family Member	Comment
Father	Glad we have an early warning system in place, so my children can continue to have support from each other.
Mother	Glad we have plans in place for everyone.
Daughter 1	I think we are on the right track.
Son 1	It all looks okay to me.
Daughter 2	Pleased to be able to do what I want to do.

## Case Study 8

### Parents to retire

**Stage:** Parents ready to leave the farm and retire  
**Trigger:** Who takes over?

*This family came together as a result of parents wanting to retire and move off the farm.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Direct 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move into town.</li> <li>• Handover sustainable farm to son.</li> <li>• A financially comfortable retirement.</li> <li>• His son to be respectful of his experience.</li> <li>• Son to be clear about what he needs from him.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not understand why the women get so upset.</li> <li>• Does not understand why the girls get so upset with their brother.</li> <li>• Son does not listen and he sometimes lacks caution.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Stabilising 8/Conscientious 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They would retire into town.</li> <li>• Business would continue.</li> <li>• Concerned about leaving her home and garden.</li> <li>• Needs clarity about financial arrangements.</li> <li>• To be able to afford to do the things she wants to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never have discussed money and is reluctant to do so.</li> <li>• Does not want to appear extravagant.</li> <li>• Sad to leave the garden.</li> <li>• She does not expect her daughter in law to maintain the extensive garden she has developed.</li> </ul>

Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Son 1</b>  (Direct 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He would take over.</li> <li>• He would manage on his own.</li> <li>• Expected parents to have made their own arrangements for their financial security.</li> <li>• Did not expect his sisters to have any entitlement or input into decisions about the land.</li> <li>• Other people would be as clear and focused as he is.</li> <li>• Assumed that his father would help him when ever he needed it, the way his grandfather helped his dad.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues are other people's problems.</li> <li>• Cannot understand why people get upset.</li> <li>• Gets irritated by emotional responses.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law</b>  (Conscientious 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerned she may not be able to manage the garden to the mother- in-law's standards.</li> <li>• Will be difficult to move into the homestead that has been all of their family home especially if things change</li> <li>• Know my sisters-in-law share their mothers love of gardening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She likes the garden but her interest is more in the business.</li> <li>• Not devoting the time to the garden that her mother-in-law did and feels disapproval from the family.</li> <li>• Worried family is being judgemental.</li> <li>• How to discuss assets without seeming greedy.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b>  (Influencer 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worried if brother inherits he may sell.</li> <li>• Unsure if the farm is held for next generation.</li> <li>• There will be equity in non-farming assets.</li> <li>• Understands her sister-in-law will be a very different farming partner than her mother has been.</li> <li>• Everyone needs to do what is right for them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify daughter-in-law's role.</li> <li>• Too much pressure trying to live up to others' expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 2</b>  (Stabiliser 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not want any conflict.</li> <li>• Everyone will be happy with all the decisions.</li> <li>• People are more important than business.</li> <li>• Concerned their parents needs should come first.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to be supportive of her mother as she thinks the adjustment to town is harder than her mother realises.</li> <li>• Worried her brother may take advantage of the parents.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- The parents to budget their living costs and to include a biennial overseas trip.
- The mother, daughter-in-law and daughter 1 to develop a realistic plan for the future of the garden.
- Son to give father as much notice as possible if he wants a hand.
- Mother to identify things (in the garden) that are important to her.
- Reach an agreement on what would happen if the son sells in the first 10 years of property transfer (sunset clause).
- Recognition the family home will now belong to the son and daughter-in-law and will naturally be managed differently. In the short term, family gatherings to occur at the parents' home.

Family Member	Comment
Father	Looking forward to doing new things.
Mother	Excited about the future.
Son 1	Hoped concerns have been put to rest.
Daughter-in-law 1	Glad we have talked about the house and garden.
Daughter 1	It will take time for everyone to adjust to such big changes.
Daughter 2	Feel more comfortable now.





