How to Succeed with your Succession Planning

Expert knowledge means success

Contents

Note: This publication has not been updated since it was last published. Some of the hyperlinks may have changed and may need updating. In addition, some of the information in this publication may be out of date.

Introduction

It's odd, but while business owners are usually very objective in making decisions that can impact on their business, when succession planning is being considered and loved ones are involved, emotions often get in the way and blur the picture to making a good and timely decision.

A typical succession plan has two elements:

- the transfer of control over the management and operation of a business to those best able to exercise it; and
- the transfer of assets or the value of a business to designated family members, employees or outside third parties - this who may be a different group than the person or persons who will be take over management and operational control.

Key aspects for a succession plan include short- and long-term business goals, prospective changes in ownership as well as management and the mechanics of transition.

The Succession Plan

It's a fact that death isn't something that many of us like to think about but succession planning isn't just about creating a plan to cope with the business ownership after your death. Yet unless you're willing to face up to this unpleasant thought now, there's a fair chance that the loved ones who you wish to receive your property after your death, will end up disappointed. If you die without having made out a valid Will, the way in which your assets are distributed after your death under the intestacy rules, may be quite different to what you had in mind.

To succeed in business, business owners usually prepare a formal business plan. This helps them to achieve their company's goals - establishing quantitative goals (making a certain level of profit, achieving cash flows to repay start-up and development capital, or growing the sales or carving out a specific market share) as well as qualitative goals (such as developing a highly-skilled work force, creating more community awareness, or developing a new product or service).

Typically a business plan like this is reviewed annually or even monthly by comparing it with actual results. This formal business planning process has withstood the test of time.

So, why aren't the same disciplines used to develop a business succession plan? In most cases it's because the owner is so embroiled in day-to-day operations that this critical phase of planning is postponed until it's too late. Yet the simple fact is that business owners can protect the current and future value of their business entity by planning for succession.

Succession planning should take into account the transfer of business ownership and realisation of the asset value, before death. Sadly, most business owners bury their head in the sand and hope that, when the time comes, as if by magic there will be produced a successor with enough money to take over the business. But it rarely works out like that. Consider these factors:

- As operational structures have become flatter and middle management have become increasingly downsized in today's businesses, how will new executives be recruited?
- In case you haven't noticed, there's a technological revolution going on - within a short time from now (perhaps now already) the most senior managers will have to be computer literate. How will this affect the succession of your business?
- Perhaps the last few years, since the end of the recessions in the 1980s and 1990s, have altered for ever the ideas about how organisations develop and are able to grow. As many have found out, there is an expanded job market, but with fewer relevant skills available. How will you cope?
- As social, environmental, political, and economic conditions are constantly changing, how will you cope with any long-range planning? Government deregulation, re-regulation, and over-regulation keep most of us guessing about our corporate responsibilities
- How will people be motivated to stay in the company, how will they be prepared for their new roles and how will their performance be evaluated?
- Who will take over when you are gone?
- Will they have the necessary funds or backing to take over the business when you retire or decide that it's time to enjoy what you've built up?

30% of all EU enterprises will change hands in 10 years

Research by the European Commission in 2003 estimated that one third of all enterprises in the European Union would transfer ownership in the next ten years, involving some 610,000 small and medium-sized enterprises and potentially affecting 2.4 million jobs each year. The European trends identified by this research are:

- the increasing importance of business transfers as a policy issue owing to the high and rising number of transfers within the ten year period 2003-13
- an increasing number of business transfers will take place outside the family to third parties
- an increasing number of entrepreneurs will stay in the same enterprise for a shorter period of time, not a lifetime and
- increasingly, personal decisions (early retirement, change of profession, interests, or in the family situation, etc) and the competitive environment (changing markets, new products, new channels of distribution, etc) and not just age, will be the triggers for transfers.

Source:
ACCA Research Report No. 85
Chris Martin, 2004

Good succession planning involves maintaining the value of the business for yourself or your family after you can no longer maintain it yourself. How to do so begins with an analysis of your personal objectives:

- Do you want to keep the business in your family?
- If the business is to stay in the family, who in the family will control it?
- Is there a need for transition management involving key non-family employees?
- Should you hold onto the business until death?
- If you sell it to your children, how will they finance the purchase?
- If you give it away, how can you retain control?
- If you give it, how can you be fair to non-active children and protect the business from demands of non-active children? Often, a buy-sell agreement can accomplish this goal.
- Does your business present a liquidity problem to your estate?
- If you can't transfer it/sell it to your family, how do you go about selling it to the employees or to an outsider - perhaps even to a competitor?

