



THE NEXT HEIR IS A TEAM

Collective Succession and the Rise of Shared
Leadership in Modern Family Offices

by Elodie Rojas



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INTRODUCTION: THE END OF THE SINGLE HEIR

For centuries, succession followed a simple and reassuring logic: one generation built, the next inherited.

A single heir, often the eldest or the one deemed most capable, embodied continuity of the name and the capital.

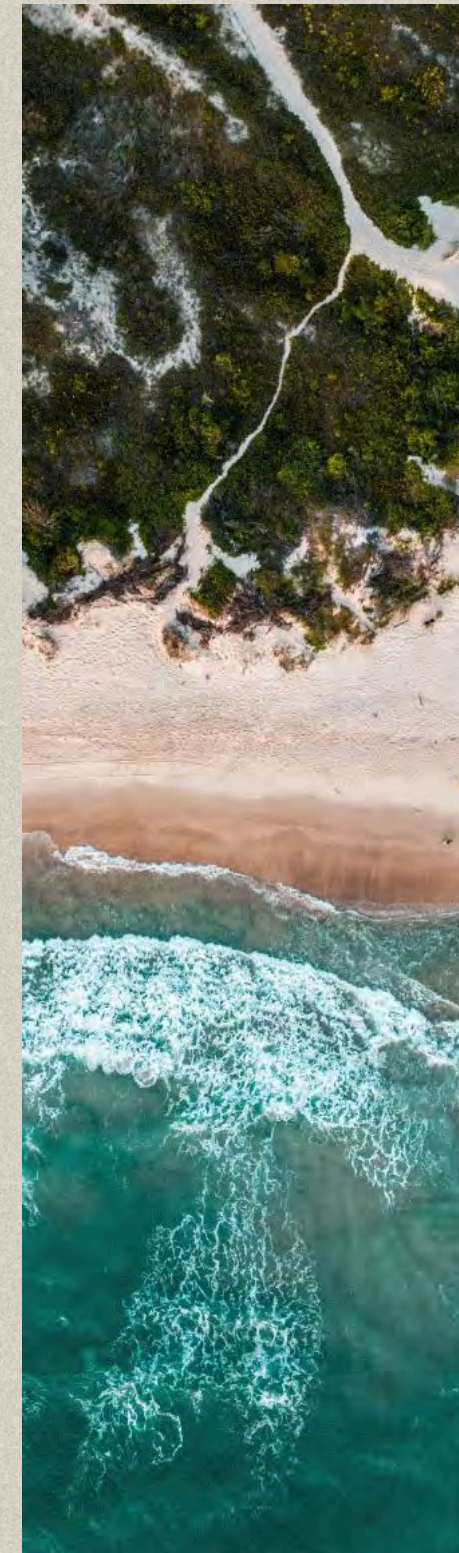
Wealth, authority, and responsibility were passed on like a torch, from one steady hand to another.

However, this hierarchical view of transmission now belongs to a bygone era.

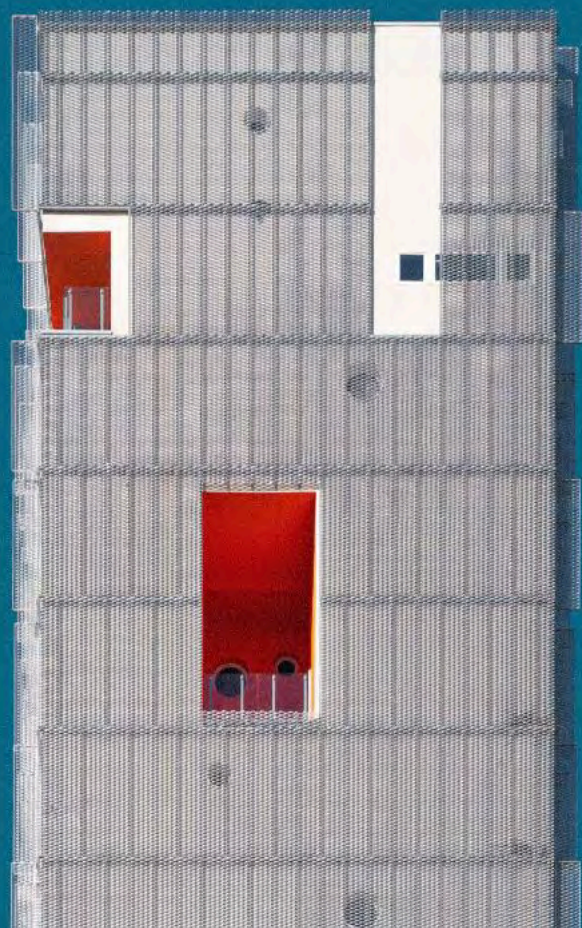
Today's families are no longer linear structures. Over time, they have become global, mobile, multicultural networks. Their members live across continents, pursue different professions, embrace distinct value systems.

They often engage in entrepreneurial, technological, environmental, or philanthropic initiatives that extend far beyond the historical boundaries of family wealth.

Authority no longer flows naturally from age or position. The next generation does not want to wait its turn; it wants to participate, to contribute and to co-create.



INTRODUCTION: THE END OF THE SINGLE HEIR



Family offices have evolved accordingly.

Once discreet administrative units or purely financial vehicles, they have become complex ecosystems integrating governance, investment strategy, education, social impact, and identity.

In this new context, performance is no longer driven by centralized control, but by alignment: a shared understanding of what wealth means, what it enables, and what the family chooses to do with it, together.

Yet succession planning has not always kept pace with this reality. Many families still organize transmission around the designation of a single successor.

This highly personalized approach concentrates pressure, fuels rivalry, and exposes the system to fragility if the chosen individual cannot, or does not wish to, assume the role.

Research on shared leadership and co-succession in family enterprises consistently shows that models built around a single heir are more vulnerable to relational crises and continuity breakdowns.

It is time to reframe succession. Not as an act of nomination, but as a collective process.

Across the families we support, a new dynamic is emerging. The next generation no longer simply inherits authority, it builds it.

Heirs create councils, investment committees, governance labs.

They experiment with role rotation, co-decision, and shared accountability.

This shift reflects a broader trend: families that foster collective participation demonstrate greater resilience and stronger intergenerational longevity.

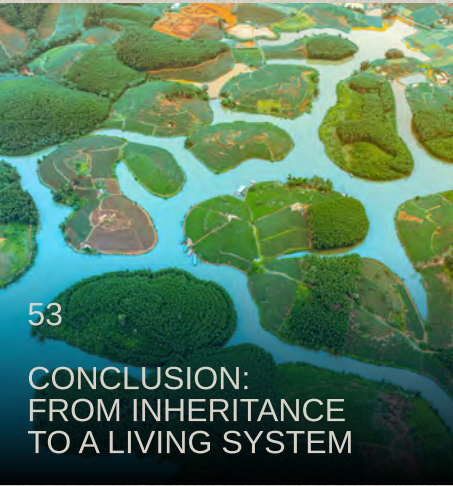
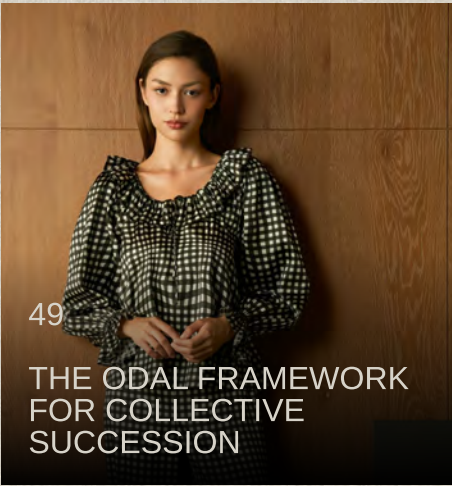
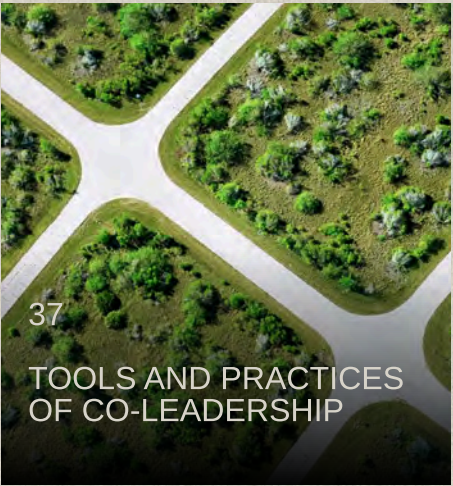
The modern family office can no longer function as a vault. It must become a platform, a space where collaboration replaces hierarchy, and interdependence replaces control.

