

Family Business Consultation:  
A Delphi Study to Develop a Model Curriculum for Marriage and Family Therapists.

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### ABSTRACT

Family businesses are a specific type of businesses that combine the family system with the business system. In this new system, emotions play an important role due to the long term relationships that exist amongst family members. This emotional component provides family businesses with unique advantages as well as challenges.

Marriage and family therapists (MFTs) understand human relationships from a systemic approach. This specific training allows MFTs to be particularly well suited to help family businesses better deal with relational issues they might face by providing families with a different perspective for solution. Currently there is no consensus regarding the specific training MFTs should undergo in order to be better prepared to provide consulting services to family businesses.

To meet this need, the purpose of this study is to identify the content for a model curriculum for MFT graduate students in family business consultation. A modified Delphi method with a mixed methods approach was used to obtain the content that a model curriculum should have. The Delphi method was used to obtain consensus on the opinions of MFT experts in family business consultation. A mixed methodology was used to triangulate the data obtained and to enrich the data gathered from a quantitative analysis.

The results of this study show that marriage and family therapists wishing to pursue a career as family business consultants would benefit from additional training in the following specific areas: multidisciplinary theoretical approaches to understanding family businesses, consultation as a business, differences between consultation and therapy, and supervised practice. These results allowed the creation of curriculum components that could be used for a family business consultation course, workshops, and other educational events. Specialized training can help therapists provide better services to family businesses as well as an additional career avenue for the field of family therapy.

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You light up my life!

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Problem Statement

Family businesses can be broadly defined as firms where family members participate and have strategic control over their business. Using this definition, Astrachan and Shanker (2003) found that family businesses employ 62% of the workforce and contribute 64% of the U.S. GDP. They also found that family firms comprise 80% to 90% of all business enterprises in North America. Further, one third of the Fortune 500 businesses are family-owned companies (Kets de Vries, 1993; Roseblatt, de Mik, Anderson, and Johnson, 1985). Family businesses include small, medium-sized and large enterprises, ranging from clothing stores and small restaurants to major corporations such as Ford Motors and U-Haul.

To own a business can be a powerful motivator creating an emotional and financial attachment and commitment to the company. Family owned businesses tend to be run with a dedication and passion that can give a competitive advantage. On a negative note, it might be difficult for family members to separate what is personal from what is business due to the emotional link they have to the business. Further, new and more complex conflicts tend to emerge when blending family with business (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2007/2008).

To share a long history of interaction by living together, loving each other and, sometimes, disliking or competing with one another might add complexity to the family

business environment (Kaslow & Kaslow, 1992). In family businesses, issues of the family tend to be carried over into the workplace and to contribute to business-related conflicts. These conflicts generally center around hierarchical structures, gender issues, attitudes towards money, power and control, decision-making authority, sibling rivalry, and the line of succession (Kaslow & Kaslow, 1992).

According to Kaye (1991), conflicts in family businesses tend to have more complex characteristics than those that arise between parties that do not share a long - term relationship. Conflicts within families have a dynamic pattern where repetitive sequences created by family members maintain the conflict over time. Conflict can be understood as a way of not wanting to know about deeper underlying issues. In order to help resolve family business conflicts and improve member's interactions, the relational patterns should be analyzed. In analyzing these patterns, underlying issues surface.

The unique relational issues faced by family businesses can be understood by marriage and family therapists who are trained in understanding the systemic processes that underlie relational issues. Family business consultation is a promising area for marriage and family therapists to apply their expertise. However, marriage and family therapists are primarily trained to work in clinical settings (Hodgson, Johnson, Ketring, Wampler, & Lamson, 2005), not in business settings.

#### Purpose Statement

The general research question guiding this study is: What additional training should MFTs have to work efficiently as family business consultants? And specifically, what components should be included in model course contents in family business consultation for MFTs ? The purpose of this study is to identify a model course contents

for marriage and family therapists wanting to specialize in family business consultation. In this study, the Delphi method was used to obtain consensus on the opinions of marriage and family experts in consulting with family businesses regarding content for a model curriculum. I modified the traditional Delphi method by adding a qualitative section to all the phases in order to better understand the rationale behind the responses.

### Family Business Consulting: Unique Contributions of Marriage and Family Therapists

Interdisciplinary family business consulting emerged in the 1980s (Kaslow, 1993). Family therapists began to get involved as family business members discussed the issues they faced in their businesses and family issues emerged (Rodriguez, Hildreth, & Mancuso, 1999). Friedman's (1986) clinical experience made him realize that family therapists could be consultants to work systems. He found that almost any family breadwinner who increased his or her understanding of emotional processes within his or her personal family (Bowen, 1973) also began to make similar changes in his or her job environment.

Family therapists are particularly well trained to deal with the complexity of conflicts within families and can provide family businesses with insights on relationship issues by exploring their fears and assumptions (Boverie, 1991; Kaslow, 1993; Kaye, 1991). Marriage and family therapists can provide family business owners with insights about the dynamics within the system and with skills for resolving their conflicts and create stronger relationships (Sperry, 1996).

The overarching conceptual framework of systems therapy that guides marriage and family therapists (Wynne, Weber, & McDaniel, 1986) allows professionals to understand that the presenting issues are a sign of underlying relational processes and patterns that might even be unconscious (Liebowitz, 1986; Kaye, 1991). Ongoing emotional issues might not allow family members to approach business related issues. Marriage and family therapists can understand and intervene in these underlying issues and are particularly suited to guide discussions about controversial topics (Benningfield & Davis, 2005). Marriage and family therapists as family business consultants can assist in improving communication skills, giving value to each family member and, thus, promote an environment of healing. Most business consultants do not possess this specialized training and experience to help family business' owners deal with their family issues (Rodriguez, Hildreth, & Mancuso, 1999). Most of the traditional approaches to solve conflicts concentrate on relationships between separate parties without considering the unique complexities of long term relationships (Kaye, 1991).

Potentially, all family therapy models could be applied to understanding family businesses and can help inform a family business consultant. However, there are a few that have been published. Structural and Bowenian theories are the two most written about in this arena. They both appear to be useful in the understanding and mapping family businesses.

Friedman (1989) wrote one of the most in-depth and extensive descriptions of business dynamics using a Bowenian theoretical framework. Bowenian family systems concepts can help in the understanding of generational and sibling relationships which are crucial in family businesses. Swogger (1991) also applied this theory to understand and

assist family firms in generational succession. Benningfield & Davis, (2005) discuss how family therapists can use genograms and family maps to help families to represent their histories and foresee future possibilities of the family business. Deacon (1996) provides a thorough description of structural family therapy to understanding business dynamics.