Mack



## Case Study 9

### Concern over father's new wife

**Stage:** Father remarries

**Trigger:** Concern over inheritance

*This family came together to discuss the implications of the father re-marrying on future inheritances and what would happen in the event of the father's death.*

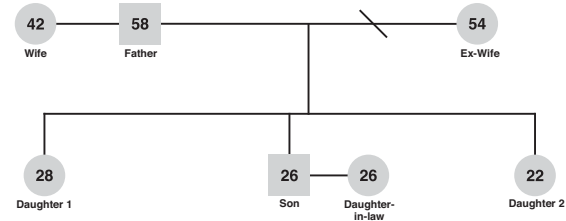
*The son and daughter-in-law are working this property with part-time help from the father. The*

*parents' divorce had already divided family assets and the son was estranged from his mother.*

*The son has a half-share in the land but due to increases in land values, would be unable to buy the other half from siblings.*

*Son had had an offer from his wife's family to join their operation.*

*Mother of children not present at meeting, nor were Daughter 1 and 2 who have no involvement in the farm. The father and new wife were present.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Direct 11/Conscientious 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Son would stay managing his farm.</li> <li>• He had everything in order.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daughter- in-law not respecting his experience.</li> <li>• Anxious about including new family members in business.</li> <li>• If son left the business, what would happen?</li> </ul>
<b>Wife</b>  (Influencing 9/Stabiliser 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She would be told if there were expectations of her.</li> <li>• Things would be clarified and discussed as they went along.</li> <li>• Expects some financial provision in her husband's will.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to know if there are any expectations and if she can meet them.</li> <li>• Frustrated by lack of communication and clarity.</li> <li>• Concerned that the son is estranged from his mother.</li> <li>• Concerned that her husband's children see her as a threat.</li> </ul>

Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Son</b>  (Stabiliser 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be treated as an equal by his father.</li> <li>• Have clarity about what will happen in the event of his father's death.</li> <li>• Manage the farm with his wife.</li> <li>• Be making more of the decisions.</li> <li>• Concern about not enough land; farm won't be viable if he has to pay out everyone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caught between his father and his wife.</li> <li>• No definite time line for the change over of decision making.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law</b>  (Direct 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be included in the family and the business.</li> <li>• Clarity about roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't understand her father-in-law's reaction to her.</li> <li>• Frustrated by lack of clarity about what they expect of her in the business.</li> </ul>



Family Member	Comment
<b>Father</b>	Will give it a go.
<b>Wife</b>	Glad to know where I fit.
<b>Son</b>	Hard not to feel anxious but have got somewhere to start.
<b>Daughter-in-law</b>	Pleased to get some direction.

### Agreed future options:

- Be aware of Karpman's Triangle.
- Ensure clear roles and responsibilities are clear.
- Daughter-in-law recognised the need to be more tentative in dealings with her father-in-law.
- To have monthly meetings and start with any concerns they have about relationships and communication.
- Father and daughter-in-law to look at the D.I.S.C. profile again and agree to let each other know if they thought the other was being aggressive.
- Father and son to develop a written document clarifying the role of the daughter-in-law in business.
- Son to undertake research into options for land transfer and initiate succession planning.