INTRODUCTION: THE END OF THE SINGLE HEIR

This is what we call the rise of **collective inheritance**.



SUMMARY



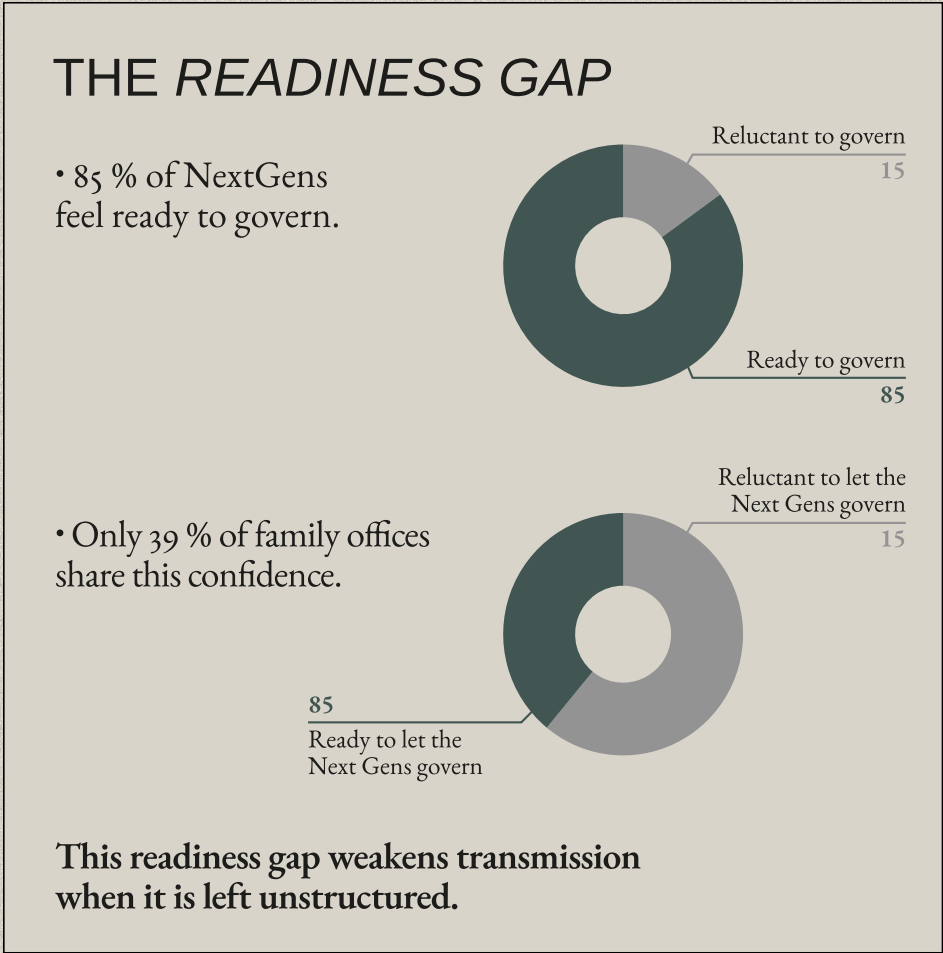
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FROM THE HEIR
TO THE TEAM:

A GENERATIONAL
SHIFT

A NEW APPROACH TO SUCCESSION

Succession is no longer an individual handover. It is a collective learning journey.



FROM THE HEIR TO THE TEAM: A GENERATIONAL SHIFT

While a large majority of Next Gens feel ready to engage in governance, far fewer family offices share that confidence.

What it reveals is not a lack of competence, but a change in expectations. The rising generation wants to be an actor in governance, not a spectator of vertically transmitted power.

This evolution is cultural as much as structural.

Purpose now outweighs status. Impact, sustainability, transparency, and technology are seen not as constraints, but as drivers of performance and relevance.

As written by Luca Gnan (2021) in the International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research:

« The future of family enterprises no longer rests on the governance of power, but on the governance of meaning. »

FROM INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP TO SHARED LEADERSHIP

FROM THE HEIR TO THE TEAM: A GENERATIONAL SHIFT

Traditional succession based on a single heir isolates responsibility and concentrates pressure on one person.

At the contrary, collective leadership distributes both. The family then becomes a leadership team.

Roles are no longer defined by bloodline alone, but by skills, appetite, and contribution. Decisions are debated within structured forums, supported by external expertise, and assessed against a shared vision.

Research by Sorenson et al. (2014) published in *Frontiers in Psychology* confirms that families with a shared vision and an open communication environment achieve better performance and stronger leadership continuity.

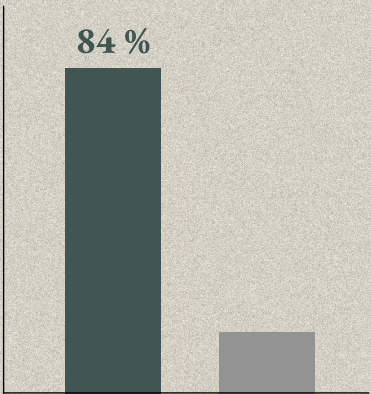
Families that adopt this model benefit on multiple levels:

- **Resilience**, as leadership no longer depends on a single individual
- **Innovation**, through diversity of perspectives and backgrounds
- **Engagement**, as each generation plays an active role
- **Cohesion**, as mission outweighs individual position

Governance, in this sense, is no longer about control. It is about coherence.



In a study conducted by the Ocorian Group (2023) in the Middle East, 84% of family office professionals noted that young leaders now prioritize responsible, long-term investment strategies.



GOVERNANCE ALIGNED WITH PURPOSE

FROM THE HEIR TO THE
TEAM: A GENERATIONAL
SHIFT

In today’s world, family governance extends beyond financial capital management. It includes the stewardship of the family’s purpose.

Heirs do not simply want to preserve wealth. They want to define what it is for.

Succession is therefore no longer the end of a cycle, but the beginning of a collaboration, one in which generations jointly define the role of capital in the world.



It is worth noting that, as indicated in the RSM Family Office Transition Report 2024, more than half of family offices have not yet formalized a succession plan.

The absence of formal succession planning in many family offices is not only a risk. It is an opportunity: to rethink governance around transparency, preparation, and collective responsibility.

Families that embrace this shift move from a logic of transfer to a logic of learning. Governance becomes both an educational process and a shared identity.

The next heir is not a single person, but a team united by a common mission, and this team is built through dialogue, structure, and trust.

It is this shift from inherited authority to shared responsibility that is redefining the sustainability of prominent families today.

PHILANTHROPY: STRUCTURING LEGACY AROUND A SHARED MISSION

SIMPLY
for GOOD



In this movement toward collective governance, philanthropy is gradually emerging as a structuring lever in the process of transmission.

It invites families to move beyond the mere preservation of wealth and to question its purpose: no longer simply to transfer assets, but to reflect on what this legacy means and what it enables one to build.

This reflection raises an essential question, both intimate and universal: what imprint do we wish to leave, and what lasting contribution do we want to make to the world?

Long perceived as an individual gesture or a peripheral and often discreet initiative, philanthropy is now establishing itself as a privileged space for inter-generational dialogue, where the family explores what it truly wishes to transmit beyond financial capital.

It makes it possible to address subjects that go beyond the purely economic dimension and touch on identity, values, and responsibility. The younger generations in particular are no longer questioning only the amount of the donation, but its meaning, its methods, and its impact.

They seek to understand how wealth can become a tool for positive transformation, consistent with their convictions and contemporary challenges.