There are few scholarly writings about in-depth theoretical explanations of business dynamics from an MFT perspective. Some articles written focus on specific issues faced by organizations and not, as it has been written from a transgenerational and structural perspective, about the organizational dynamics and processes as a whole. For instance, Kirschner (1992) used a comprehensive family therapy model to work with family businesses, specifically in the understanding of parent-offspring relationships. Almaturo (1996) used reality therapy/choice theory as a method to reduce conflict with families who work together.

#### Marriage and Family Therapy and Family Business Consultation: A Specific Niche

There is a difference between doing therapy and providing consultation. An important difference is the type of the relationship established with the client. Wynne, Weber, and McDaniel (1986) suggest that consultation implies a more collaborative way of relating with clients in terms of delineating the problem and considering alternative solutions. These authors also suggest that advice giving is common between a consultant and a client in contrast to therapy where advice is avoided.

According to Benningfield & Davis (2005), the main difference between consulting and therapy is the goal of the work. As a family business consultant, a family

therapist, in addition to focusing on how the family functions, must focus on how the family business functions. This implies attending to the interaction of multiple systems (McDaniel, Weber, & McKeever, 1983). The goal in therapy is to change present ways of interaction within the family system. In contrast, a family business consultant must focus on the business' performance and its interaction with relational dynamics within the family.

Consultants should understand the underlying processes and dynamics that sustain conflicts (Bloch, 1980) and have knowledge of family dynamics, alliances, sibling rivalries, myths and legends, secrets and rules, structure, functioning, and vulnerabilities (Kaslow & Kaslow, 1992). In addition, consultants need to be aware of the overlapping relationships that are formed in family businesses (Liebowitz, 1986) and tensions that emerge from combining the family system with the business system (Rosenblatt, Anderson, de Mik, & Johnson, 1985).

There is a need for marriage and family therapists in family business consultation. However this arena is not yet recognized as an important area of research and application of specific treatment approaches. Very few articles combining family business consultation and issues related with marital and family therapy have been published in marriage and family therapy journals. Those that have been published have been published in business or management journals.

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) published three issues of clinical updates for family therapists. From 1999-2007, there were 52 topics mentioned in these three publications but none of the topics dealt with family businesses.

### Formal Training: A Possibility to Provide Best Quality Services.

Regardless of the importance of family business in the global economy, formal education and research programs that specifically focus on family business are recently appearing (Lea, 2003). In 1998, the Nation's Business magazine identified that in the U.S. 20 universities had established some form of family business program within or affiliated to their business schools. Interest in family business studies began escalating in the 1990s. In this decade doctoral education in family firms emerged and rigorous empirical studies on family business took place (Hoy & Sharma, 2006).

Educational programs other than business do not offer specialized courses for graduate students who wish to pursue a career as consultants. There are few sources of information targeted to marriage and family therapists consulting family businesses. Further, there are no professional standards, no clear scope of practice or definition of statues or clear guidelines for marriage and family therapists to do consultation with family businesses (Benningfield & Davis, 2005).

According to Sperry (1996) clinical training programs do not train their graduates in organizational or clinical-organizational interventions. Most clinicians who consult businesses must gain their expertise through actual experience. There is very little opportunity for these professionals for training, reflection and supervision in clinical consultation to businesses. For Sperry, there is an important difference in knowledge that is acquired through only experience and that which is gained in addition to training, reflection and supervision. Lowman (1985) questioned if a clinical psychologist should present him or herself as an organizational consultant without having proper supervised

training without violating the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association. This rationale also can be applied to ethical standards of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). The AAMFT code of ethics states the following in regards to working in specialized settings (such as family business consultation):

While developing new skills in specialty areas, marriage and family therapists take steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from possible harm. Marriage and family therapists practice in specialty areas new to them only after appropriate education, training, or supervised experience.

(American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, 2001, 3.7).

The AAMFT's Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) specifies area VI (Additional Learning) for masters and doctoral programs. The objective of this specific area is to allow the student to gain knowledge in “specialized interest and background in individual, couple, and family therapy. Additional courses may be chosen from coursework offered in a variety of disciplines.” Specialized courses in family business consulting could be added to fulfill this requirement.

The field of psychology developed a distinct discipline to understand organizational behavior known as Industrial/Organizational (I-O) psychology. I-O

psychology is considered a scientific discipline that has added much to society's knowledge about work behavior (Hilgard, 1987). I-O field has contributed to the body of knowledge in general psychology in specific areas such as psychometrics, assessment methods, aptitudes, interests, motivation, fatigue, stress, group dynamics, leadership, ethnic and gender comparisons, and decision making (Katzell & Austin, 1992). Clinical psychology and I-O psychology are different specializations within graduate training programs in psychology.

I-O Psychology has a long history since its roots in the 1900's (Katzell & Austin, 1992) . Throughout this time it has gone through a process of development to the point that today it is widely recognized. Today, 171 universities in the United States alone offer specialized training graduate programs in I-O psychology (Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2009).

Training in I-O psychology adheres to an individual model since the underpinning theoretical approaches are behaviorism, neobehaviorism, gestalt, humanistic, and cognitive psychology (Koppes, 2003). I-O psychologists spend most of their time doing surveys, assessments, and problem diagnosis (Katzell & Austin, 1992). In the past decade is recognized by having an increasing recognition and empirical justification of the use of personality measures as useful and important tools in areas of selection, vocational counseling, and career guidance (Dunnette, 1998)

There are currently no established courses using family systemic theories to understand businesses, specifically family businesses. Therefore, the establishment of guidelines for MFTs to apply their specific training to helping family businesses appears to be a fruitful area of connection for family therapists.

## A Foundation to Build On

In 1986, the Family Firm Institute (FFI) was founded by family business owners, consultants and educators to create a network that provides its members the opportunity to discuss problems and challenges they might share. The FFI is committed to promoting contributions to practice and theory by publishing research, conceptualizations, and case studies in their journal, *Family Business Review (FBR)*. It also emphasizes on training opportunities offering an annual conference and organizing regional groups and workshops. Today, the FFI is formed by nearly 1500 individuals throughout the world. Its formation and growth shows a clear demand for education by professionals working with family business.

The FFI created a committee to identify knowledge areas needed by professionals working with family businesses. They determined three levels of expertise necessary for professionals working for family businesses in order to work effectively in the field: awareness, knowledge and skills. Professionals and consultants should attain the highest level of expertise and be skilled in their content areas (Hoy & Sharma, 2006).