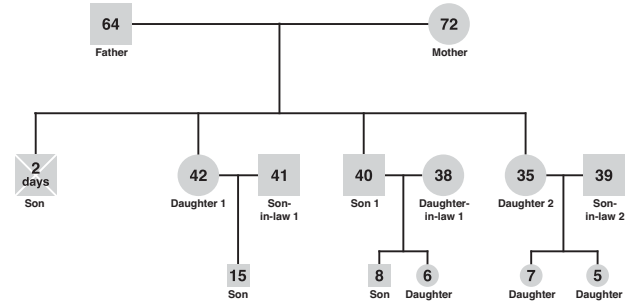
## Case Study 10

### Poor health

**Stage:** Poor Health

**Trigger:** Renovations to a kitchen

*This family came together as a result of the father's increasing poor health relating to a degenerative disease and deteriorating relationships between the mother and son. It was triggered primarily over renovations to the son's kitchen and the son's dissatisfaction with his salary and conditions. Daughter 1, Son-in-law 1, Daughter 2, Son-in-law 2 have no involvement in the farm and did not attend meeting.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Stabiliser 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To not be a burden.</li> <li>To stay involved.</li> <li>Feel useful.</li> <li>To be financially secure; ensure money is spent wisely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding it difficult to communicate about sensitive issues.</li> <li>Distressed seeing his wife and son argue.</li> <li>Access outside help rather than rely on family members to help him physically.</li> <li>Not working, having family as physical carers.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Conscientious 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone to be very cautious with money and there be no spending without everyone agreeing.</li> <li>Improved communication with her son.</li> <li>To be treated respectfully.</li> <li>To be acknowledged for her expertise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict between her and her son.</li> <li>No discussion re spending or anything else much.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b>  (Direct 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a reasonable standard of living.</li> <li>Expected it to be okay to want different things to parents.</li> <li>To do the best he can with the farm.</li> <li>Have clear financial plan moving forward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No support for trying new things.</li> <li>Constantly questioned over spending.</li> <li>Criticism of his every move from mother.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law</b>  (Stabiliser 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone would be happy.</li> <li>Husband would be treated fairly.</li> <li>Would be okay to make house to her standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has felt alienated since kitchen renovations, thought it was reasonable.</li> <li>Not sure if she has any authority or role in business.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- Agreement on an annual figure for household maintenance.
- Reach an agreement on drawings.
- Monitor relationship with mother and son to ensure it does not digress, deteriorate; agree to seek outside help if does not improve.
- Reach an agreement on all spending over \$5,000.
- Clarify what is farm expenditure and what is personal expenditure in relation to houses.
- Access outside help for father.



Family Member	Comment
Father	Sorry to be a burden, keen to stay on track.
Wife	Glad things are on the table, hope things improve.
Son	Hope we can have more harmony moving forward.
Daughter-in-law	New beginning.

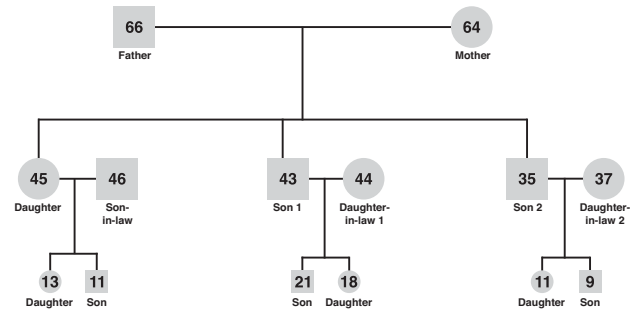
## Case Study 11

### Different ideas about management

**Stage:** Son 2 wanting to have more control over business decisions

**Trigger:** Recent and nasty conflict about management

*This family came together as a result of increasing conflict over management issues between the Father and Son 2. All the family were concerned about the conflict. The meeting was convened by the non-farming brother, Son 1, who had been paid out 10 years before. Son-in-law 1 and Daughter-in-law 1 were not present at the meeting.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b> (Direct 11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would maintain control till death.</li> <li>• He and son would work together; he would make decisions as long as he was able.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Son does not listen.</li> <li>• Son does not value his experience.</li> <li>• Son gets angry and walks away, won't talk.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b> (Stabilising 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She would be travelling and taking it easy by the time she was 55.</li> <li>• Wants to be out of the business especially the conflict.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caught in the middle, no one listens.</li> <li>• Wants to do other things, husband not interested.</li> <li>• Feels upset about husband and son's relationship.</li> <li>• Concerned about son's marriage.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 2</b> (Stabiliser 8/Conscientious 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have most of the control after 15 years.</li> <li>• Father to retire by 60.</li> <li>• Be able to implement new farming practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Father does not listen.</li> <li>• Father is critical and gives no encouragement.</li> <li>• Father reluctant to change farming practices.</li> <li>• Feels trapped, can't leave now, been here too long.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b> (Stabiliser 10/Influencer 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family would be a supportive working environment.</li> <li>• To be heard and respected.</li> <li>• A happy family and extended family.</li> <li>• Loving communication with their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinks her husband gets no recognition.</li> <li>• Has strained relationships with father-in-law.</li> <li>• Wants her husband and son to have a positive relationship.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b> (Direct 8/Influencer 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Left himself because of lack of ability to have an influence.</li> <li>• For things to be different for his brother, especially by now.</li> <li>• For mum to be doing the things she wants.</li> <li>• Father to have developed some off-farm interests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sees same symptoms in brother he experienced before he left.</li> <li>• Sees the father's frustration now he is not part of it.</li> <li>• No off farm interests.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b> (Stabiliser 8/Influencer 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They would sort out difficulties as they occur.</li> <li>• They would be happy in their lifestyle and work.</li> <li>• Support each other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family business spoiling relationships and family gatherings.</li> <li>• Feels sad they appear so unhappy.</li> <li>• Worried Mum is not having a chance to travel.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- To be no business discussion at family gatherings (agree to pull each other up).
- Farming members to meet Monday mornings for 1-1.5 hours to discuss the week ahead. Each meeting to start with a positive comment about something they had seen the previous week.
- At meetings to let each other know by raising a hand when they did not think they were being heard.
- To communicate directly with the person concerned (note Karpman's Triangle).
- Daughter-in-law to alert her husband when and if she hears him being critical and discouraging to their children.
- To share their feelings honestly and without blame.
- Mother and Father to have a month off to travel after sowing budget set; Mother to plan and book by the end of the month.
- Father agreed to think about which area of business Son 2 could take control of and to notify at a weekly meeting by the end of the month.
- If plans not working, to come together with a Facilitator in six months time.
- Strategic business to be discussed annually at a meeting with an external professional.