PHILANTHROPY: STRUCTURING LEGACY AROUND A SHARED MISSION

SIMPLY
for GOOD



When approached strategically, philanthropy allows families to express and embody a shared purpose, align family values with a clear societal contribution, and transform legacy into a collective project.

It also constitutes a practical learning ground for family governance: co-decisionmaking, prioritization, impact evaluation, and constructive confrontation of perspectives.

Families are thus moving toward a more intentional, measurable form of philanthropy focused on systemic issues, capable of bringing generations together around a shared ambition: exercising a collective and lasting responsibility within society.

In this dynamic, legacy no longer rests on a single individual, but on a team aligned around a shared societal vision, reflecting the contemporary evolution of family leadership.

Conceived in this way, philanthropy does not merely extend the family story; it gives it coherence, depth, and a trajectory toward the future.

2

Collaborative succession does not succeed on intention alone. It depends on the quality of the framework that supports it.

Without structure, collaboration becomes confusion. Without method, goodwill fades.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION

FROM CONCEPT TO DESIGN

THE ARCHITECTURE OF
COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION

In traditional models, succession planning ends with the designation of an heir. In collective models, this is where it begins.

The question shifts from «*Who leads?*» to «*How do we lead together?*»

We share the experience of many organizations in the sector, which shows that the most resilient families are those that treat governance as a living system, capable of adapting, assessing itself, and renewing itself..



Four structural pillars underpin this architecture:

- **Alignment of vision:** a shared mission that transcends individual interests
- **Clarity of roles:** who decides what, and how
- **Decision protocols:** structured dialogue and arbitration mechanisms
- **Measurable accountability:** evaluating contribution and cohesion, not just control

When these principles are incorporated into living documents (charters, family constitutions, decision-making frameworks), the system becomes more agile and coherent, even during times of disagreement or crisis.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

THE ARCHITECTURE OF
COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION

According to the Deloitte Private – Global Family Office Insights 2023 report, families that update their governance processes annually experience 30% fewer internal conflicts and greater involvement from younger generations.

This confirms what is already evident: governance protects capital not through rigidity, but through clarity.

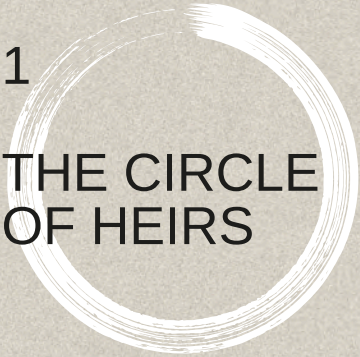
Once these foundations are laid, it's time to choose the most culturally appropriate form for the family.

It is at this stage that the four archetypes of co-succession come into play, as observed in academic research over the past five years, and confirmed by our fieldwork.



THE FOUR ARCHETYPES OF CO-SUCCESSION

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION



1

THE CIRCLE OF HEIRS

“The guiding principle is trust: power is shared, and responsibility is passed on.”

This model is based on rotating leadership among brothers, sisters, or cousins.

Each member serves their mandate on a fixed term basis, typically for a period of one to two years.

When supported by neutral facilitation, rotation increases engagement and shared understanding.

STRENGTHS

- Empowers everyone and builds a shared understanding of the issues at stake
- Encourages flexibility and strategic agility
- Strengthens emotional bonds among members of the circle

RISKS

- Breaks in continuity if the rotation is too rapid
- Fatigue among the most frequently called-upon members
- Risk of imbalance without external support

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Time-limited mandates and a clearly defined succession schedule
- Independent facilitation to maintain neutrality
- Systematic documentation of decisions to preserve institutional memory

EXAMPLE

A sibling group of entrepreneurs alternates the chairmanship of the family council every 18 months.

Each handover is prepared through a relational and strategic audit led by an external coach or advisor.

THE FOUR ARCHETYPES OF CO-SUCCESSION

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION



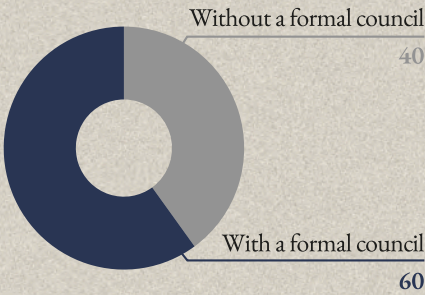
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THE FAMILY COUNCIL

A true family board of directors, this model brings together several heirs supported by independent advisors (lawyers, financiers, governance experts).

Particularly suited to large or blended families and complex estates, it professionalizes decision-making and ensures representation across branches.

These structures show continuity rates 40% higher than families without a codified body.



The UBS Global Family Office Report 2024 indicates that 6 out of 10 families now have a formal heirs' council or similar body.

STRENGTHS

- Professionalizes decision-making and reduces gray areas.
- Ensures fair representation of the different family branches.
- Encourages knowledge transfer across generations.

RISK

- Bureaucratic heaviness or excessive formalism.
- Risk of politicization of discussions.
- Disengagement if the council's mission lacks clarity.

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Clear mandates and regular rotation.
- Independent chairmanship or secretariat to guarantee neutrality.
- Indicator-based monitoring: participation rates, quality of decisions, and strategic coherence.

EXAMPLE

A fourth-generation European family establishes a Family Council composed of eight members.

Three committees (investments, philanthropy, and education) report to it.

Major decisions require a qualified majority of 75%.

THE FOUR ARCHETYPES OF CO-SUCCESSION

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION



THE HYBRID TEAM

“The Hybrid Team combines the family vision and professional expertise.”

Strategic oversight remains with the family, while professional executives manage daily operations.

This model brings balance, guaranteeing operational continuity without sacrificing family identity. It is increasingly common in third-generation family offices.

STRENGHTS

- Combines emotional legitimacy with technical competence.
- Stabilizes governance through professional management.
- Enhances the attraction of external talent.

RISK

- Combines emotional legitimacy with technical competence.
- Stabilizes governance through professional management.
- Enhances the attraction of external talent.

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- A family-management collaboration charter defining roles and scopes.
- Regular strategic alignment meetings.
- A Values Committee safeguarding the cultural integrity of the project.

EXAMPLE

An industrial family hires an external chief executive while retaining a strategic committee chaired by a female heir.

Decisions related to investments and societal impact are taken jointly under a co-signature process.

THE FOUR ARCHETYPES OF CO-SUCCESSION

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION



THE MISSION COUNCIL

An emerging model placing purpose at the heart of governance.

It aligns investment, philanthropy, and values, transforming wealth into a lever for measurable societal impact.



The PwC Family Business Survey 2024 reveals that 79% of Next Gens want to align their financial strategies with their social or environmental beliefs: a trend that makes the Mission Council the ethical laboratory of the family.

STRENGHTS

- Creates strong inter-generational cohesion around a purpose-driven project.
- Transforms wealth into a lever for measurable societal impact.
- Strengthens the family office’s reputation and external credibility.

RISK

- Symbolism without concrete metrics.
- Risk of imbalance between mission and return on investment.
- Potential tensions if not all family branches align on the same impact priorities.

CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

- Precise definition of commitments and objectives, with a policy for measuring and benchmarking key indicators.
- Involvement of independent experts to assess results, similar to the role of Independent Third-Party Organizations (OTIs) for enterprises à mission in France.
- Annual publication of an impact report to ensure transparency.

EXAMPLE

An Asian family establishes a Mission Council composed of members from two enérations and a responsible-investment consultant.

The council allocates 10% of returns to education and reforestation projects, tracked through environmental impact indicators.

THE SHAREHOLDER FOUNDATION: A GROWING TREND

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION

It is worth noting the steadily increasing trend in France and Europe at large, toward the creation of shareholder foundations holding stakes in operating companies.

The owning family may gradually transfer all or part of its shares in the company to the foundation, which then gains a voice in the company's governance.



This structure places the family's philanthropic mission at the very heart of the family business, going beyond the purely wealth-related scope of the family office.

It thus represents another, indeed an even stronger, way to align the family office, the family, and the operating company around a single shared vision.