The main goal for creating this body of knowledge was to provide guidance to educators in business schools in the development of curricula for graduate studies. The body of knowledge includes the skills and knowledge a competent family business practitioner must have in order to work effectively in the field of family business. The authors integrate existing and emerging knowledge about family businesses. This publication allows FFI members to expand their understanding of family business and promotes inter-disciplinary complementation in order to increase their effectiveness (FFI, 2000).

The FFI determines four main reasons for identifying a body of knowledge for family business professionals.

1. Family business is a distinct professional field that is growing and maturing. As a new discipline in development, it is important to gain recognition and credibility for which it needs to determine those knowledge areas that form part of this discipline.

2. The body of knowledge creates standards that guide family business professionals in the vital areas of knowledge necessary to be effective in the field.

3. The body of knowledge provides clients information on how family business professionals can assist them.

4. This body of knowledge is intended to help educators in business schools develop of curricula of graduate studies.

It is interesting to note that even though a multidisciplinary approach is discussed, one of the goals is targeted to curricula in business schools specifically. The possibility of developing specialized courses in other graduate programs such as marriage and family therapy is not expressed.

Family business as a field is comprised of diverse professions. Family business professionals have very different backgrounds and perform different functions for the family business clients. Professionals such as bankers, accountants, psychotherapists, insurance providers, financial counselors all form part of what is understood by family business professionals. This fact adds complexity to the creation of a body of knowledge. Each of these professionals defines themselves as family business advisors although their fields of practice are significantly different, they concentrate in different issues, have different goals, intervention styles and outcomes. The body of knowledge identifies the

areas that presently comprise the family business profession. According to the Family Firm Institute body of knowledge committee, all of this knowledge should be understood at least at some level by all professionals working in family business. A family therapist, then, should not only be skilled in family dynamics but should also be familiar with issues regarding the other areas such as the general issues of estate planning such as tax consequences. It is important, then to identify the level of inter-disciplinary knowledge that family business professionals should have. The Family Firm Institute committee established four main areas important for family business professionals to learn about: legal, financial, management science, and behavioral science.

The Family Firm Institute considers a multidisciplinary approach to consulting family businesses. In order to expand education in different disciplines, it provides its members with certifications in advising family businesses. Applicants must first determine the areas they wish to improve on by doing a “Self Assessment Matrix” which consists of a list of topics on the four core areas and a matrix showing the current level of knowledge and the desired level of knowledge. Once this has been filled out, the applicants must select a mentor. Mentors are experienced members who already hold a certificate. The applicant then completes a “Self-Assessment Activity” which consists of determining those areas he/she wants to develop in the following two years and how he/she will attain the goals set. The applicant then develops a “Learning Contract”. This contract consists of the formulation of specific learning objectives, plans for achieving these objectives (specific activities, readings, etc.) and the date of completion. In addition to this, the applicant must attend to a “Launching Pad” which is a seminar for

professionals new to interdisciplinary family business advising, to a Family Firm Institute seminar or course, and to two annual Family Firm Institute conferences.

This is a starting point to help professionals improve their skills and knowledge and for the family business consulting profession to assure a minimum level of expertise. However, there is not a standard curriculum for the different areas of knowledge and the applicant gets to determine what he/she is lacking and to evaluate the level of knowledge he/she holds. Further, the mentors come from diverse disciplines and they are not classified by professions. Even though the Family Firm Institute promotes a multidisciplinary approach, there is always an area of expertise.

No such mentoring system exists in the profession of marriage and family therapy. And if one did exist, it would likely include both coursework and supervised clinical practice. Also, while the Family Firm Institute seminars are typically offered once a year in Chicago, such a workshop paradigm, without supervised clinical practice is not within the standard of training typical of the MFT field. Further, at the present time there are no courses, determined course content areas or supervision standards for family business consultation within MFT.

### Conclusion

Family businesses are an important population that could benefit from marriage and family therapy consultation services. These businesses present specific issues. However, no consensus currently exists to inform family therapy training in this specific area. The present study is an attempt to address this need.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Overview

In the following literature review I will first address the fundamental aspects included in the education of marriage and family therapists and the major concerns that marriage and family therapists have had in regards to their training curriculum. I will then discuss how the fundamentals of the training of marriage and family therapists allows an understanding of the dynamics of systems other than families such as businesses, which makes family therapists well suited to work as business consultants. However, marriage and family therapists have not focused on the great potential this area has for their profession. I will detail the main family systems conceptualizations consultants have used for understanding organizational dynamics. I also will discuss the differences between doing therapy and being a business consultant. Finally, I will discuss the uniqueness of family businesses, their importance in the global economy, and how marriage and family therapy models can provide a useful framework to understand and intervene in this unique setting.

#### Marriage and Family Therapy Training

Marriage and family therapy (MFT) is a distinct professional discipline with graduate (masters and doctoral) and post graduate clinical training programs. Marriage and family therapists (MFTs) are mental health professionals trained in psychotherapy and family systems. These professionals are licensed to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders within the context of marriage, couples and family systems.

The core competencies a marriage and family therapist possesses allows him or her to understand the dynamics of systems giving balanced attention to individual, family, community, cultural, and contextual factors (American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, 2004). With this in mind, MFTs can apply their knowledge and expertise to understand the dynamics of organizations other than families. This latter alternative has not been thoroughly explored by MFTs. Further, training programs only focus on the application of MFT in clinical settings such as health care agencies or private practice.

In 1981, Winkle, Piercy, and Hovestadt conducted a Delphi study to develop a graduate level marriage and family therapy curriculum. To date, this is the only study that addresses marriage and family curriculum as a whole. These authors identified 101 specific course content areas. They grouped their findings in the following seven major areas: Theories and techniques of individual and group psychotherapy; normal/abnormal human growth and development/life cycle; specific theories and techniques of marriage and family therapy; topics related to marriage and family relationships; supervised clinical practice; ethics and professional development; and statistics and research methodology. Participants did not mention specific training for working in alternative settings and understanding larger systems.

Most evaluations of the MFT training curriculum have focused on specific issues such as preparing MFT students for managed care settings (Patterson, Baron, & McKintosh-Koontz, 1997), gender and power (e.g., Coleman, Avis, & Turen, 1990; Filkowski, Storm, York, & Brandon, 2001), sexual orientation (e.g., Long & Serovic, 2003), diversity (e.g., McDowell et al, 2002; Guanipa, 2003;), spirituality (e.g., Grams,

Carlson, & McGeorge, 2007), theory (e.g., Fish & Piercy, 1987; Crane et al, 2002; Deacon & Sprenkle, 2001) ethics (e.g., Piercy & Sprenkle, 1983) and supervision (e.g., McDaniel, Weber, & McKeever, 1983).

