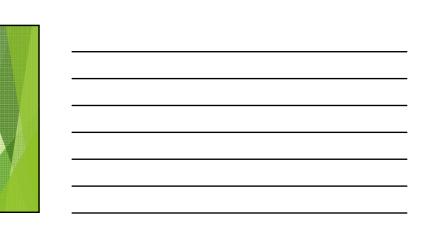
# Challenges with Succession Dick Wittman, CEO-Dad Cori Wittman, HR/CFO-in-training-Daughter

#### The BRAT List

- ▶ DAD: "Try searching the court repository [for this new potential hire]"
- ▶ CORI "Already did cleaner than your record (already checked that too!)"
- ▶ DAD "...how do you spell the word, BRAT?"
- ► CORI: "C.O.R.I."
- ► MORAL: Lots of give and take in transition process
  - ▶ Need to give license to successors to call you out
  - ▶ Also need to set boundaries on expectations concerning professionalism

#### **BEFORE** the Transition Create Climate for Potential Successors

- ► Communicate clearly established policies for employment
  - ► Family Employment Policy
- ▶ Engage in discussion of alternative career development paths
  - ► College/technical school -> agronomy, vet science, finance/marketing, diesel tech
  - ► Apprenticeship/career off-farm -> Farm Credit, trade associations, ranch-hand, Peace Corps
- ▶ Determine compatibility personality inventories
  - ▶ Strengths Finder 2.0 (before college, after college!)



## Challenges

- Respect need for successors to develop their own processes, but set rules on how and when.
  - ► Our rule: follow SOPs already in place first
  - ▶ If have suggestions to improve, build on what already works
- ▶ Manage the feeling of inadequacy... "I just don't know anything"
  - Review job duties regularly
  - Mark progress on transitioning responsibilities (see CEO job role)
    Discuss obstacles and learning paths needed to get to finish line
- ▶ Budget quality time for mentoring discussions
  - Mentoring complex tasks when only have few minutes or pre-occupied with other priorities NOT effective
  - ▶ Set up blocks of time; clear agenda and commit unfettered mental focus

## Challenges (cont'd)

- ▶ Maintain a professional tone when dealing with conflict
  - ▶ Tempting to switch from manager employee to father daughter dynamic
  - ► Avoid "parenting" and focus on "managing"
  - Works both ways...Cori has had to call me out at times ... and I've had to call her out when we weren't living up to this expectation
- ▶ Don't rush the decision on who the next leader will be
  - ▶ Tempting to push this early
  - ► Give potential successors some time to show strengths and prove their credibility
  - ▶ If successors earns respect of others first, easier than "anoint and defend"

## **Audience Experiences?**

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