<b>Family Member</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Father</b>	Need time to make it work. Everyone has to try.
<b>Mother</b>	Was good to discuss it all, worried about what happens if it does not work out.
<b>Daughter 1</b>	Will be glad to be able to come to a family gathering not having to listen to farming talk.
<b>Son 1</b>	Glad we have some ideas to help move things forward.
<b>Son 2</b>	Relieved we have talked about this, cautiously optimistic. May be hard to do some of it, guess we can try.
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b>	Some of this could be difficult to put in practice.

He sent me to college.  
Why doesn't he listen  
to what I learned

He thinks he  
knows everything



*Mack*



## Case Study 12

### Decision to leave farming

**Stage:** High level of conflict between the sons  
**Trigger:** Daughter- in-law's discontent

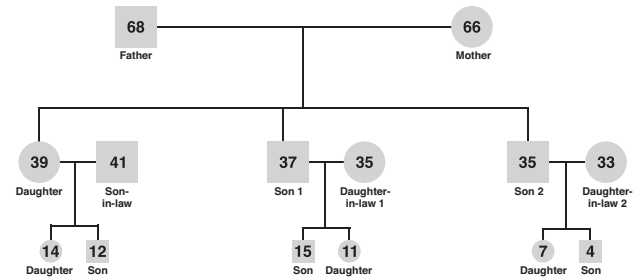
*This family came together as a result of growing discontent from Daughter-in-law 2. The Father had experienced a very unsatisfactory business separation from his brother after their father's death.*

*In the Mother's family, the transfer of family assets*

*had gone only to the males in the family. There is a wish for fairer outcomes in the next generation.*

*Stress levels are high, with conflict between the farming sons, a lack of understanding about business structures and finances and there has been no profit for 12 years.*

*Daughter 1 and Son-in-law 1 were not present at the meeting.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Stabilising 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would work till his death.</li> <li>• Live on station and visit wife in town occasionally.</li> <li>• Boys would continue farming, one on farm and one on station.</li> <li>• Off-farm assets would go to his daughter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No-one has time to look after him.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Conscientious 8/Influencing 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She would be able to move to town and live.</li> <li>• Would continue to draw an income from the farm.</li> <li>• Boys would work on separate blocks.</li> <li>• Drought will finish and things improve.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys not working together as planned, high conflict.</li> <li>• No income to support her the way she had expected.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b>  (Direct 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live in the original family home and farm and inherit.</li> <li>• Manage the farming business.</li> <li>• Would have control.</li> <li>• Business arrangements should stay as they are.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not appreciate being challenged by younger brother.</li> <li>• Can't afford to finance his mother's retirement expectations.</li> <li>• Does not understand others' desire for business arrangements to change.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter- in-law 1</b> (Stabiliser 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To remain uninvolved in the business.</li> <li>• For them to sort out whatever their problems are.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict has not been resolved.</li> <li>• Does not understand why they have not sorted things out.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 2</b>  (Conscientious 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality with his brother in farm ownership and decision making.</li> <li>• Sharing the work load.</li> <li>• Sharing the responsibilities.</li> <li>• Compensation for being in a remote location.</li> <li>• Father needs easy access to medical assistance.</li> <li>• Children's education costs would be met by the business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unaware how to reach agreement on any issues with his brother.</li> <li>• All his concerns relate to his own situation.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b>  (Influencing 9/Conscientious 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everything would be fair - finance, workloads and opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to find a way forward.</li> <li>• Her husband is not getting a fair deal.</li> <li>• Not able to make decisions for themselves.</li> <li>• Their children's education needs are not being met.</li> <li>• Father- in-law's health needs are not being considered.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- Need to develop a plan where effort is rewarded.
- Family guidelines to apply to everyone.
- Explore the option of separating the businesses in next six months.
- To meet again with a proposal in June.
- To consider the sale of some assets.
- To seek outside help if conflict continues.