Family business consultation is a niche of potential and need of MFT professionals. This specific business setting is characterized with unique challenges that need to be studied and understood by future consultants. To date, however, there are no studies that address different roles and functions family therapists can play in business consultation. This hinders MFT professionals because they are not aware of the existence and potential of this area. Also, with no empirically examined data, MFTs have little research support to help them effectively work as business consultants.

#### Applying Marriage and Family Therapy to a Different Setting:

##### Business Consultation

Newman, Edwards, and Raju (1989) conducted a meta analysis of 126 studies that used organizational development (OD) techniques and interventions used to improve an organization's effectiveness and health (Beckhard 1967; Frenck, Bell, & Zawacki, 1978). They found that interventions that consider the individual within a system and the individual in relationship with others were more effective than those focused solely on the individual to effect changes in organizations. These results make sense from a systems theory perspective, and demonstrate the need of businesses to consult with professionals who are well trained in these theories and concepts.

An individual model sees the problem within the individual and dismisses the organization's dynamic (Liebowits, 1986). Family systems theory differs from

psychological theories in that, in addition to seeing the biological and intrapsychic systems of the individual, the whole system is perceived as a complex set of interrelationships.

Business consultants can apply concepts from different family systems theories (e.g., Ackerman, 1966; Satir, 1967; Bowen, 1978; Haley, 1971; Minuchin, 1974). Thus, the knowledge and skills that family therapists possess have the potential to add to the effectiveness of business organizations and give valuable insights to businesses in trouble by helping them identify dysfunctional relationships and resolving long-standing emotional issues (Borowick, 1986; Boverie, 1991; Davis, 1983). Their expertise and training in systemic theories and concepts uniquely equips MFTs with the basic skills needed to work as organizational consultants (Shumway et al, 2007).

Matheny and Zimmerman (2001) conducted a content analysis of 43 articles related with family systems theory applied to organizational consultation published between 1970 and 1998. These authors found that strategic constructs were the most discussed in-depth throughout the articles. They also found that there was a significant difference in the usage of this model and the author's background. They found that paradox constructs were used significantly more by MFTs than by any other professional group (psychologists, psychiatrists, residential nurses, medical doctors and social workers). Structural and Bowenian conceptualizations also were important frameworks discussed. There are, however very few articles or books written with in-depth analysis of business or family business dynamics from any marriage and family therapy theory. The ones that are most written about are Bowenian and Structural theories. This does not mean that these are the theoretical models that necessarily informs and guides the work of

family business consultants. This phenomenon can be analogous to the existing gap between clinicians and researchers. Although both recognize the importance of using science to guide clinical observation and using practical experience to inform science, these professionals do not tend to work together (Olson, 1981; Shwartz & Bruelin, 1983; Piercy & Sprenkle, 1986). Researchers and clinicians do not seem to exchange their ideas and work collaboratively (Stith, Barasch, Rosen, & Wilson, 1991). Family business consultants are in the majority focused on doing field work and their major concentration is providing consultation services, not doing research.

The same clinician – researcher gap and the recent recognition of this specialized field might be the reasons for not having extant scholar literature written on family business consultation from an MFT theoretical perspective.

There are several books written by family therapists about family businesses (e.g. Bork, 1993; Jaffe, 2000; McClendon & Kadis, 2004). However, since these books are directed to family business owners, the theoretical explanations offered are presented in a simple and pragmatic manner. They are not in-depth theoretical discussions.

Bowenian theory has a huge impact in different disciplines related with this emerging field. For instance, one of the core workshops offered by the Family Firm Institute (FFI) for family business advisors from any of the four main fields considered (behavioral sciences, finance, law, and management sciences) is on genograms. The genogram is used as a tool for gathering information about the family's history and relationships across generations. It also provides a map of the key people and their relationships, and offers an educational framework for exploring family system concepts with the families as part of the assessment and intervention phases of the consultation.

## Structural Theory as a Way of Understanding Business Dynamics

There currently exists little in the way of general theoretical analysis, application of specific models, and empirically tested and supported systems-based for MFTs to use for organizational intervention (Matheny & Zimmerman 2001; Shumway et al., 2007). As a response to this need, Shumway et al. (2007) developed a family-systems based model applied to organizations and used qualitative and quantitative methods to validate it. This model used concepts and principles of structural family therapy (Aponte & VanDeusen, 1981; Minuchin, 1974). Their idea was to create an intervention model that helps facilitate structural change by attending to the processes within the organizations. Their results show that there was a meaningful change between the initial assessment and the follow-up eight months later. These authors show how marriage and family therapists are well trained to understand organizational functioning and how to facilitate change in business organizations.

The structure of the family is what maintains the problems because the boundaries between the subsystems are either too rigid or too permeable, thus the hierarchies are unclear. The goal for structural family therapy is to make the family system functional by changing its structure. This can be obtained by realigning subsystems and creating hierarchical boundaries. Such restructuring clarifies boundaries, breaks coalitions and alignments, and redistributes power (Aponte & VanDeusen, 1981; Minuchin, 1974).

The fundamental concepts of structural family therapy can be applied to the understanding of the structure of businesses (Deacon, 1996). Businesses have hierarchies, coalitions and subsystems (Miner, 1988), thus the structure of businesses is similar to the

structure of families. Further, the organizational structure cannot be separated from the relational dynamics, thus the relational dynamics determines the organizational structure and the boundaries which differentiate individuals by the type of relationship more than by the simple nomination of the position (Hirschhorn & Gilmore, 1992). According to Deacon (1996), the structure of businesses has three main characteristics which can be explained from a structural perspective: hierarchy and power, subsystems and boundaries, and alignments and coalitions.

### *Hierarchy and Power*

All living systems tend to organize themselves in hierarchical order to separate the different parts of the system. A functional hierarchy establishes clear boundaries which maintain clear rules and roles between members (Minuchin, 1974). Like families, businesses are hierarchically organized (Kanter, 1984). Hierarchies are maintained by power (Deacon, 1996). In families, the different subsystems are characterized by a hierarchy of power where typically the parental subsystem is on top in relation to the offspring subsystem. According to structural family therapy theory, in healthy families, parent-children boundaries are both clear and semi-diffuse. This allows parents to interact and together negotiate the methods and goals of parenting with some degree of authority. A clear boundary between parental and offspring subsystems and having a parental subsystem that is sufficiently connected allows the children to have autonomous sibling interactions that produce socialization. This boundary should not be extremely rigid or aloof as to ignore the offspring's needs for support, nurturance and guidance (Minuchin, 1974).