You shouldn't get the idea that business succession planning ends with an inheritance tax/estate plan and life insurance policy firmly in place. Business succession planning must also include a plan for transferring the trust, respect and goodwill that's been built up over the years. If the main reason clients/customers are willing to do business with a company is down to the charisma and skills of the owner, these clients/customers need to be reassured that they will continue to receive that same quality of attention and service after the owner is no longer around. This can be done by starting to transfer such loyalty while the owner is still around - through introducing clients/customers to younger managers or partners now, and by transferring some of the management responsibilities to them. Getting the clients/customers comfortable doing business with the "next generation" of ownership or management, with no change in service is a smart step towards successful succession planning.

Why plan for succession?

A succession affects your family, employees, customers, suppliers, creditors, and others.

According to some surveys only 51% of business owners had a strategic business plan and from that 51%, only 12% had their plans written down. The majority of the planning was in the owner's head. This makes it very difficult to plan for the future of the company. The process of planning for the transfer of control to your successor should be as important as keeping your company in business.

The average "lifespan" of a family enterprise is twenty-four years, roughly the working life in the business of the founder. Statistics show that more than the majority of businesses don't survive their founder's departure. Preparation for this event is critical, therefore, even if you don't plan to retire for many years. Less than 40% of family businesses are successfully transferred to the next generation and only 15% reach the generation that follows. It's believed that at any given time, about 40% of all businesses are facing the transfer of ownership issue as the founders are wrestling with the problem of what to do with their businesses:

- Should they simply stop altogether and shut up shop?
- Should they sell - but who'd buy the business - an outsider or insider (employee)?
- It might be best to hang on. Maybe there's a better time to stop?
- Should they retain ownership but recruit outside management?
- Should they pass on ownership and/or control to the family?

There are four main reasons why family firms fail to transfer the business from generation to generation successfully:

- Lack of viability of the business.
- Lack of planning.
- Little or no desire on the owner's part to transfer the business.
- Reluctance of offspring to join the business.

Unless you've prepared a plan to keep the business in the family after your death or retirement, or to sell it as a going concern, the chances are that your Executors won't be able to sell it to realise anything like its true value. This is particularly sad when you've probably put tremendous amounts of time and energy in building it up.

The earlier you start to be realistic about what should happen to the business, the better. Whether you think it or not, you're not immortal. The big lesson is - don't leave it until it's too late - sit down right now and start thinking about your exit strategy.

Things may not be easy for you - in some cases, your children or other family members won't be interested or qualified to run your business - in which case your best bet is to sell it as a going concern.

If you don't find a buyer or you run out of time, you may have to liquidate and take what you can get for the remaining assets. This is a course that's unlikely to realise the maximum value for all the hard sweat and tears you've put in over the years.

Getting out of a business is almost as important as getting into it. But many business owners fail miserably at devising exit strategies, which include selling the company, going public or passing the business onto someone in the family. That's not because the strategies are too complicated but rather that they're overlooked completely.

No matter which way it's done, the goal of any exit strategy is usually the same: to convert assets into cash.

The 20 Steps to Successful and Effective Succession Planning

- Assess your current situation - Can your business continue operating profitably if you were no longer there? What is necessary to ensure its continuity?
- Set outline objectives and identify possible action plans - What must be done before your business is ready for a succession? For example, if you want to pass your business on to your children but they are too young to run it, your plan should outline how the business will operate until your children are able to take over.
- Use advisors - Succession planning is very personal and can be an emotional process. This is a once in a lifetime action. You have to get it right.
- Start the process early - Transition takes time. You have a lot to do before you can let go.
- Set a timetable for implementing the plan and stick to it - Nothing breeds stress faster than rolling delays, promises made and not kept. Commitment to a plan for inclusion of others in ownership is essential for the business, your successor and employees.
- Review the company's financial statements - In most private companies the need to show a profit is overridden by a desire to save tax. It's important for a purchaser to be able to easily identify the discretionary and non-recurring expenses that are really profit distributions and thus can be added back to profits.
- Find out what the business is worth - You'll need to know the difference between the various types of buyers active in today's marketplace. To some your company may appear worthless, whilst to others it may be worth a lot of money.
- Cut down or cut out those activities, expenses and personnel that exist essentially to satisfy your personal and/or ego needs and which depress profits - Remember, that in most cases a purchaser will value the business on the basis of the profits expected from the business based on its historical performance.
- Consider the tax implications of your decisions - Before you take any action, look at all the different scenarios for passing on the business. How much can you give to your children without incurring substantial tax liabilities? Should you sell a piece of the business to the children? How about a gift/sale combination? Again, carefully examine each situation to make the most tax-advantaged decision possible. There is no quick formula to determine to whom, when and how it should be structured.
- Identify the ideal replacement - When you understand what your company is today, you can identify what it could be tomorrow. List the skills, interests, talents and resources that your successor must have to carry on the good work you've started.