Family Member	Comment
Father	If the boys are happy, I am happy.
Mother	Hope we can find a way where everyone is satisfied.
Son 1	We will see how it goes.
Daughter-in-law 1	This may help sort it out.
Son 2	Explore opportunities to work separately.
Daughter-in-law 2	Keen to work towards independence.





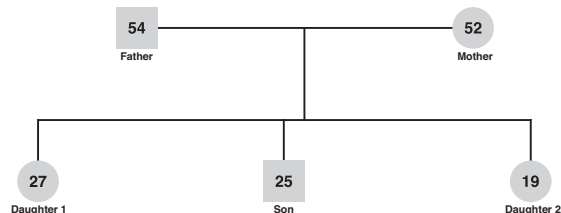
## Case Study 13

### Include young family members

**Stage:** To include younger generation into business

**Trigger:** Concern about Will

*This family came together as a result of a facilitator being in their area and it being an opportunity to plan for the future with their children. The eldest two children were both university graduates and the youngest child had just commenced tertiary study.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Influencer 9/Stabiliser 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing discontent about current will.</li> <li>• Children to make the most of any opportunities.</li> <li>• Have adult conversation with children in a facilitated environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explained the will which was 75% to son 12.5% to each of the daughters, knowing that it was inappropriate but not knowing what to do.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Stabiliser 12/Conscientious 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxious about children's wellbeing if something happened to them.</li> <li>• Does not believe their wills reflect current times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wants to convey the message that she loved her children equally and wanted them to have equal opportunity.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b>  (Stabiliser 8/Influencer 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They would all be treated equally.</li> <li>• Have an understanding of parent's plans.</li> <li>• Know brother's plans and expectations.</li> <li>• No real expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents to explain the will.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b>  (Direct 9/Influencer 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interested to know why parents wanted us to meet.</li> <li>• Business would remain viable for whomever running it.</li> <li>• Not sure what to expect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncomfortable with the inequity.</li> <li>• Does not think the business would be viable for the one working in it, if it was divided equally.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 2</b>  (Stabiliser 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand others' plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would happen to her if something happened to parents?</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- Discussing the will openly ensured the three children knew they were loved equally.
- New wills to be drafted to treat the children equally, to be reviewed should any one child enter the business. Develop a plan for provision for Daughter 2 should something happen to both parents before she completes university.
- Plan to meet annually and again in 5 years with a facilitator or earlier, if anyone returns to work in the business.

Family Member	Comment
Father	Proud of his children and the way they handled themselves today.
Mother	Relieved that we had the discussion about the will even if the answers are not easy.
Daughter 1	Surprised about the will, pleased we had a chance to talk about it while Mum and Dad are alive to make changes.
Son 1	Surprised by the level of emotion including my own; glad we did not leave it 10 years.
Daughter 2	Glad we are not selling the farm.



## Case Study 14

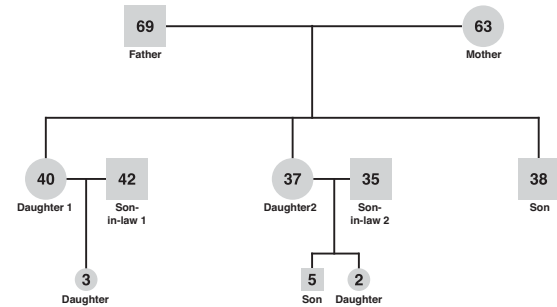
### Concern about profitability

**Stage:** Future direction

**Trigger:** Not making a profit

*This family came together as a result of the business not making a profit and some family members being unsure if they will continue to be involved in the business. Parents disagree on future direction, with the mother wishing to sell and the father not.*