It is certainly a trend to keep an eye on in the years ahead.

COMBINING MODELS TOWARD A LIVING GOVERNANCE

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLECTIVE SUCCESSION

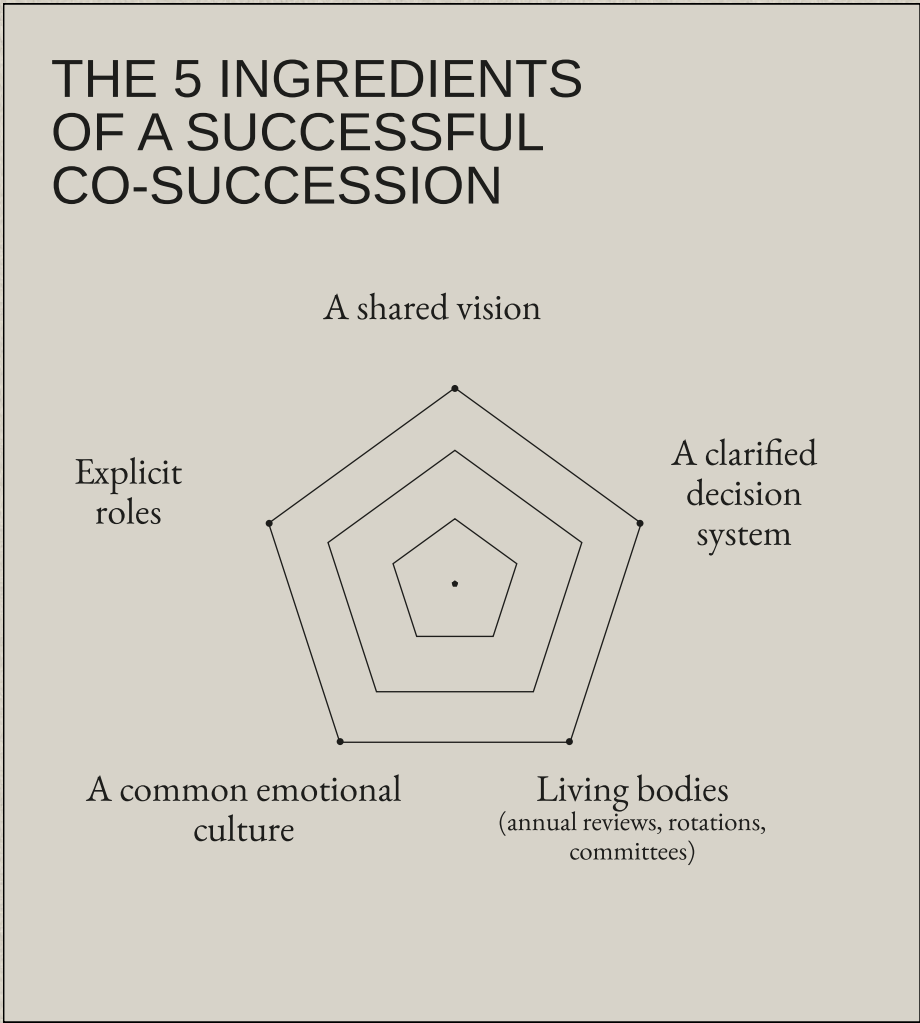
These archetypes are not exclusive. Families often combine and evolve them over time.

A family may begin with a Circle of Heirs and evolve toward a Family Council as the structure expands.

Another may combine a Hybrid Team with a Mission Council to balance performance and a shared vision.

As Luca Gnan (2021) reminds us:

« *The strength of family governance depends less on the model chosen than on its ability to renew itself in step with the family.* »



Thus, co-succession is not a template to be replicated, but an ongoing conversation between generations, in which the framework supports the relationship rather than constraining it.

The ultimate goal is not to appoint a single leader, but to cultivate a culture in which everyone becomes a steward of the common good.

3

EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE:

THE NEW
GOVERNANCE
SKILL

In wealthy families, success has long been measured in numbers, performance, growth, etc.

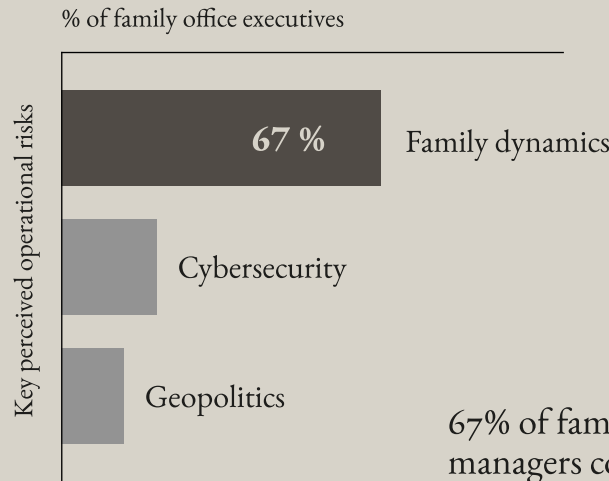
But as relational complexity grows, emotional intelligence becomes the true determinant of continuity.

Unmanaged emotions (fear, rivalry, unspoken tensions) pose a greater risk to governance than many technical threats.

Emotional intelligence enables families to transform divergence into perspective, and conflict into learning. It supports trust, dialogue, and identity transitions, from founder to steward, from designated heir to co-leader.

Collective leadership rarely fails for lack of competence. It fails when relationships are left unattended.

THE REAL NON-FINANCIAL RISK



67% of family office managers consider family dynamics to be their main operational risk.

> *More than cybersecurity.*
> *More than geopolitics.*

(Deloitte, 2023)

In other words, emotions unmanaged weigh more on continuity and risks much more identified as crucial than cybersecurity or the geopolitical situation by example.

FROM TECHNICAL COMPETENCE TO RELATIONAL COMPETENCE

Emotional intelligence (or EQ) : the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions in oneself and in others, is becoming the new backbone of collective governance.

In a co-succession model, it makes it possible to transform the diversity of viewpoints into a richness of perspective rather than a source of division.

Some studies show that leaders with high EQ create teams that are more cohesive, more agile, and more satisfied.



In family businesses, this aptitude is correlated with better long-term governance: families capable of emotional dialogue are more resilient in times of crisis and better able to maintain intergenerational trust.

THE INVISIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
THE NEW GOVERNANCE SKILL

Co-succession rarely fails due to a lack of technical competence.

It fails because fear, rivalry, or unspoken tensions paralyze cooperation.

Emotional intelligence then acts as an invisible infrastructure, sustains trust, facilitates communication, and makes governance alive.

It also allows families to address a frequently taboo question: identity transition.

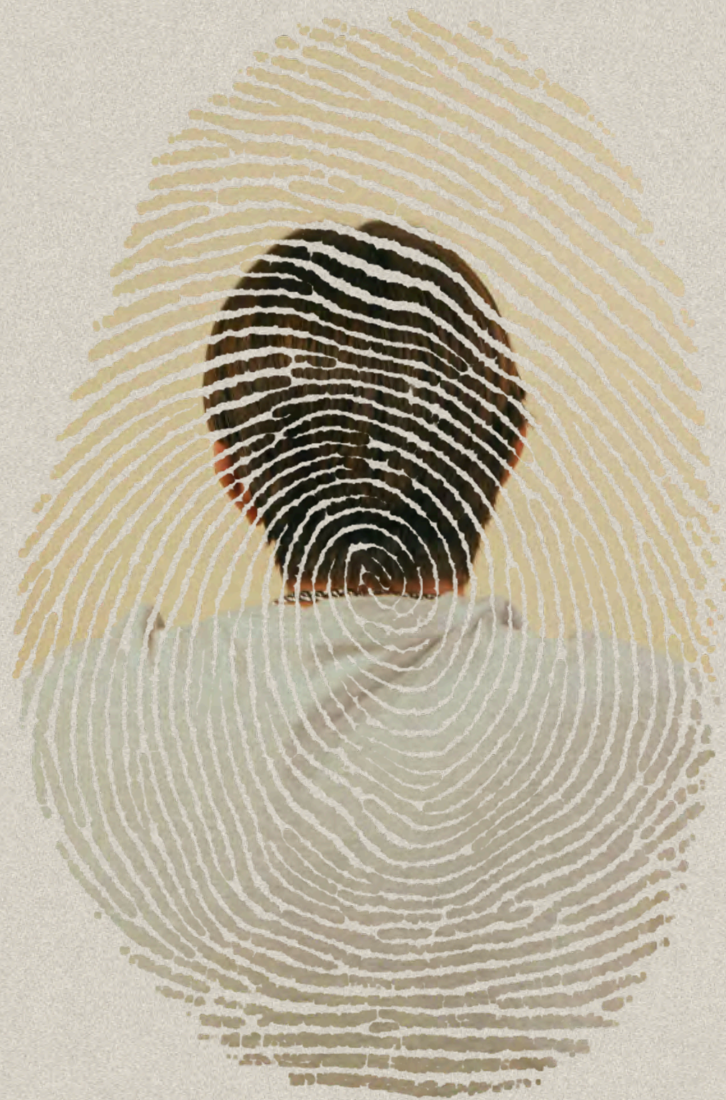
Moving from designated heir to one of several co-leaders, or from founder to transmitter, requires deep inner work.

