



Top Tips for Succession Planning



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Every business needs to know where it is going. For a family business, a good succession plan lets the business move forward and helps remove a lot of unknowns. Here are some tips for succession planning.

Start early	The sooner, the better when it comes to talking about succession. Don't wait until a major event forces you to talk about it.
.....but, have a deadline	Do more than just talk about it. Make sure you have a plan in place.
Get involved	Make sure all family members are included in any discussions.
What does everyone want?	Fully discuss what each generation wants. How/ when will the exiting generation retire? Does this link in with what the next generation wants? Include non-farming siblings in this discussion. Let everyone have their say and don't make assumptions!
Show me the money!	Does the plan stack up financially? Does the exiting generation have funds to retire without relying on the business? Will inheriting the farm mean inheriting a lot of debt? Are funds set aside to pay out non farming siblings? (see start early!)
Get help	If you can't come to an agreement, you may need the help of a facilitator. This would be an impartial party that could chair the discussion. Having someone from outwith the family can often bring a more professional atmosphere to a meeting.
Get advice	Make sure you involve your lawyer and accountant in your succession plan. If the people you normally work with are not expert in this subject, get someone who is.
Remember the "family" in "family business"	It is important to preserve the family business, but also to preserve family relationships. You still want to be able to sit round the dinner table once things are sorted out.



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