In businesses, the executive subsystem is comparable to the parental subsystem, where leadership and power are key aspects in the creation of boundaries. The goal of consultation, then is to help restructure the organization's system along more healthy lines with balanced boundaries that create more functional relational patterns between members (Deacon, 1996).

### *Subsystems and Boundaries in Business*

The family's structure is organized by the ways in which its members interact. These interactions develop into patterns that determine how and when members should relate with each other. These relational patterns determine the subsystems and the way boundaries are established. The healthy family must have appropriate boundaries between the different subsystems: the family unit as a whole, parents, siblings, and the individual (Minuchin, 1974).

In businesses, there are subsystems determined by hierarchy. These subsystems at the same time involve other subsystems according to the expertise, salary, and specializations. Clear boundaries allow subsystems to carry out their functions and have clear communication between them. Either too rigid or too diffuse boundaries undermine communication and reduce productivity (Deacon, 1996).

### *Alignments and Coalitions*

Alignment is the joining of members of a system or subsystems for a certain purpose. When members align they form a temporary subsystem. These alignments sometimes cross subsystems. A coalition is a particular type of alignment where at least two members of a subsystem join and form a rigid boundary and exclude other system members (Aponte & VanDeusen, 1981; Minuchin, 1974). A consultant must observe

how members relate and how boundaries are set in order to understand the business' system dynamic and the source of conflict.

### Bowenian Theory as a Way of Understanding Business Dynamics

Friedman (1986) began introducing family therapy concepts to help his clients solve issues related with work. He soon realized a parallel between the emotional processes within the family and the workplace. The only difference he noted between these systems was the intensity of the emotional processes where the family system is more chronically intense. According to Friedman, there are four main concepts used by family therapists that can be applied to business consultation: systems thinking, leadership, transitions, and emotional interlock.

#### *Systems Thinking*

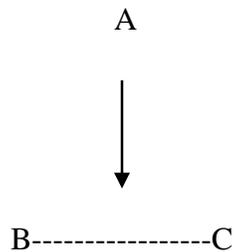
Marriage and family therapists as business consultants can help their clients change their perceptions by beginning to think in a systemic way about relationships and relational issues. Industrial psychologists, in contrast, work with an individual model. For example, when workers are not communicating well, these consultants may have them interact; when productivity goes down, these consultants look for different ways of motivating the personnel or recommend changes in the physical environment. An individual model of thinking is not as helpful as using systemic concepts of family emotional processes. Focusing on productivity alone will not bring symptomatic relief. Concentrating in the symptomatic issues will, on the contrary, create misconceptions of the problem and ultimately, may recycle the symptom (Friedman, 1986).

The notion of homeostasis is central to a systemic perspective and transcends the dynamics of individual models. Homeostasis explains the appearance of some issues in the work system such as why problems seem to appear without a cause and why they resurface constantly regardless of the best intentions to solve them, or why an incompetent and conflictive employee, who is absolutely loyal to the company and to keep doing things as they have always been done, is protected and, instead, an intelligent and creative worker who makes noise with new ideas may be more likely to be fired.

Friedman found that within companies, significant issues and dysfunctional symptoms appear within 6 months of a major change in the larger system. The changes and the symptomatic appearance are not necessarily obviously related. To understand that the appearance of an issue in an apparently unrelated area of the corporation could be the outcome of the disruption in the organization's homeostasis helps lessen the anxiety produced by the symptom, the apparent issue. The problems will go away if workers are not fed by reaction and anxiety. Further, lessening anxiety makes it more likely for one to come up with a workable solution.

When issues in the organization appear, the tendency is to focus on the content of those issues, for example, personality conflicts, productivity, punctuality, motivation, communication and cooperation. To focus on the content increases anxiety levels and allows the underlying destructive processes to continue unrevealed. If a business consultant teaches these systems principles to his or her clients he/she will focus on the emotional processes underlying the symptoms and not on the content of the symptom itself.

Emotional triangle or triangulation (Bowen, 1978) is a concept that helps operationalize the notions of homeostasis and process. An emotional triangle refers to three persons or parts of a system with a problem. From the position of A, it is not possible to alter the relationship between B and C.



Homeostatic forces will convert the continuous efforts of A to modify the relationship between B and C into the opposite of what is intended: trying to push them apart will attract them and trying to push them together will generate polarized positions. Thus, change in B and C can only occur when A's individual relationship with either or both changes. If A becomes responsible for the relationship between B and C, A will end up with the stress of the relationship or even of the entire system.

We are all part of triangles. What is stressful is to *be* triangled which means to be caught in the center of unresolved issues in the relationships of others. Once the system's dynamic is understood, the triangled position can be the most powerful point to promote change. Triangles interlock with other triangles. These interlocking triangles are the key to detecting how issues in one system or subsystem are related with symptoms in another system or subsystem.

In a work system, an overfunctioner is most likely to be considered the problem. An individual-based model focuses on the personality traits of the symptom holder or

identified patient. In contrast, a systemic perspective focuses on the nature of the system likely to produce such symptoms. Symptoms appear when there is an increase of the stress level of any executive regardless of his or her personality.

Friedman (1986) described the following organizational characteristics as those that most likely produce symptoms: Isolation from the general community or other similar types of organizations in the field; distance between the ruling body (board) and the workers; leaders that have low intense and interdependent personal relationships beyond their work system; chairmen or executives that are unable to take independent, well defined positions with clarity and vision. These factors create the ground for triangulation and can be applied in different levels: to the entire work system or to a subdivision of the system.

### *Leadership*

The higher up in the genogram (or organizational chart) a therapist can get, the more of the system she or he can affect. When there is change in the functioning at the top, the entire organization is affected systemically. Therefore, the overall health and functioning of any organization mainly depends on one or two people at the top of the organization. Leadership can be understood as an organic or even biological aspect of any organization. An organism tends to function at its best when its head is well differentiated. If the head is weak and unable to take a stand, anyone below who tries to take a stand will be in an eroded position. Those below the individual in this eroded position will sabotage this position by bonding with the weak head. Thus, a key aspect for good leadership resides in the leader's ability of self-definition and not, as an individual model would assume, his or her ability to motivate others. A systems

approach focuses on the leader's position in the system instead of in his or her personality traits.