It involves accepting vulnerability, relinquishing implicit hierarchy, and adopting a logic of equal collaboration, far removed from parent-child dynamics.

As psychologist K. E. Goodpaster summarizes in *Frontiers in Psychology* (2014):

« *Families that know how to listen before deciding transform power into connection and conflict into learning.* »

Nathalie Prieur, a specialist in philanthropy, goes further by adding that families must first learn to listen internally, among members and as a collective, as a necessary prerequisite before they can truly listen to the outside world.



MEASURING AND STRENGTHENING EMOTIONAL CAPITAL

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
THE NEW GOVERNANCE SKILL

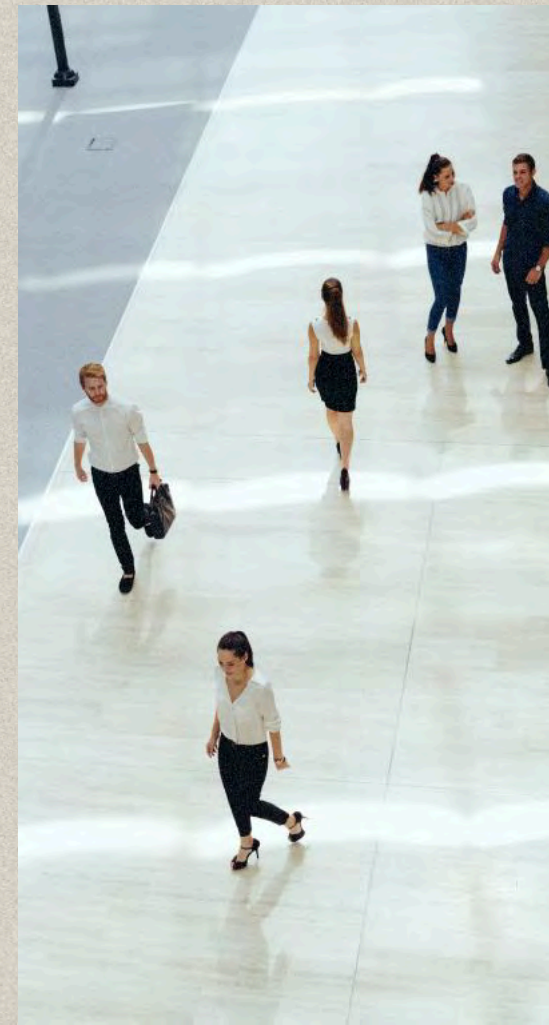
It is essential to integrate emotional intelligence at the heart of the methodology used to build and pilot a family office.

This is why we have developed several proprietary tools that:

- **assess the family system's capacity to adapt** by measuring trust, transparency, and change management.
- **identify gaps between the collective mission and individual aspirations** before they become fractures.

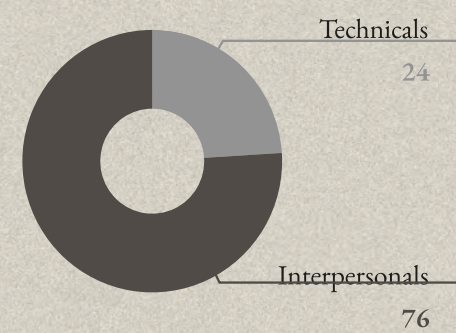
These diagnostics transform subjective feelings into tangible data, making it possible to adjust governance based on objective elements rather than impressions.

They also serve as a starting point for coaching sessions, mediation, or family retreats focused on communication and cooperation.



FROM “SOFT SKILL” TO STRATEGIC LEVER

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
THE NEW GOVERNANCE SKILL



Recent PwC NextGen Survey 2024 studies confirm that 76% of young leaders believe their interpersonal skills will have more impact on their success than their technical skills.

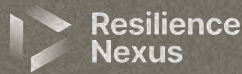


In a world where emotional complexity grows as quickly as financial complexity, this awareness marks a turning point: EQ becomes a strategic indicator of continuity.

We prefer to speak of quiet continuity: the ability of a family to evolve without rupture, to innovate without division, and to transmit without losing its unity.

It is in this calm that the true maturity of governance is expressed.

RESILIENCE: THE CAPACITY TO GROW TOGETHER



« The Next Heir is a Team » embodies the architecture of resilience.

What matters is whether that shared capacity can hold.

Collective succession is not tested when everything is functioning smoothly. It is tested when the family system comes under strain.

Transitions of leadership, divergent generational expectations, sudden external shocks, reputational exposure, liquidity stress, or internal fatigue do not merely challenge structures.

They challenge coherence. They reveal whether alignment is deep or superficial, whether trust is robust or conditional, and whether governance can adapt without fragmenting.

Shared leadership increases complexity. More voices, more perspectives, more distributed authority. Resilience prevents that complexity from turning into fracture.

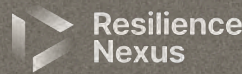
It is the family's capacity to grow together while conditions change; where the team itself becomes the resilience architecture.

In our work with multi-generational families, we observe that resilience rests on a small number of foundational capabilities:

- Clarity of shared purpose across generations ;
- Confidence that continuity is meaningful and worth building ;
- Leadership that can evolve with legitimacy and trust ;
- Governance structures that support change rather than inhibit it ;
- Alignment that is lived in decisions, not just expressed in principle.



RESILIENCE: THE CAPACITY TO GROW TOGETHER



Families that cultivate these capacities do not avoid difficulty.

They absorb it without losing identity:

- Leadership transitions become deliberate rather than destabilising.
- Generational differences become a source of renewal rather than drift.
- Structure becomes a source of clarity rather than rigidity.



Resilience is the invisible stabiliser of collective leadership.

It ensures that distributed authority does not become diffusion of responsibility.

It protects emotional capital while financial capital evolves. It allows governance models to bend without breaking.

Where collective succession defines how leadership is shared, resilience determines whether that shared leadership can mature over time.

In this sense, resilience is not an additional layer of governance.

It is the condition that allows governance to survive transition, complexity, and time.

It distributes strength across geographies, operating environments, and generations, reflecting the reality of modern global family systems.

By Dr Kelly Culver
- Resilience Nexus

4

Values only have strength when they translate into concrete practices.

Collective governance cannot be decreed: it must be structured, measured, and maintained.

TOOLS AND PRACTICES OF CO-LEADERSHIP

FROM DIALOGUE TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES OF CO-LEADERSHIP

Families that successfully navigate collaborative transitions do not merely talk about cooperation, **they codify and document it.**

They create simple yet rigorous mechanisms to frame decision-making, clarify responsibilities, and monitor the evolution of the relational climate.

These families demonstrate significantly higher internal satisfaction rates and a marked reduction in generational friction.