- Define your company's future needs - Decide if it will be carried on into the next generation or sold.
- Face the reality - both you and your business are constantly changing. Eventually the needs and requirements of your business will conflict with your personal lifestyle needs.
- Establish your income requirements - How much money do you and your spouse need to retire?
- Start to build up financial resources that are independent of your business - such as through an approved pension scheme or a funded unapproved retirement benefit scheme.
- Develop some outside interests - Make time to develop these interests outside of your business.
- Prepare the business for transfer - Take stock of those areas where your personality, skills or influence are key elements of your firm's success. Start a plan to transfer these activities to others within the company.
- Provide for equitable treatment of all your children/grandchildren - This is the hardest step of all, and it can be a major stumbling block in the process for succession. Often it's helpful to ask the next generation about their desires and concerns regarding ownership. This input is helpful when the owner makes decisions.
- Communicate your plans to the entire family - After you've determined the best course of action, it's important to inform all members of the family, including spouses, at one meeting. Everyone needs to hear your plans, which will help avoid misunderstandings and bad feelings if one child hears about your plans before another. This approach also gives family members a chance to discuss the plan and to ask questions.
- Document your decisions - Put your plans into writing and give a copy to your solicitor or accountant. Family and other close associates should be familiar with the important features of your succession plan and know where it is kept.
- Review your plan - At least once a year, review your plan with your business advisor and amend it to reflect any changes in your current situation or objectives.

The three options for Succession

For the business owner facing retirement (for whatever reason or with plans to pursue other interests), it really boils down to three main choices:

- Transferring or gifting the business to heirs in the family
- Selling the business (and/or its assets) to employees, competitors, or other third parties - and taking the money out of the business
- Going public, cashing in some of the value of your shares and "buying" in a new management team - not covered in this publication but check with us for a separate guide on the options for going public

"Selling" to the family

When a business owner plans the transfer of a family business from their (older) generation to a younger one, how the older generation gets the value they deserve out of the business is an important question.

These factors, alone or in combination, make transferring a family business difficult, and sometimes even impossible. The main cause for failure, is lack of planning - yet with the right foundations in place, the business, in most cases, will remain healthy and viable. There are four plans that make up the transition process of transferring ownership and management to another generation or owner to ensure the successful transfer of your business within the family hierarchy:

- The strategic plan for the business - this will allow each generation an opportunity to chart a course for the firm. Setting business goals as a family will ensure that everyone has a clear picture of the company's future.
- The family strategic plan - this plan establishes policies for the family's role in the business. By implementing this plan, you may avoid family arguments about pay, sibling rivalry, ownership and management control.
- The succession plan - this will ease the owner's concerns about transferring the firm. Many founders don't want to let go of the company because they are afraid the successors are not prepared, or they are afraid to be without a job. Often, heirs sense this reluctance and plan an alternative career. If, however, the heirs see a plan in place that outlines the succession process, they may be more apt to continue in the family business.

- The estate plan - this is critical for the family and the business. Without it, it's likely that you'll pay higher inheritance tax (IHT) than necessary (check with us for our guides on Inheritance Tax: Sadly, IHT is given a low priority against a perceived degree of immortality").

The transfer of a business from the senior family member to an heir or heirs is a common practice involving sophisticated estate planning techniques. Typically, the plan unfolds as offspring succeed to the management level and make preparations for taking control of the company. An heir can purchase the company outright by borrowing money or paying in instalments. If the transfer is a gift however, it does not create liquidity for the senior family member and may involve inheritance tax being payable.

When a small business is a key component of family wealth, the owner usually has a strong desire to perpetuate it in one form or another. But perpetuating the business through an orderly succession to family members or other insiders is the ultimate management challenge. The owner(s) must deal with business, family, tax, and estate issues when planning for the succession of both management and ownership.

