



Next-Gen Letting Go

We talk to the elder generation regularly about letting go. BUT, what about Next-Gen? Do they need to learn to let go, too?

One of the reasons letting go poses a problem for elders, particularly founders, is because for many, the family business is all they've ever done. And what we DO is too often at the top of the list instead of WHO WE ARE. It's about identity. If I let go of my identity, who am I? My encouragement would be NOT to let go of your identity. Discover your identity!

***Let go of what you've done,
but never let go of who you are!***

So much for the elder letting go. What I want to talk about here is about Next-Gen letting go. Sure, when it comes to identity, the same "rules" apply to Next-Gen as to elders.

Don't let what you do define who you are.

Having said that, I regularly am confronted with the need Next-Gen has to let go. If "Mom" is letting go of some of the leadership and direction of the company, who will pick up that baton? And if Next-Gen (might be one person; might be multiple people) needs to pick up that baton, what MUST they let go of?

***I've never seen a relay race with
runners carrying multiple batons.***

So, what must Next-Gen let go of? I would start with DOING. In order to THINK and to LEAD (primary responsibilities for those who sit in the "big seats,") there must be time to think and lead. That can't always happen when you are "doing." In order to "coach" your troops, you have to let them do the daily, weekly, monthly and annual tasks; let them make their own mistakes (just like you have along the way...); and learn from them.

One of the more difficult things for Next-Gen to let go of is "my way is the right way." Yes, certain things are non-negotiable, but if the grass needs to be mowed, how much does it really matter that it have the same pattern you like? Let it go! Or, if your job was to take the mail to the post office daily, does it really matter that the person you hand that duty off to takes the same route and does it at exactly the same time you did?

Let it go!

Circling back to the elder. Next-Gen's day will come to let go of the company. Now is the time for you to let go. And, make no mistake, Next-Gen is watching. Both for down the road and for the letting go Next-Gen needs to do now, set a good example.

***Pass on an "inheritance" of
how to let go...
graciously, humbly, willingly.***

You'll be glad you did!