FROM DIALOGUE TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES OF CO-LEADERSHIP

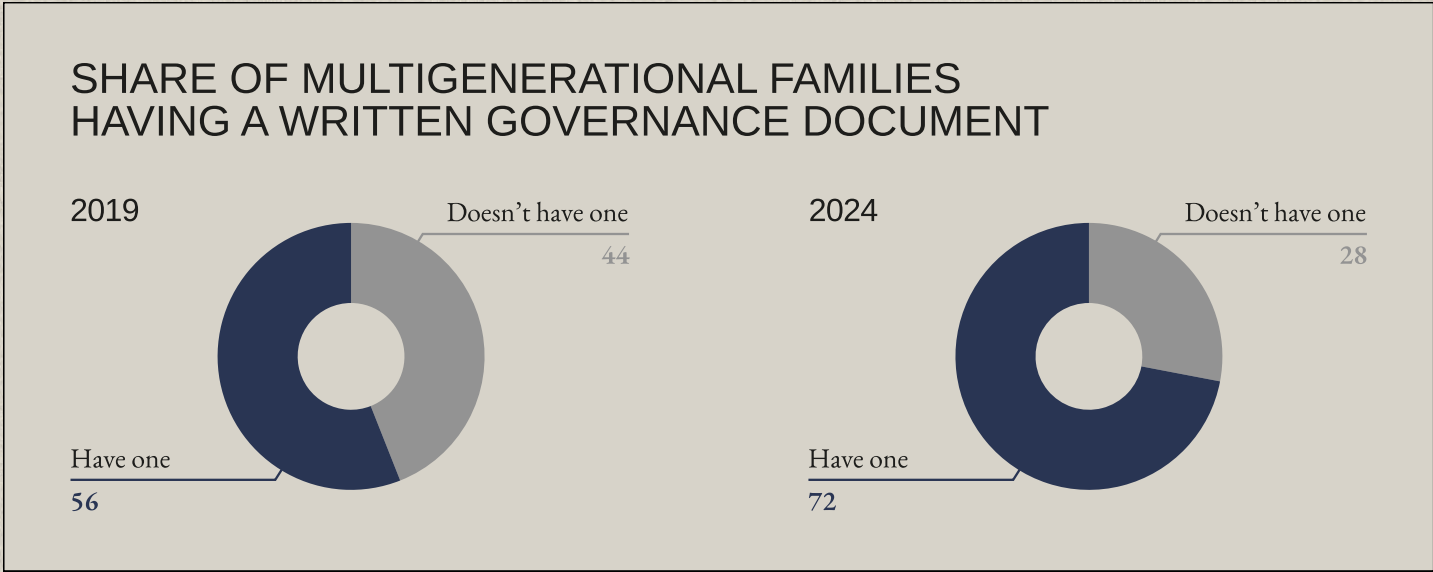
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CONSTITUTIONAL TOOLS: THE FOUNDATIONS

The family constitution becomes the living heart of the governance system.

Long symbolic, it is now designed as a true operational manual.

The UBS Global Family Office Report 2024 notes that 72% of multigenerational families now have a written governance document, compared to 56% five years earlier: a sign of growing institutionalization.



A modern constitution includes:

- a mission and values statement,
- a matrix of roles and responsibilities,
- conflict resolution clauses,
- a rotation and review calendar.

This formalization is not intended to rigidify governance, but to provide a shared reference point and a common language where loyalty replaces authority.

FROM DIALOGUE TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES
OF CO-LEADERSHIP

2

DECISION- MAKING TOOLS: STRUCTURING CO-DECISION

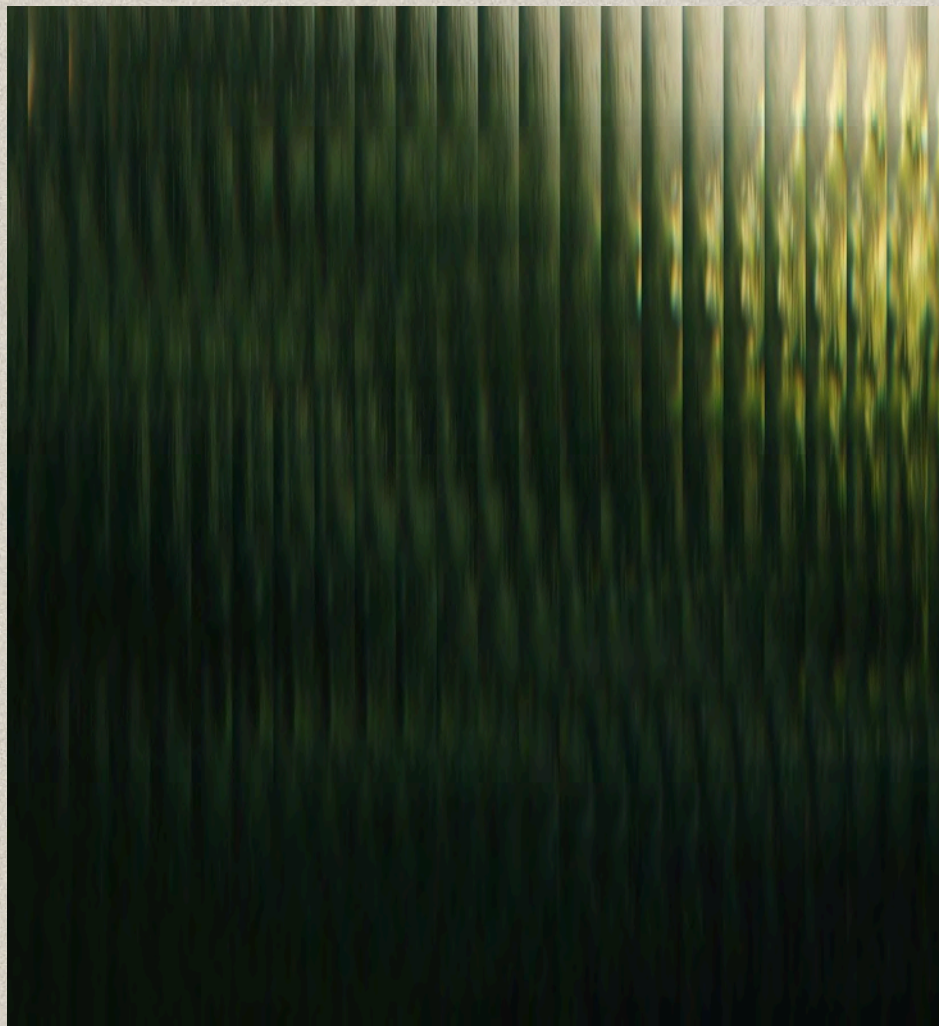
In a team-based model, decision-making becomes a collective art.

High-performing families use decision matrices specifying the scope of intervention of each body: family council, investment committee, philanthropy committee, etc.



They also adopt consensus thresholds (unanimity, qualified majority) depending on the nature of the decisions.

This type of practice, combined with the formal use of decision matrices and charters, reduces conflict frequency by 30% and increases the perception of fairness within families.



FROM DIALOGUE TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES
OF CO-LEADERSHIP

3

MEASUREMENT TOOLS: MAKING TRUST VISIBLE

« *What gets measured improves* »

This principle applies as much to governance as it does to finance or social impact.

This makes the creation of a Governance Dashboard highly relevant, combining financial and relational indicators such as:

- **Alignment Index:** consistency between values and investments.
- **Engagement Index:** effective participation in governance bodies and projects.
- **Trust Temperature:** annual anonymous survey measuring the emotional climate.

Families that regularly track these indicators double their chances of maintaining active engagement from the next generation over more than five years.



FROM DIALOGUE TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES
OF CO-LEADERSHIP

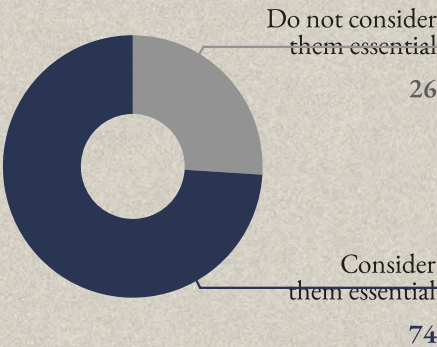
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LEARNING TOOLS: SUSTAINING COLLECTIVE COMPETENCE

Co-leadership is based on continuous learning.