Most leaders, when encountering a lack of response to changes he or she desires, tend to try harder to push this change. This will develop emotional processes into forces that stabilize the status quo and, on the contrary, enhance the symptoms. All leaders must face paradoxical resistance from their followers. Good leaders must not get distracted by active resistance. Followers will work to get leaders out of track when leaders are functioning at their best.

Most individual approaches to leadership focus on a continuum that goes from charisma to consensus. They do not resolve the paradoxes of resistance that are mainly caused by homeostatic phenomenon rather than to conflicts of personalities. A systems perspective of leadership does not create polarization between the leader and the follower, instead, it focuses on the organic nature of their relationship. Instead of focusing on the impact the leader and the follower have on each other, it focuses on how they function as part of one another as they are constituent parts of the same emotional system. The emphasis then is on how the leader functions within the system, where his or her self-differentiation consequently affects the followers due to the organic characteristic of their relationship. Self differentiation means taking responsibility of his or her position as the head of the organization and determining his or her own goals and self while staying in touch with the rest of the organization (Bowen, 1978). The ability to be a self and at the same time maintain being part of the whole system might be the most difficult task in any relationship system. This process will change the dependency that is underlying those tendencies to sabotage the leadership.

### *Transitions*

Family systems consultation can help an organization cultivate an approach to transitions that will lessen negative effects on newcomers, outgoers, and to the whole system. New relationships do not depend on the personalities of the parties but on the residues of any unresolved issues from the previous relationship that are carried over to the new one. In this sense, unresolved issues are transmitted from generation to generation (Bowen, 1978). These moments are crucial in producing modifications to future transitions and determine new directions of future flow.

A family systems approach to transitions and separation will reduce the effects of the residue left by the previous relationship and will enable the work system to be more objective in the selection of the new employee in order to have a relationship with a fresh start.

### *Emotional Interlock*

Emotional interlock refers to more than individuals simply having an effect on one another. The dynamic of this concept can be equivalent to electricity. The effects that work systems and family systems have in each other resides on the fact that they both run on the same energy, thus the energy is internal to the systems and not external.

These two systems are connected in such a way that their states of homeostasis unite to create equilibrium.

How does Business Consultation differ from Family Therapy?

The constructs used in family therapy can be applied to the understanding of systems other than families (Deacon, 1996). However, families and businesses are not the

same and its differences need to be taken into consideration (Borwick, 1986; Boverie, 1991; McClendon & Kadis, 1991; Merkel & Carpenter, 1987; Rosenblatt, de Mik, Anderson, & Johnson, 1990).

Families are permanent and membership is limited (Merkel & Carpinter, 1987). Commonly, family goals are related with member's self-worth, the development of personal and professional competence, and achieving feelings of comfort and of belonging together (Rosenblatt et al., 1990). Further, families are people oriented, focus inward and are self contained (Benson, 1990).

Businesses, on the other hand, have a determined lifespan, are in constant change with the economy and technology and have room for including more members (Merkel & Carpinter, 1987). The main goal for any business is to yield profits. In order to achieve this, it must have good credit rating, high priority among suppliers, productive employees, and a stable or growing share on the market (Rosenblatt, et al., 1990). Business systems are also task oriented, focus outside themselves, and thrive on change (Benson, 1990).

The differences between therapy and consultation are not clear cut or generalizable (Boverie, 1991; Merkel & Carpinter, 1987). There are several approaches to therapy that range from a traditional medical model to a postmodern and collaborative approach. This range implies an overlap in a series of dimensions between therapy and consultation. However, business consultation is not therapy (Deacon, 1996) and the general differences need to be discussed.

One of the major differences resides in the goals for each. In therapy, the goal is to improve family relationships. In business consultation, the goal is to improve

organizational functioning and the emphasis is to help advance organizational goals which may not necessarily imply the improvement of relationships (Boverie, 1991; Merkel & Carpinter, 1987).

Another important difference resides in the type of relationship that is established with the client. A consultant relates with his or her clients more as a colleague (McDaniel, Wynne, & Weber, 1986) whereas in therapy this type of relationship could be seen as an ethically questionable dual relationship. The AAMFT code of Ethics states the following in regards to this ethical issue:

Therapists, therefore, make every effort to avoid conditions and multiple relationships with clients that could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, business or close personal relationships with a client or the client's immediate family. When the risk of impairment or exploitation exists due to conditions or multiple roles, therapists take appropriate precautions. (AAMFT Code of Ethics, 2001, 1.3)

Relationships between a consultant and his or her client tend to be close and personal. The consultant positions him or herself as a colleague and an advisor. In contrast, a therapist tends to avoid relating with clients in this way (McDaniel, Weber, & McKeever, 1983). The therapist and client, on the other hand, maintain certain boundaries within the clinical setting. A consultant, for instance, can be invited to have dinner at his client's home, or to have a drink with business owners. A therapist would

not accept this interaction. This difference raises more profound differences in terms of professional identity and its relationship with ethics.

The issue of identity and its relationship with ethics is a complex and not yet established and is still a philosophical discussion (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2008). However, each professional's work is guided by the ethical codes determined by the association of his or her profession. In family business consultation this can be a gray area because due to the multidisciplinary essence, a variety of ethical codes apply simultaneously. Thus, identifying oneself as a business consultant points to a multiplicity of codes of ethical conduct. This can be a conflicting issue for MFTs working as family business consultants due to the new nature of the profession and the nonexistence of specific ethical codes of professional conduct for family business consultant.

Wynne et al., (1987) note the role of consultants and therapists as another difference. The core of consultation implies providing advice and an objective opinion targeted improvement, and innovation. Further, the scope of the consultant's work depends on the client. In contrast, therapy tends to avoid giving advice and the therapist tends to be the one (in different degrees) to define the direction of therapy.

Consultation has a more explicit educational component than therapy (Wynne et al., 1987). Although psychoeducational approaches to therapy use education, in consultation it is not insight oriented. In consultation education is the primary objective. In therapy, the educational aspect is secondary to the primary goal of deeper change.

Business consultation must focus on how the individuals function within the system as well as in the organization's overall functioning (Davis & Sandoval, 1991).

Consultants must take into consideration that due to the differences between the goals for both systems, what it takes to keep a business viable is not likely to be the same as what it takes to keep a family going. However, sometimes the goals of both systems are in harmony, as in creating a family business (Rosenblatt et al., 1990).