Any transition must preserve the continuity of leadership and it is most important that the succession of ownership and management be perceived as a process rather than an event. Succession is a process requiring planning, teamwork, and constant re-evaluation.

Planning for succession in a family business is a special situation of the first order. So infrequently is it done successfully that only a small fraction of family businesses survive into the second generation and less still endure into the third.

Selling to an outsider

Potential third-party buyers for your company can come from anywhere - from employees, customers, suppliers, or industry competition. Unrelated buyers can usually be divided into management (employees), financial buyers and strategic buyers. Finally, if your business has grown quite large and/or you're in an industry that's flavour of the month with investment analysts, you may be able to sell out to the general public via an AIM or even a Full-List flotation.

- Employees - These people know your business from the inside, and may already have a personal stake in seeing that it survives and prospers. They may be willing to pay more for your company than an outside financial buyer would, because their inside knowledge lowers their risk.

  The main problem with company insiders is that they frequently lack cash. You may have to finance a large part of the transaction yourself, or arrange third party financing through a leveraged buy-out. The reverse side of this is that if you know the parties well, you may be more willing to be flexible as to terms - for example, you may be more willing to defer part of the sales price via an earnout provision or a consulting arrangement.

- Financial buyers - Financial buyers are mainly interested in your company's cash flow. They are typically individuals or companies with money to invest, and are willing to look at many different types of businesses or industries. In some cases they are corporate refugees wanting to buy in - former executives of larger corporations who want to buy themselves a job by finding a company to actively manage. In other cases they may be holding companies that are simply looking for good returns on their investments, and who would like your current management to stay in place.

  Financial buyers will examine your accounts and assets very closely. Most of them are looking for a solid, well-managed company that won't need a great deal of immediate change, but there are some investors who specialise in turnaround situations and will be willing to look at companies that are not currently profitable.

- Strategic buyers - Strategic buyers are those who are interested in how your company might fit into their own long-range business plans. They may be one of your competitors, or a similar company from another part of the country that wants to expand into your local area. The classic strategic buyer would be a larger company who does what you do in a nearby region. However, another possibility is a company in a related business, whose management can see that your company has strengths from which they can benefit - for example, you may already produce a product that they want to sell, or you may have distribution channels that they want to exploit. Sometimes these types of buyers - who are in related, but not completely parallel-businesses, are referred to as "synergistic buyers."

Whether synergistic or competitive, strategic buyers are generally the ones who will pay the most for your company. The better the fit, the more they will want your business and the greater the premium they will pay.

You must be careful when speaking with competitors or people your business currently deals with directly as suppliers, vendors, or customers. Although they may be legitimately interested in buying your business, if the deal falls through, you don't want them to have gained enough information to ruin you.

It's best to let your accountant or other agent deal with all potential buyers initially, revealing only enough to whet their appetite. If negotiations progress, you'll want the prospective purchasers and their accountants etc to sign confidentiality agreements early on in order to protect your legal rights. But don't rely solely on the paper - you'll need to keep your sensitive information under lock and key until the final sales contract is signed and there's a legally binding commitment made to acquire your business.

Choosing a successor

Selecting a successor is often a decision by default. Sometimes, a family business will have someone from the next generation who is more active, qualified, and interested in the business than others in the family. Some founders spend a great deal of time grooming the heir apparent (or the successor has absorbed much of the necessary knowledge on his or her own over the years). Here, there may be challenges in finding ways to ensure a fair and proper treatment for the non-participating family members.

If succession has not already been determined by interest, proximity, or birth order, a group effort in choosing and grooming an individual is one way to proceed. Key employees who are not family members can often be recruited for a transition team. If key employees in your business can be part of the process of selection and initiation of a successor, the entire team will benefit over the long run. Involving key employees is something that's essential for continuity and credibility in dealing with outside sources such as banks and suppliers - in addition, it usually "glues" the ongoing commitment of the key employees to the business.

Who do you want to take over the business? This may not be as easy as it sounds. You will be better off with someone who is familiar with the company and knows how you operate. If a family member is involved, then the decision becomes more complicated. You may even have more than one family member interested in taking over the business. What do you plan to do in a situation like this? The key is to train them to work together and take over control as a team. In countless situations, businesses went bankrupt because family members could not agree on how to run the company. Do not allow yourself to commit a mistake like this. The decision of who will take control is a leading factor in determining whether or not your business will continue to prosper after you are gone.