*Daughter 2 and Son-in-law 2 did not attend meeting and are not involved in the farm.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b> <small>(Direct 10)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expected to stay on the farm until he died like his father did.</li> <li>The younger generation will work as hard as he does.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trying to tell them they are not working hard enough without upsetting them.</li> <li>Work loads not being met.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b> <small>(Influencer 8)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thought she would be retired to the coast by the time she was 60.</li> <li>Wants to be financially secure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frustrated and fed up, husband only thinks about work.</li> <li>Thinks she has done her time on the farm and wants to move.</li> <li>Needs a compromise?</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b> <small>(Stabiliser 8)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants to travel.</li> <li>Would not return to the farm unless he was married.</li> <li>Does not think he will be able to meet his father's work expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to tell his father that his heart is not in the business because he wants to travel.</li> <li>Not prepared to work the same hours as his father.</li> <li>Wants a work life balance.</li> </ul>
<b>Son-in-law 1</b> <small>(Direct 7)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have clear roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>Good communication.</li> <li>Happy to work, as long as clear about what they want him to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Happy to do what ever they want him to.</li> <li>Would like his father- in-law to be more communicative.</li> <li>Does not enjoy the tense atmosphere.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b> <small>(Stabiliser 9)</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would work in the business doing the bookwork.</li> <li>Would like to see less conflict between her parents.</li> <li>Her family continue to live on the farm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants her brother to do what he wants to do and travel then the conflict will be much less.</li> <li>Everyone should be doing what they want to do, not trying to live up to Dad's expectations.</li> <li>Unclear about the future.</li> <li>Happy to stay or go, just need parents to decide and stop arguing.</li> </ul>

Family Member	Comment
<b>Father</b>	Unsure.
<b>Mother</b>	Keen to find a way to share her time between the coast and the farm.
<b>Son 1</b>	Relieved.
<b>Daughter 1</b>	Hopeful.
<b>Son-in-law 1</b>	Good to have clarity.

### Agreed future options:

- To reach agreement about working hours, days, weeks.
- Include an outsider in the operational meetings until the communication improves (evaluate after 6 months).
- Son to have two years away and the family to reassess when he returns.
- In the next 3 months, explore options for a permanent/temporary residence at the coast and how such an acquisition would be financed.



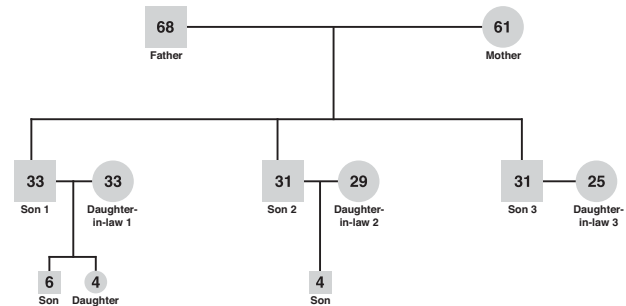
## Case Study 15

### Parents need a hand

**Stage:** Parents no longer able to do the physical work required

**Trigger:** Mother wanting to retire from her nursing jobs at 60

*This farming family came together as a result of the parents disagreeing on future direction. The father wanted to sell if no sons wished to take over, but the mother did not. No in-laws were present at the meeting.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Influencer 9/Stabiliser 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wants to stay on the farm.</li> <li>One of his children would return as he had done.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not want his children to feel guilty.</li> <li>Sad that no-one wants to return.</li> <li>Understands sons not wanting to give up the financial security they have.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Direct 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>She wished to retire at 55 and she is now 61</li> <li>Does not believe that the farm can support anyone else.</li> <li>To lease the land to fund retirement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glad that her husband has been made aware of the reality.</li> <li>Relieved they have had an offer to lease the land.</li> <li>Would like her husband to keep 50 hectares and some sheep so that he will have something to do.</li> <li>Hopes they will do some enjoyable things together.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b>  (Conscientious 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Want their parent's future to be secure.</li> <li>Not prepared to sacrifice own financial security.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glad there is a plan.</li> <li>Understand father's disappointment.</li> <li>Hope parents will do some travel.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 2</b> (Direct 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents' security is important.</li> <li>Do not want to farm or sacrifice what I am doing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glad there is a plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 3</b> (Influencing )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Want to continue doing what I am doing.</li> <li>Want parent to have some security in their future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not want parents to feel disappointed in the sons not returning to the business.</li> </ul>

**Agreed future options:**

- Decide to lease land for parents' financial security.
- Free the sons to make decisions to meet their needs.
- Retain small area to run some sheep.
- Develop the lease agreement addressing all concerns.