## Family Business: A Special Kind of Business

### *A Definition of Family Businesses*

Family business is about love and work and the relationships between the two (McClendon & Kadis, 1991). The two most significant systems of human interaction are the family or intimate system and the career or achievement system (Lynch, 1994). Family businesses are the interaction of these two systems (Davis, 1983). When these two systems combine, a new system is created. This joint system is unique since emotional issues related to the family are often obstacles to the effective operation of the business (Kets deVries, 1993). Further, this new system includes members other than family which adds complexity to the dynamics (Benson, 1990).

Flemons & Cole (1992) punctuate the importance of considering family businesses as a unity. They propose the term family/business where the slash implies a conceptual boundary where each term is defined in relation to the other. Family/businesses need to be understood within a context. It is essential to understand and take into account the contexts of both because they are key in the creation of meaning, they are socially constructed (relationally) and interpreted individually. They are contextualized (which makes paradox possible), and are constant in a world of change. Relational stabilities can thus change when one or more parts are altered.

Sharma, Chrisman, and Chua (1996), found thirty-four different definitions for family businesses in the family business literature. Although there is no consensus as to what uniquely defines family businesses, there is a general agreement among authors that the dimensions to consider in the definition are: the degree of ownership and management by family members, interdependent subsystems, and generational transfer.

In 1995, Astrachan and Shanker conducted research to determine the impact of family businesses in the U.S economy. Because they needed to begin with a clear definition of their object of study, they created three definitions that range from a more inclusive one to a more exclusive one. They created three concentric circles to represent their findings. The outer circle represents the most inclusive definition, which consists of some family participation in the business and control over the business' strategic direction. The middle circle narrows the inclusiveness by requiring that the business owner plans to pass the business to another family member and that either the founder or the successor participates in managing the business. The difference between the first definition and the second one is that the latter includes families who might have a role in the business, such as being part of the board but might not deal much with the day-to-day activities. Another important differential aspect is the owner's intention of future succession of the business which implies a long term vision and involves taking determined strategic decisions for achieving this goal. The third circle represents the most exclusive definition which includes businesses where multiple generations have a significant impact on the business.

According to Astrachan and Shanker (1995), The measurement of the impact these companies have in the economy varies according to the definition used. Using the

most inclusive criteria (i.e., some family participation in the business and control over the business' strategic direction), family businesses involve 89% of business tax returns, 62% of the workforce (82 million individuals) and 64% of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Using the most exclusive definition (i.e., businesses where multiple generations have a significant impact on the business), family businesses involve 11% of tax returns, 27% of workforce (36 million individuals), and 29% of GDP. Regardless of the definition used, family businesses represent a significant part of the U.S economy and have an extensive impact on the global economy.

According to Davis (1983), family businesses will continue being a powerful source in the global economy. Laws are supportive of family firms which make it easier to create and pass businesses throughout generations. This growing number of family businesses creates a challenge to develop more effective management and change technology to help them grow. This is an area where marriage and family therapists as consultants have a lot to offer since systems theory is recognized as the main conceptual foundation of modern approaches to organizational development (Beckhard, 1969; French & Bell, 1990).

### *The Bright Side of Family Businesses*

Davis (1983) conducted research with 40 family members of family firms and asked them to complete the *Family Environment Scale* which assesses eight different dimensions: cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement, orientation, organization, and control. He then compared these results with ratings obtained from members of non-family firms. The dimension that stood out was the achievement orientation of family firms. Further, McKlendon and Kadis (1991) found that family

businesses have an advantage over non family businesses because of their humane treatment of employees, strong community ties, commitment to quality that is tied to the family name, long term investment strategy in people and community, and quality of life focus which includes educational, cultural, and recreational activities.

Kets de Vries (1993) conducted in-depth interviews to over 300 executives of family businesses. He found specific positive and negative aspects to these organizations. On a positive side, these companies tend to have a longer term view of the business, better relationship with their employees, customers, community and other important stakeholders. This might affect positively the quality of their products. To have their name representing the business makes them more aware of their standing in the community and their reputation. Family members establish a certain culture in the business by the values they express creating a common purpose for the employees and establishing a sense of identification and commitment. In well run family businesses, all employees feel part of the family and have easy access to senior management which reduces bureaucracy and makes decision making more effective. Family members also have expertise in the business because they are in contact with the business from early childhood.

#### *Unique Challenges of Family Businesses*

There are certain specific aspects related with the emerging conflicts in family businesses that consultants need to take into consideration. Most family businesses are named after them, thus they represent the family in the community. This might lead the family to tend to protect their external image of well functioning and family cohesiveness, masking or ignoring the conflicts they might face (Kepner, 1983).

Family businesses might have difficulty defining authority and responsibilities clearly. In some families, the decision-making hierarchy is completely ignored and bypassed (Kets deVries, 1993). One of the keys for a family business to succeed is to have clear boundaries established (Bork, 1993). Family members must adapt to new and different boundaries at the workplace. The different boundaries and different roles and functions each member has in the business setting are likely to get confused with those they have within their family system. A structural therapist can help the family differentiate between these two systems by clarifying and strengthening the different boundaries and hierarchy that exist within and between these two systems (Deacon, 1996).

Nepotism can be an issue in family businesses since family businesses tend to welcome family members regardless of their ability to contribute to the business. A company with many of these unproductive family employees cannot survive. Further, it is unattractive for competent employees to work under an incompetent boss (Kets deVries, 1993). In addition, parents often avoid assessing their children honestly for fear of causing conflicts or hurting them (Liebowits, 1986).

Maintaining a cohesive family unit may become more difficult as generations spread out. A consultant can help prevent many of these issues by helping family businesses set clear roles, responsibilities, and rules. Such rules might include specific requirements for entering the business and what all must do, family members or not, to move ahead in the business. This can help family members prove that they are there due to their capabilities and not just because they are part of the family (Kets deVries, 1993).

## *Life Cycles*

Business and families go through predictable life cycles. Each of the stages that form part of the cycle presents different challenges for the individuals. Thus, individuals have different needs and tasks throughout the course of the cycle (McClendon & Kadis, 1991). According to Kaslow (1993), a family business goes through three stages. The first one is the first generation which consists of establishing the foundation of the business. There are differences in the types of foundations businesses have. Some organizations begin with brothers or father and sons or with a couple.

A second stage is the expansion phase. Different subsystems develop as the business grows. Managers who might not be part of the family might be hired. If money is needed, investors from outside of the family might also be included. There also can be changes within the family such as active members moving away or spouses joining the business. Further, divorce or remarriage might occur and in-laws might get involved (Benson, 1990). Many issues of the first fundamental phase that were either not addressed or dealt with appropriately begin to surface in this phase. The most common themes are: finances, job responsibilities and chain of command, and expansion operations (Kaslow, 1993).

