

THE **SOUL** OF FAMILY BUSINESS

What people are saying about *The Soul of Family Business*

While nothing tops the value and impact of interacting with a family business consultant face-to-face, this book is a wonderful source of practical tools and thoughtful reflections tested over a lifetime of Tom's consulting work. It is a candy store of delights, of lessons, for people involved with business families of every age and stage.

—Bill Monson, former director of the University of St. Thomas Family Business Center

Drawing from the depths of his personal and professional experience, Tom Hubler guides us through the life cycles, challenges, and opportunities of family business. His inspirational anecdotes and wisdom-filled one-liners could only come from the experience of a highly respected senior practitioner. Spiritually grounded, they are designed to stimulate thought, reflection, and action for family business owners and practitioners alike. He does not simply visit the world of family business; with a philosopher's insight, he probes its depths.

—Paul Karofsky, founder of Transition Consulting Group, Ltd., executive director emeritus of Northeastern University's Center for Family Business, author of *So You're in the Family Business: A Guide to Sustainability*, and a third-generation family business owner

If you are an owner of a family business or consult to one, *The Soul of the Family Business* is a must-read. Webster's dictionary defines soul as "the immaterial essence, animating principle, or actuating cause of an individual life." Tom Hubler does not disappoint the reader; there is no part of the family business soul that Tom does not address. From love, values, gratitude, forgiveness, and conflict to succession, family health, and more. Every issue discussed is followed by one or more mini case studies. This is a hands-on book that captures Tom's many years of dealing with family businesses.

—August Aquila, CEO of AQUILA Global Advisors, LLC

This book has great insights into the inner workings of family business by one of the top consultants in the field.

—Gary B. Cohen, managing partner of CO2 Partners and author of *Just Ask Leadership: Why great managers always ask the right questions*

Tom is one of very few pioneers in the professional field of family business consulting. I've had the privilege of knowing and learning from Tom for over 20 years, and in *The Soul of Family Business*, Tom shares his deeply rooted experience working with business families. Through his consulting experiences, references to the insights he's gained from his mentors and teachers, and sharing of the step-by-step interventions of his work, Tom has provided families and practitioners alike with wisdom for the ages.

Tom is a deeply soulful individual. This long overdue treatise reflects Tom's soulful essence of his life's work. Reading *The Soul of Family Business* is to express our gratitude toward Tom's immense contributions to the field.

–Mark B. Rubin, senior managing director of FTI Consulting and founding partner of The Metropolitan Group LLC

The Soul of Family Business offers practical tips and advice, allowing readers to choose what will work best for their business families. His Inside-Out Succession Plan model is simple, pragmatic and achievable; it captures the essence of his work with legacy business families. The book is a great primer for anyone involved in family businesses – from owners and family members to non-family managers and external advisors. Hubler has lived family business both personally and professionally, and he shares his knowledge generously. His book is a valuable, insightful gift to all business families and their advisors.

–Aron R. Pervin, founder of Optimizer720 and family business consultant at Pervin Family Business Advisors Inc.

Tom is a true sage in the field of family business. In reading this book, Tom brings out the soul and essence of what it means to be a family business. He describes in-depth all the issues that are so pertinent to family businesses. It is a must-read for all family business consultants!

– Carmen Bianchi, founder of Carmen Bianchi Family Business Associates and founder and former director of the EMC Business Forum at San Diego State University and the University of Texas at El Paso Family Business Forum.

I am very fortunate to have been a part of Tom's work for over 30 years. He has helped me in my professional career, as well as in my relationships with family and friends. He has expertly captured his lifelong vocation and identified the soul of family and family business in this book. Reading *The Soul of Family Business* will help you be a more thoughtful consultant, a more successful business owner and, most importantly, a better person.

–Thomas E. Zanicchia, president of Wealth Management Consultants, Inc.

The Soul of Family Business is the best guide to keeping your family and your business well grounded. As a CPA, I have seen how the crossroads of family and business need to be intentionally navigated to be successful. As Tom says, “it’s easier to prevent a problem than to try to fix one.”

–John Lawson, CPA and shareholder at Schechter Dokken Kanter CPAs

Rooted in his upbringing, education and decades of experience, Tom Hubler has crafted his own style in helping business families reach their goals. *The Soul of Family Business* presents the tools, methods and examples for finding harmony and success in both the business and family, and shows the inner workings of how Tom helps clients find solutions they didn’t know existed.

–Jon Keimig, director of the University of St. Thomas Family Business Center

The Soul of Family Business is a masterpiece packed with wisdom and stories from one of the pioneers of family business consulting. Business owners and consultants alike will benefit from Tom’s deep understanding of the intricacies of running a successful family business.