A good approach to the succession decision is to talk with your key employees and family members and find out who is interested and also capable of taking over the business. If you decide that the succession will go to a family member, then make sure that the person who will take control is not lacking the proper education and skills needed. Make that family member work his way to management so he/she will feel and appreciate the privileges and responsibilities associated with such a position. The alternative to family members running the business is to identify a key employee and groom them for that leadership role.

If there is competition between your children for the position, a decision to divide the power between them is not likely to be successful. Ownership may be divided but management should be clearly delineated. Often ownership can be split into passive and active shares, giving the active successor the necessary control over the business but providing an equal economic benefit to the inactive shareholders. In some cases the business can be divided along functional lines, so that different family members can assume control over well-defined functions or business units.

Between these extremes are the majority of family business successions. Able founders need to pass along a hard-earned creation to able successors who have worked hard to become prepared to take on the task. There will be the usual number of differences of opinion and approach commonly found between generations and between co-workers of the same generation. These can and will be worked out mutually over time to the benefit of the individuals, the family and the business. Planning and communication are the tools these successful teams must use consistently.

Transition

- Transition Timing - Transition of the control of a family business can take place over a period of months or even years, depending on the needs and wishes of the family members and the business itself.

  As the successor gains confidence and credibility in day-to-day operations and dealings with outsiders, the founder can back away into an advisory role. If the founder encounters difficulty in "letting go" of the business entirely, the successor must be prepared to be reassuring and supportive and ensure some type of ongoing role for the founder so that he or she feels included.

  If the successor resists, it may only cause the founder to become more rigid and the successor to become more frustrated. Transitions are stressful times and must be dealt with on an objective basis by the successor at all times.

  A transition plan or timetable should be drafted initially to assure continuity of management, and should be re-evaluated periodically to see if the goals set are being achieved. The transfer of power can be seamless and subtle if good communications and careful planning are practiced by all parties to the transition.

- Management transition planning - Management succession is the first aspect that must be addressed. Future leadership requires two primary ingredients, namely competency and commitment. Providing for corporate longevity is achieved only if succeeding management has both of these ingredients. The following steps will help in planning.
  - Determine critical skills necessary for future leaders
  - Define job responsibilities and expectations
  - Assess skills and level of commitment of the next generation
  - Establish a development plan that includes on-the-job experience plus book and classroom training
  - Examine performance in a regular and systematic way
  - Establish routine management meetings to include team building

  Assessing the potential of future leaders and training them is too important to postpone, to leave to chance or to approach haphazardly. Creating a training plan is essential for the future success of the company. This training begins with the entry of the younger generation into the business and continues throughout their career. Learning technical skills, human relations skills, management techniques and developing leadership qualities requires systematic attention.

  A critical part of preparation requires devising ways to include future successors in the decision-making process. No one becomes a good decision-maker if they don't get the opportunity to make decisions, to learn from mistakes and to enjoy the satisfaction of their successes. Through involving the younger members, the senior generation gains confidence in their successors as they see successful, though perhaps different, leaders in action.

  Founders face a major change by including others in making decisions. If they want to train a next generation, they cannot get away with being solo in their work style. They must begin to think of themselves as having partners, junior though they may be. Partnering implies talking things over, taking others' ideas and opinions into account and being open to the goals and dreams of others. This confronts the owner with starting the process of letting go of the control previously enjoyed. However, if the desire is for a competent future management team, the tough emotional task of letting go in small increments has to begin early.

- Ownership transition planning - The ownership planning process begins with questions that are different from management planning. To begin with, the owner must make the success and safety of the business the first priority, because personal wealth, retirement comfort and job security for family and non-family are tied to the future well-being of the enterprise. Consideration of the needs of the business with its growth and strategic goals, must be foremost.

  The owner needs to grapple with how the ownership will be allocated, and to whom. Will there be multiple owners or should the company be owned only by those who work in the company? Will key executives have ownership? Can several owners operate as a team?

The answers to these questions will be unique in each situation.

The ownership plan must take into account the needs of the founder for future income to sustain a satisfying life style. How income is paid out and protected, how much is distributed and for how long it is paid are questions that must be faced. The easy situation would be to have ample assets separate from the businesses, allowing financial separateness. Too often this is not the case.