The most advanced families establish internal academies or intergenerational training programs combining technical learning (finance, governance, impact investing, philanthropy) and relational development (listening, negotiation, nonviolent communication).

The PwC NextGen Survey 2024 reveals that 74% of young leaders consider continuous education and mentoring essential to their preparation for governance.



This approach can take the form of:

- a Family Leadership Curriculum: a program combining emotional intelligence, systems thinking, and modern governance;
- annual family retreats, where members review the charter, redefine the vision, and renew their mutual commitments.

FROM DIALOGUE TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES
OF CO-LEADERSHIP

5

TECHNOLOGY AS A NEUTRAL ARBITER

Digitalization is also transforming governance.

Secure collaborative platforms ensure transparency in decision-making and preserve key documents (charters, reports, votes).

Moreover, families using digital governance systems perceive greater transparency and improved management of disagreements.

Technology does not replace trust, but it supports it.



It acts as a neutral mirror that makes facts visible and decisions traceable, reducing the emotional burden associated with interpretation.

COLLABORATIVE TECHNOLOGY AT THE HEART OF FAMILY GOVERNANCE: THE CORNERSTONE OF CO-SUCCESSION.



1

THE INVISIBLE RISK OF INFORMATION ASYMMETRY

Families openly discuss financial, legal, and tax risks.

Yet information asymmetry is rarely on anyone's radar, even though it is one of the most common drivers of relational breakdowns and governance deadlock.

This risk builds over time, with wide-ranging consequences:

- **Erosion of trust.**
When certain members consistently feel like they're the last to know, suspicion takes hold. In a family, trust is always relational, never contractual, and once it's damaged, it's hard to rebuild.
- **Emotional narratives replacing facts.**
Without clear information, people fill in the blanks: *"They're hiding something from us."* "The business must be in trouble." Silence creates a vacuum that rumors rush to fill.
- **Power concentration and key-person risk.**
When knowledge is concentrated in a few individuals, succession grows more complex and institutional memory weakens.
- **Governance theater.**
A family may have a council or a charter in place, but if decisions and meeting minutes aren't accessible, those structures become symbolic rather than functional.
- **Conflict amplification.**
In many family disputes, the tension stems less from the decision itself than from how, or whether, information was shared in the first place.

COLLABORATIVE TECHNOLOGY AT THE HEART OF FAMILY GOVERNANCE: THE CORNERSTONE OF CO-SUCCESSION.



2

INSTITUTIONALIZING COLLABORATION

Reducing these tools to simple document storage misses the point entirely.

Without them, family communication tends to rely on scattered channels that create blind spots: decisions made without full consultation, archives that can't be found, or conflicting versions of the same document.

A structured governance platform formalizes two essential forms of collaboration:

- **Formal collaboration:**
Votes, deliberations, e-signatures, and approvals, all timestamped and archived to build a reliable institutional memory.
- **Informal collaboration:**
Between-meeting exchanges, news sharing, and early signals that keep members connected and foster a sense of belonging.
- **Without these tools, another risk emerges:** siloed working, where family branches, generations, and governing bodies each move forward independently. Technology addresses this through core capabilities:
 - **Granular permissions:**
Role-based, instance-based, or document-level access rights
 - **Full traceability:**
A timestamped audit log of every action
 - **Integrated collaboration:**
Votes, polls, and discussion threads built in
 - **Advanced security:**
Encryption, strong authentication, and GDPR compliance

Governance platforms also enable immediate access revocation when sensitive events occur (divorce, death, or a change in ownership) while maintaining a reliable audit trail.

In a context where financial and relational stakes are deeply intertwined, that level of security is a genuine trust guarantee.

COLLABORATIVE TECHNOLOGY
AT THE HEART OF FAMILY
GOVERNANCE: THE CORNERSTONE
OF CO-SUCCESSION.



3

THE NEXT GEN:
THE REAL TEST OF
FAMILY GOVERNANCE

Integrating the next generation is the true test of whether a family governance model is built to last.

The challenge is rarely about competence. Next Gens often arrive with strong academic credentials, sometimes stronger than those of their predecessors at the same age.

The real question is one of belonging.

How can a fourth-generation heir, born long after the business was founded and often spread across different geographies, feel genuinely invested in a project they had no hand in building?

The answer lies largely in the transmission of collective memory.

An heir who understands their family's history, its defining trade-offs, its formative failures, and the values that guided earlier generations, will govern with a depth that's fundamentally different from someone who inherits only financial assets.

That memory doesn't transfer on its own: it has to be structured, preserved, and actively shared.



Next-generation governance tools are designed to do exactly that, creating space where members can learn, develop context, and progressively take on greater responsibility, all within a secure environment.

They make it possible to build out structured onboarding journeys and support the natural evolution of each member's role over time.

Technology doesn't replace trust between family members. It makes trust visible, verifiable, and built to last.

FROM DIALOGUE
TO METHOD

TOOLS AND PRACTICES
OF CO-LEADERSHIP

6

FROM A TOOLBOX
TO A SHARED
CULTURE

All these instruments (charters, matrices, dashboards, platforms, etc.) only have value if they nurture a culture.

In the families we support, governance becomes a rhythm:

- **quarterly**, an alignment review,
- **annually**, a strategic retreat,
- **continuously**, listening for subtle relational signals.

This rhythm creates a sense of continuity and belonging.

Governance is no longer an administrative constraint: it becomes a living discipline, a way of learning together how to endure.

This evolutionary approach also helps prevent the risk of obsolescence often observed in structures built around a single heir.



THE ODAL
FRAMEWORK
FOR COLLECTIVE
SUCCESSION

Collective succession must be cultivated.

It does not consist of transferring existing power, but of enabling a collective capacity to govern together over time.

At ODAL Partners, we view succession as a process of shared, evolving, and intentional leadership, rather than as a one-time legal or patrimonial event.

Our methodological framework was designed to support families through this profound transformation: moving from a model of inherited authority to a model of distributed responsibility.

The ODAL framework is built on four interdependent stages: *Discovery*, *Design*, *Implementation*, and *Evolution*, which reflect the very principles of contemporary leadership: listening, co-creation, experimentation, and continuous learning.

1 • Discovery

This phase aims to reveal the invisible foundations of collective leadership: values, founding narratives, relational dynamics, individual aspirations, and shared vision.

It creates a space where every voice matters, an essential condition for allowing shared legitimacy to emerge rather than imposing leadership.

3 • Implementation

Collective leadership reveals itself in practice.

This phase translates intention into observable behaviors: active committees, explicit decision rules, feedback mechanisms, and shared management tools.

The emphasis is placed on accountability rather than control, and on supported trust rather than blind delegation.

2 • Design

At this stage, governance is no longer conceived as a hierarchy, but as a relational architecture.

Roles, bodies, and decision-making processes are designed collaboratively to foster clarity, interdependence, and fluidity, while respecting the family's unique culture.

Leadership becomes a collective function, structured, yet alive.