–Dave Wondra, president of Wondra Group LLC and past global chairman of International Coach Federation

When I met Tom, too many years ago to count, I was impressed with his values, insight, sensitivity, and understanding of the problems and paths to resolution for members of family businesses. I was an associate editor of the *Family Business Review* at the time, and what he was saying was far more thoughtful than most of what was being written and researched — I daresay it still is! I knew his message had to reach a larger audience, so I encouraged him to write and publish to help advance the field. I am grateful that he did, and certainly this book is in line with all Tom is. All who are interested in deeper understanding of family business should read *The Soul of Family Business*.

– Joseph Astrachan, Wells Fargo Eminent Scholar Chair of Family Business and past executive director of the Cox Family Enterprise Center at Kennesaw State University, author, and coeditor of the Journal of Family Business Strategy

Is there a “secret sauce” for family business survival? With more than 20 years of experience advising family businesses, Tom Hubler describes stunning transformations

within businesses and families as they discover the soul that drives their family business. Hubler makes the case that the secret sauce that differentiates successful family businesses from others is a combination of values, purpose, and yes, love. Together, these factors create a soul that helps families surmount difficulties embedded in every family and energizes family members to work hard, solve problems, and believe in a cause greater than oneself- the family business.

Hubler explains that soul is also crucial to these businesses because of the unique fluid boundaries between family and business. Unlike non-family businesses, family members of family businesses may be tempted to dominate family gatherings, dinners, or even while brushing teeth, with work-related discussions. While these mutable boundaries can be helpful in conveying information quickly, they can also be overpowering and lead to dissonance. According to Hubler, the family's soul, can help families determine when business discussions should be allowed to permeate family interactions, and when they should be banned.

Most enlightening, Hubler demonstrates through case studies that soul determines the success of governance policies. When decisions surrounding business strategies and goals, or rules concerning family members' rights (such as buy-sell agreements and family employment) are based on values and purpose, they are more likely to stick.

Hubler's book should be read by all family business owners, their families, and associates. His message about soul as the family's secret sauce may sound un-businesslike, but in fact, can be a family business's most powerful ally.

–Kathy Overbeke, founder of GPS: Generation Planning Strategies, LLC and a family business consultant

The Soul of Family Business is all about creating and preserving a truly healthy family in business. Unlike most family business literature, this book's focus is not best practices but rather the heart and soul of the family in business. Conflict resolution, recovery from substance abuse and family betrayals, forgiveness, and gratitude are elegantly and practically discussed in Tom Hubler's book.

–Ernesto J. Poza, founder of family-business.com, professor emeritus at Thunderbird School of Global Management, and co-author of Family Business

Tom Hubler, as "dean" of family business advisors, has filled a craftsman's chest of tools worn smooth by generations of use. Tom generously shares priceless gifts – the family forgiveness ritual for new beginnings and stories of problems avoided by structure and formality. Family businesses and advisors will prosper using this practical wisdom.

–Steve Coleman, partner of Platinum Group

In *The Soul of Family Business*, Tom Hubler provides family business owners with important insights and processes to help them build a better future for their families and businesses. He shows compassion and respect to each family's integrity as they navigate the balance between owning a company and having long-standing, often complicated relationships with one another. The book describes the hard work and dedication required and offers cases and practical exercises to face the challenges.

—Lilli Friedland, president of Executive Advisors

By sharing his 30+ years of seasoned insights, coupled with actual case studies to beautifully illustrate the concepts, Tom Hubler has written a book that is an instant classic for family businesses of all kinds. More than 15 years ago, Tom did a wonderful job of bringing our multi-generation family closer together as individuals and as a team, helping us become better family shareholders and preparing us to meet future challenges. *The Soul of Family Business* reflects Tom's consulting style, one that encourages family members to speak up and be heard, to feel secure and be listened to, and to be motivated and tested in achieving goals. Your family – like ours – will be better for having benefitted from Tom Hubler's wisdom.

—Richard Murphy, president and CEO of Murphy Warehouse Company

Tom Hubler has written a reference book for family business leaders who need a “wisdom resource,” a collection of sound principles and teachings from an experienced elder intended to spark their own ideas on how to help their family move forward – in both their responsibilities to the future of the family business and in their cultivation of love for each other.

Hubler emphasizes that in order to build an enduring company, business families must master two kinds of skill: proactive skills to prevent divisive, painful conflict; and skills to heal and move forward when such conflicts occur. But what makes this book special is the author's collected gems of wisdom about how to initiate productive family conversations, so that when conflict happens, there can be respectful attention to resolution, personal healing and renewed commitment.

Using case studies from his own experience, Hubler describes practical ways to initiate constructive conversation among family members to discuss issues that affect their ability to work together. He describes ways to initiate forgiveness practices within the family so that personal hurt, harm or betrayal can be acknowledged and corrected with care and respect.

—Allen Bettis, president of Legacy Associates Family Business Advisors

For decades, Tom has been both an ardent student and teacher of families in business. This exemplary book is testimony to Tom's passion and skills in building healthy families and strong family businesses.

–Paddy McNeely, CEO of Meritex Enterprises