Ownership planning requires clarifying values and desires about equitable treatment in estate distribution to all the offspring. The owner who has only one child who is competent to run the business and committed to taking over has an easy solution. But almost no one is in this simple situation. Most parents want to treat their multiple offspring equitably. Many founders struggle to find an ownership plan that feels fair without undermining the family relationships and the future viability of the company.

When the above issues are dealt with and the tradeoffs between them are accepted by the owner, there is the need to look at the tax consequences. The price that must be paid to protect the company, provide for the future income of the senior generation and treat the offspring equitably is the tax bite. Only professional advisors can develop ways to do what you want to do with the least tax consequence.

Once the plan for ownership is fairly well ironed out, it is in the best interest of the business and the family that those who will be affected by it are informed by the owner in a way that allows discussion of the plan. Nothing makes for more dissension, confusion and distress than to have this aspect of business affairs remain unknown and un-discussed until the time when the owner is no longer present to help others understand the plan.

Buy/Sell Agreements

A Buy/Sell (or cross-purchase) agreement is a plan that provides for an orderly change of ownership when a business owner dies or becomes disabled. Shareholders in closely held companies often find it advantageous to enter into this type of agreement to provide when certain events such as death, disability, retirement happen, there will be pre-determined mechanisms in place that will make the process run smoothly. Buy/Sell agreements may exist between:

- Shareholders (in a company)
- Partners (in a partnership)
- Sole proprietor and a key/valued employee

Life insurance is a widely used means of funding the purchase of a business interest after the death of an owner. If one owner dies, the proceeds from the policy, which is owned by the other owners or by the business itself, are used to buy the business interest from the deceased owner's estate. In the event of an owner's extended disability, lump sum disability policies are also available to fund a buy-out. In cases where an owner retires, the buy-out may be financed with the company's cash reserves or future operating revenue and is often paid over time.

A properly drafted buy/sell agreement automatically provides for successors of the company, as well as determining a value for the company, thus ensuring an orderly passage to the next generation. It's not the answer to everything and doesn't replace the owner (if he dies) or make him better (if he's ill) but it can help solve many problems arising at the death or disability of a business owner, because it can:

- Pre-determine what your family will receive from the business in the event of your death or disability by setting and fixing the price at which business owners agree to buy and sell their business interests by providing the deceased owner’s family with a fair price for the business, while providing the remaining owners with control of it;
- Prevent the transfer of an owner's share of the business to an outsider, such as a competitor, or to an adverse party or to unwanted "partners" (such as spouses or children) from helping to run the business if your partner dies - ensuring that the business will continue in control of the present shareholders and that no shareholder will be able to sell his/her shares to an outsider without first offering the shares to current shareholders;
- Create a ready and willing buyer of a share of the business at a fair and predetermined price, thereby affording a deceased's estate with the necessary liquidity for the payment of taxes, expenses and dependent support;
- Provide for the orderly transfer of shares to a successor;
- Establish the value of each owner's business interest for inheritance tax purposes;
- Assure creditors and employees of the continuation of the business in the event of an owner's death or disability;

- Provide continuous income to a disabled business owner without adversely affecting the business' working capital;
- Provide the money to fund the plan at the exact time it is needed.

How does it work?

A buy-sell agreement is a contract among business owners. At the death of an owner, the business interest is transferred according to the terms of this contract. The other party to the contract (either the company or other shareholders or partners) is obliged to purchase the deceased's business interest and the deceased's heirs are obliged to sell at a fixed price or in accordance with an agreed formula.

Useful Links

The ACCA provides a guide to family succession in their publication *"Keeping it in the Family"* available at: http://www2.accaglobal.com/pubs/members/publications/sector_booklets/public_practice_sector/20687.pdf

Business Link provide guidance on *"Family run businesses"* including a section on *"Succession planning in family businesses"* at their website in the "Starting up: Considering Starting up" section of their website at www.businesslink.gov.uk. This section includes links to a guide on "*Selling or passing a business to a family member"* and "*How to consider your exit strategy when starting up*": http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?r.i=1073792541&r.l1=1073858796&r.l2=1074298365&r.l3=1074027604&r.t=RESOURCES&topicId=1074039237

Further Information

This guide is for general interest - it is always essential to take advice on specific issues.

We believe that the facts are correct as at the date of publication, but there may be certain errors and omissions for which we cannot be responsible.

Important Notice

Publication issued or updated on: 30 March 2012

Ref: 276