4 • Evolution

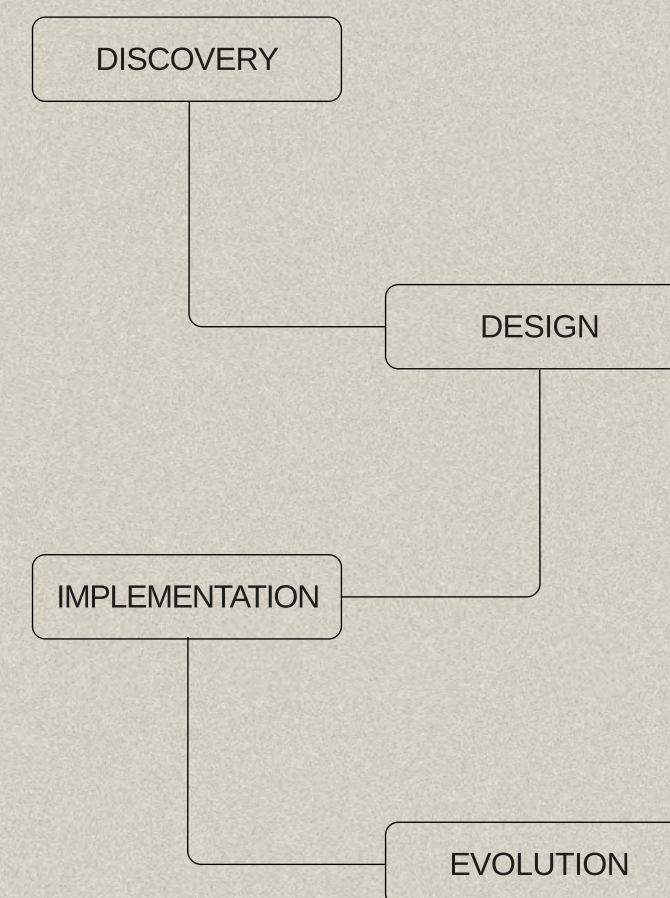
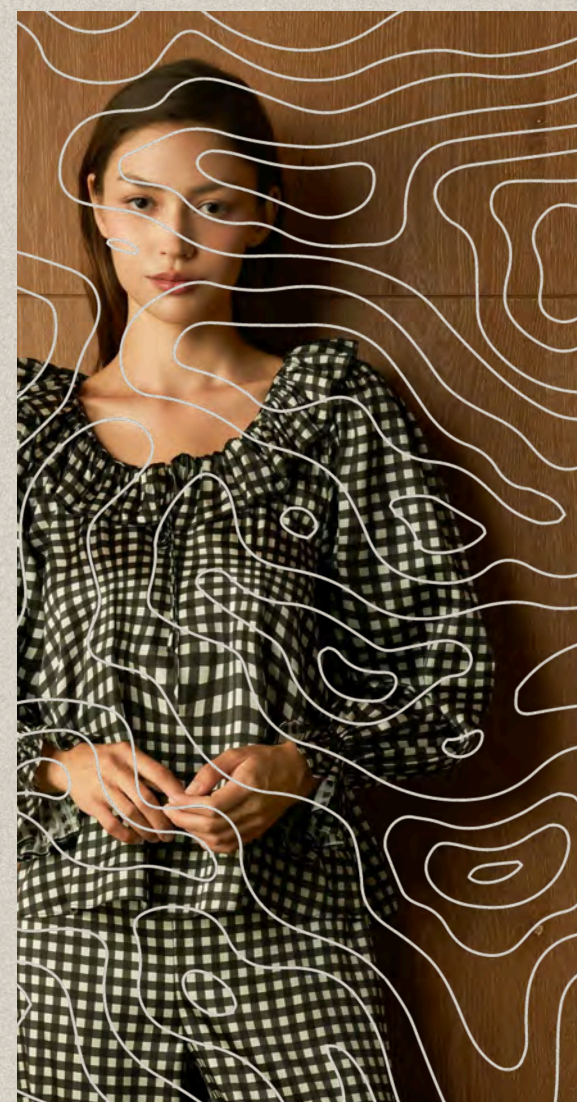
Finally, the ODAL framework incorporates an essential dimension of modern leadership: the capacity to evolve.

Governance is regularly revisited in light of family, generational, and contextual transformations.

Leadership thus becomes a learning process, capable of renewing itself without rupture.

This framework draws both on organizational innovation methodologies, research on shared leadership, and the principles of systems thinking.

It is the result of years of practice with international families facing complex challenges of succession, identity, and continuity.



More than a model, the ODAL framework is a foundation for collective maturity: it enables families to move beyond dependence on a central figure and to develop a shared governance intelligence, the key condition for inter-generational resilience.

CONCLUSION:

FROM INHERITANCE
TO A LIVING SYSTEM



CONCLUSION:
FROM INHERITANCE
TO A LIVING SYSTEM

Every family, one day, faces the same question: *“How do we remain strong when everything around us is shifting?”*

For a long time, the answer was summed up in one word: hierarchy.

One leader, one voice, one continuity.

But in the age of social networks and multiple identities (digital, societal, private, corporate...), this model is no longer sufficient.

Today’s families are discovering that true continuity does not rest on appointing a successor, but on creating a space for shared leadership.

The family office of the future will not be a fortress of control, but a living organism: flexible, transparent, and aligned with a shared intention and an embodied mission.

THE NEXT HEIR IS A TEAM

« *The next heir is a team.* »

This phrase is not a slogan, but an observation.

It captures a major cultural shift: leadership is no longer passed down, it is cultivated.

- By distributing authority, families increase their resilience.

- By integrating emotional intelligence, they transform wealth into well-being.

- By institutionalizing collective reflection, they keep tradition in motion.

- By aligning around a shared purpose, they build cohesion.

THE HUMAN ADVANTAGE

Technology, strategy, and finance will continue to evolve.

But the only truly sustainable resource remains human: listening, respect, coherence, and trust.

This is where the true governance of the 21st century takes shape: governance that has meaning for each individual and is shared by all, where financial capital has value only insofar as it supports a collective identity and trajectory.



ODAL PARTNERS’ VISION

CONCLUSION: FROM INHERITANCE
TO A LIVING SYSTEM

A true architect of family ecosystems, ODAL Partners helps families lay the foundations of a legacy that is built together rather than simply passed on.

We believe that today’s families are building the systems future generations will need: systems grounded in clarity, rigor, and sustainability.

Our mission is to help them transform governance into an art de vivre, a living dialogue between heritage and purpose.

Collective succession is not a luxury of idealism; it is a lucid and necessary strategy, one that recognizes that the complexity of tomorrow cannot be governed with the hierarchies of yesterday.

Far beyond financial capital, wealth is becoming multi-dimensional, extending across different spheres.

Increasingly, “teaming” is emerging as a natural response to this evolution.

**What endures is not retained
by one but sustained by many.**



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CONTRIBUTORS

SIMPLY
for GOOD

Nathalie Prieur founded Simply for Good, a specialist in consulting and support for corporate patronage and philanthropy.

She helps leaders, companies, and families transform a generous intention into a structured, coherent, and sustainable approach capable of reconciling purpose with social impact.

In a context where many families wish to give purpose to their wealth, Nathalie approaches philanthropy as a lever for transmission.

Her tailored approach, both strategic and highly operational, allows this ambition to be translated into concrete choices.

With over 25 years of experience in major corporations, Nathalie brings expertise, methodology, rigor, and human sensitivity to make your philanthropy a collective course, aligned with your values and contemporary challenges.

CONTRIBUTORS

Resilience
Nexus

Resilience Nexus's mission is to provide Family Offices with the vision, frames of reference, and leadership principles necessary to manage uncertainty, preserve family wealth, and seize emerging opportunities.

In an era of constant upheaval, resilience is no longer optional for Family Offices: it is essential to withstand volatility, manage generational changes, and adapt to the acceleration of technological change.

Founded by Peter Jones and Dr. Kelly Culver, Resilience Nexus redefines resilience as a strategic asset that fosters innovation, adaptability, and long-term prosperity.

Trusted Family

Trusted Family is the world's first governance platform for family businesses and family offices, designed to secure sensitive information, streamline communication, and facilitate decision-making.

Beyond technology, we support over 200 families worldwide through data-driven analysis, specialized expertise, and access to an exclusive community of international peers sharing the same values, connected both virtually and in person.

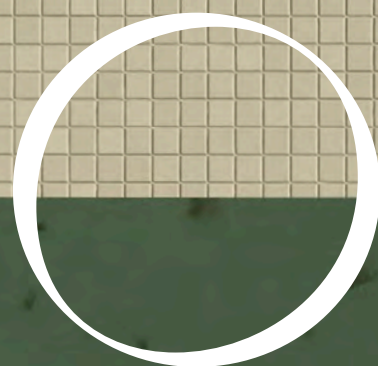
Their integrated approach fosters cohesion, transparency, and long-term success, while preserving families' legacies.

Fully independent, Trusted Family was founded and remains owned by family business leaders.



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The next heir is a team, Elodie Rojas