Family Member	Comment
Father	Got to face the reality, need to get on with it.
Mother	Glad there is a decision, hope husband will be okay.
Son 1	Pleased to find a solution that allows for us to move on with our lives.
Son 2	Pleased Mum will be able to have a well earned rest without having to sell at this time.
Son 3	Relieved.



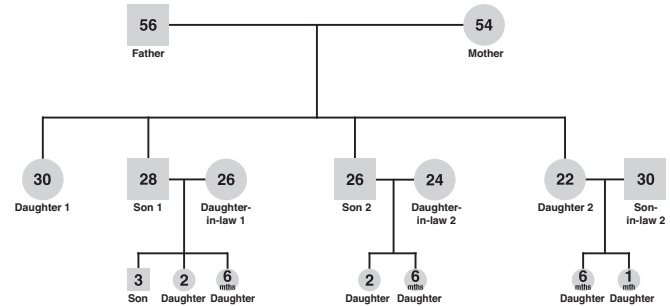
## Case Study 16

### Integrating new partners and expanding the business

**Stage:** Family members changing business roles and responsibilities as their lives progress. A desire to increase responsibilities for the younger generation and decrease responsibilities of parents.

**Trigger:** Recognition of a need for succession planning.

*This family came together to proactively design the processes required to plan for the future management of the business, taking into account workloads and increased skill sets.*



Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Father</b>  (Stabiliser 7/Influencer 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would maintain working and having a close connection with the farm until death.</li> <li>• He and sons would work together and over time, delegate decision-making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Son doesn't understand how much father enjoys working on the farm.</li> <li>• Sons don't value his experience.</li> <li>• Sons are concerned about health and wellbeing of Dad.</li> </ul>
<b>Mother</b>  (Stabiliser 7/Conscientious 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having all family members involved in plans for the future.</li> <li>• To continue pursuing off- farm interests and career.</li> <li>• Have early financial assistance for the off-farm members to buy a house. –i.e not wait for an inheritance.</li> <li>• To have a comfortable home in city where more time is being spent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting all members involved and interested.</li> <li>• Requires family members to ease her workload.</li> <li>• Wants to invest in comfortable city home.</li> <li>• Frustrated by having to be so busy to earn the income to enable the mortgage for the city base.</li> </ul>
<b>Son 1</b>  (Influencer 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To spend time with family and achieve a work life balance.</li> <li>• To be taking most of the farming responsibility within 10 years.</li> <li>• Father be retired by 65.</li> <li>• Implement new farming practices.</li> <li>• Parents in a secure situation.</li> <li>• Have a close relationship with his off-farm siblings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farming together Father reluctant to talk about specifics of the future.</li> <li>• Differing opinions on integrating new practices.</li> <li>• Unable to reach agreement on how to create a secure situation.</li> <li>• Unable to achieve a fair off- farm payout, in order to separate family and business.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter- in- law 1</b>  (Stabilising 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The family would be a supportive environment to work and live.</li> <li>• To be heard and respected.</li> <li>• To learn more about the farming business.</li> <li>• A happy family and extended family.</li> <li>• Respectful communication with their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very involved with being a mother and supporting the farm through the operational periods.</li> <li>• Being interested and involved with community.</li> <li>• Being empathetic of father- in-law's decisions.</li> </ul>

