

TRANSFERRING MANAGEMET TO THE NEXT GENERATION – A KEY FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES

Zoller*, C.T.¹, Erven, B.L.², McCutcheon, J.³, Mechling, M.⁴, Miller, D.P.⁵, Siegrist, H.⁶

¹Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ohio State University Extension, Tuscarawas County, New Philadelphia, OH 44663

²Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Developmental Economics, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210

³Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ohio State University Extension, Knox County, Mt. Vernon, OH 43050

⁴Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ohio State University Extension, Muskingum County, Zanesville, OH 43701

⁵District Farm Management Specialist, Ohio State University Extension, East District, Caldwell, OH 43724

⁶Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ohio State University Extension, Licking County, Newark, OH 43055

Transferring management to the next generation is a process that sometimes is never done or happens by default. Without proper training, many find themselves managing by the seat of their pants. In some instances, the next generation finds themselves as nothing more than fifty year old hired laborers.

Ohio State University Extension Agents and Specialists developed the Transferring The Family Business To The Next Generation workshop to address management transfer needs of family businesses. Over a twelve month period the team identified objectives, develop curriculum and recruit participants. Our objective was to give family business owners skills to transfer management responsibilities to the next generation to help continue a successful business.

During the curriculum development process six topics were identified. These included: “Understanding the Critical Skills of Managers”; “What Managers Do and Why?”; “Getting the Next Generation Ready”; “Creating Opportunity”; “How Can We Share Responsibility?”; and “Can We Be Honest About Ourselves and Our Business?”. The workshop included brief presentations about each topic and followed with a question and discussion period. Each topic was interrelated with each emphasizing the critical skills required of all managers – conceptual, technical and interpersonal.

Evaluation of more than fifty participants indicated they would make both immediate and long-term changes in their businesses. Many said the workshop gave them the information necessary to begin family discussions about the issues. Others indicated they would develop written goals. For many, the workshop allowed them to reflect on their business and begin the process of answering difficult questions.