Who	What family members thought would happen	What is happening
<b>Son 2</b>  (Direct 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agrees with all of the above.</li> <li>• Private education for his family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above.</li> <li>• Unsure how to facilitate their children in private education from Year 8.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b>  (Direct 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be included in business discussions and decisions.</li> <li>• Open and honest communication and be well informed.</li> <li>• To add value to the future business.</li> <li>• To be valued for input and experience.</li> <li>• A balanced lifestyle with opportunity to maintain city family and friend connections.</li> <li>• A happy family with an outlook to provide good opportunities and experience for them.</li> <li>• To remain involved with agriculture.</li> <li>• Be able to make personal family decisions apart from the business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining regular forums for open communication.</li> <li>• Being included and valued in aspects of the business.</li> <li>• Maintain planning to allow for work, life balance.</li> <li>• Opportunities to expand outside interests.</li> <li>• Enjoys the independence of making personal decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 1</b>  (Stabiliser 6/Influencer 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have fair recognition of being part of a family aspiring to give equal opportunity.</li> <li>• Thought Mum would be doing the things she has looked forward to.</li> <li>• Thought father would have developed some off-farm interests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerned about establishing communication structures for a smooth transition for Mum, Dad and “the boys”.</li> <li>• Not really concerned about her own future and finding fairness and not sure about committing to future mortgage.</li> <li>• Concerned about Mum’s workload on health and wellbeing and being a Grandma.</li> </ul>
<b>Daughter 2</b>  (Influencing 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have access to some financial support to service a mortgage.</li> <li>• They would be happy in their lifestyle and work.</li> <li>• The children will have an education in a ‘nice’ school.</li> <li>• They will have opportunities to access the farm for her family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worried about Mum not having a chance to do what she wants to.</li> </ul>
<b>Son in law 1</b>  (Stabiliser 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would like to be respected and included as a family member.</li> <li>• Enjoy coming to the farm and assisting whenever we visit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The financial support is unconditional with no expectations.</li> </ul>

Family Member	Comment
<b>Father</b>	It doesn't seem as daunting as I thought it would be. The family is being understanding and supportive.
<b>Mother</b>	Relieved these things are being discussed, appreciate everyone's commitment to valuing this process.
<b>Son 1</b>	Glad that we have some ideas to help move things forward.
<b>Daughter-in-law 1</b>	Some of this could be difficult to put in practice.
<b>Son 2</b>	Relieved we have talked about this, cautiously optimistic. Just hope we get on with the strategies asap.
<b>Daughter-in-law 2</b>	I'm happy with the situation we're committed to developing. Confident of our family and business moving into the future.
<b>Daughter 1</b>	Glad we're all working our way through this change.
<b>Daughter 2</b>	Pleased we talk about these things, sometimes feel emotional about it.
<b>Son-in-law 2</b>	Yes, I'm fine with this and like being included.

### Agreed future options:

- Commence Monday morning planning meetings to communicate information and quarterly business meetings.
- Agreement to formally run meetings following procedure and protocols, including taking (and circulating) Minutes.
- For all to be aware of the Karpman's Triangle and communicate respectfully at all times.
- To identify skills gaps and for business members to identify what they are interested in doing and seek further training if required.
- Members to report back on their responsibilities at the business meetings.
- Agreement for strategic business to be discussed annually at a meeting with an external professional.



## Authors' notes

- Page 18 Talking and Listening – original material unknown and adjusted by Merrie Carlshausen.
- Page 21 Communication Hierarchy – this material has been altered and adjusted by Lyn Sykes – original material unknown
- Page 22 Transactional Analysis – adapted and adjusted by Lyn Sykes from material by Eric Berne's early TA history and theory
- Page 23 Family decision making – original material unknown and adjusted by Merrie Carlshausen
- Page 26 Regular Operational Meetings, this information has been shared by Karen Harper, High Resolutions and Lyn Sykes, Nubini Consulting and Kathy Sims and has been developed through the extensive work they have done with Farming Families.
- Page 30 Mismatch of Expectations – source unknown
- Page 31 Karpman's Triangle Transactional Analysis Dr. Stephen B. Karpman
- Page 34 Misunderstanding the Intention - Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss what Matters Most Douglas Stone B001I0DL2G  
(Author), Bruce Patton (Author), Sheila Heen (Author), Roger Fisher (Author)
- Page 35 Cumulative Resentment – observations of the authors
- Page 36 Conflict – material from Conflict Resolution Network and Merrie Carlshausen
- Page 42 D.I.S.C. - (Direct, Influencing, Stabilising, Conscientious) – material from the Conflict Resolution Network

# Conclusion

## Ask yourself:

- Have you created a communication environment where everyone can be completely open?
- Do you review regularly?
- Do you understand success is more likely and easier to achieve when everyone comes to the table prepared to give more than receive?
- Do you know there is so much help available? Access what you need and make a start!!!

Business failure, relationship breakdown, family court action, legal battles, all begin with failure to communicate effectively.

For those seeking a sustainable business and a happy family, good communication skills are as vital as good equipment, rainfall and soil.

Don't hold back on the encouragement or appreciation, either. Take it carefully on suggestions or criticisms.

***Good luck and great communicating!***





# Communication the Ultimate Risk Management Tool

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