The final stage is selecting successors. The process of change in systems implies a conflict of opposing tendencies: one tendency is to maintain the status quo, the other is to push towards change, leading to a new level of differentiation and integration. This latter process implies destabilization of equilibrium and the system appears to regress. Transition periods often involve new and different problems that must be solved, and new skills that must be met. Not all changes are the same. First order changes (change in

behavior but not fundamental rules) do not require major modifications in the ground rules with which the family functions and are related with the developmental life cycle of the family in relationship with the company. On the other hand, second order changes need a major change in orientation and expectations and the creation of new boundaries and rules. Second order crisis occur when the company grows to an extent of having to hire non family professionals, or when the company's stock is put on the public market or when succession needs to take place (Kepner, 1983).

In this last stage, multigenerational issues about power and loyalty (Boszormenyi-Nage & Spark, 1973) may appear. Most issues of justice appear in times of transition when "who gets what" must be determined. These issues lead several parent owners to sell the company before having to make such decisions. According to McClendon & Kadis (1991) this is an important time for therapeutic work to be done in helping the current generation reassess their ideas of justice and fairness.

Kets de Vries (1993) states that an effective succession planning allows everyone to know ahead of time who is next in line. It is difficult for individuals to accept their own mortality. Entrepreneurs might be afraid their successors will not respect the legacy or will destroy what they built. Further, the task of choosing among the children is a very difficult one because parents intend to treat their children equally. Children might also face some fear of abandonment and be fearful of the conflicts that will arise with siblings once the parents are not present to act as arbitrators. All these issues lead to procrastination or not dealing with these matters. Gender plays an interesting role in planning for succession. Many owners prefer to keep their daughters aside because they fear that when they get married, their spouses will want to take over. Further, the

daughters might change their name, which could disrupt the symbolic and emotional value of the name and the organizations. All these psychological issues are powerful emotional processes which affect the owner's judgment, thus it is fundamental for him or her not to be the only decision maker (Kets de Vries, 1993).

Brown (1993) discusses the importance of coping with loss while going through the process of succession. Usually there is a more intense reaction when change is sudden and significant. Sudden death or disability implies changes in three interrelated subsystems: family, business and ownership. For the family, the loss will affect emotionally and functionally. The firm will encounter issues in the leadership, anxiety will increase, and there will be changes in strategy or operations. As for the ownership subsystem, loss implies estate and wealth transfer.

#### *Relational Issues*

Specific relationship issues can be part of the dynamics of family businesses. The most common issues discussed in the literature are marital relationships, parent-offspring relationships, and sibling rivalries.

*Marital relationship.* The marital relationship between the founder and the spouse is the relationship where most of the family business' problems and their successful resolution reside (Liebowits, 1986). Marital relationships also tend to be strained since the social demands of the business often leave little time for the couple to be alone (Kepner, 1983).

Tension between spouses can arise due to hierarchy when one spouse has a higher rank and the other spouse feels that he or she has the right to be equal. Payment is another important issue, where wives tend to either not get paid or receive a reduced

salary for their work. This leads some women to feel neglected, disappointed, and unappreciated (Rosenblatt, et al., 1990).

*Parent-offspring relationship.* Cole (2000) conducted a qualitative study to learn about how family business members perceive that combining business with family affects their work and personal lives. Her results indicate that the most difficult relationship is the parent- child one. Many of the children hoped their parents would view them less as children and more as employees, managers, or co-owners. Rosenblatt, de Mik, Anderson, & Johnson (1990) also found that most of their participants reported tensions between parents and their children due to the different roles they played within the family and the business.

Parent-offspring conflicts frequently are related to the intent of the son/daughter(s) to become an independent person and depart from the parent's authority (Liebowits, 1986). Relationships between sons and fathers are different from the one daughters experience with fathers (Kepner, 1983).

The main conflicts that arise between fathers and sons focus around issues of control, power, and competition. This conflict is often related to the father's desire for the business to succeed, that his hard-won achievements not be undermined, and that his expertise is recognized and utilized. This conflicts with the son's conflicting desires for parental approval and autonomy (Rosenblatt, et al., 1990). The quality of relationship varies according to the respective life stages they are going through (Davis & Taigiuri, 1989). The psychological life stages that the father and the son are going through along with the family's history and the context of their relationship can affect the father and the son's perceptions of their relationship (Dumas, 1989).

Dumas (1989) found that daughters are not usually considered as potential successors since sons have traditionally been those to carry over this role. Daughters need more recognition of the importance of her contributions to the firm. According to Dumas (1990), daughters tend to take a paradoxical stance since they wish, on one hand, to take care of their father and, on the other hand, may need to take care of the business.

The personal and emotional relationships characteristic in family businesses often induce role conflicts in a greater extent than in non family businesses (McClendon & Kadis, 1991). Role conflicts can emerge due to the fact that family members have a different role in the different systems. This can create conflicts if a son, for example, takes a position of VP and his father, the CEO does not treat him as such and continues to play the father role he has in the family. Role conflicts may occur due to role definitions and boundary lines between these two systems (Freudenberger & Freedheim, 1989; McClendon & Kadis, 1991). These relationships can be a process that disables the offspring by fostering dependence, incompetence, or lack of confidence. Conflict may also arise when an offspring strives for independence, respect, and adult identity (Rosenblatt, et al., 1990).

An individual who grows up in a family business environment must work hard to differentiate him or herself from his or her parent's expectations. To develop one's identity and acting as an independent autonomous individual can be threatening to the family that depends on the family business for income, power, and prestige. According to McClendon and Kadis (1991) therapists as consultants must help individuals determine what is it they want without feeling the pressure of external influences.

*Sibling rivalry.* Sibling rivalries form part of the dynamics of parent-offspring relationships. Often times, issues between siblings are a symptom of deeper issues related with their relationship with their parents or with their parent's relationship (Kepner, 1983).

Sibling relational patterns are likely to be intensified in a highly interdependent working relationship (Liebowits, 1986). Sibling rivalry often diffuses as siblings grow up, separate and choose their own course in life. This is not possible when siblings join the family firm, many times due to parental pressure, leading family members to stay in greater contact with each other than they would have chosen for themselves (Kets deVries, 1993).

#### Analyzing Family Businesses

The threads of family and business are intertwined in such a way that the family's emotional issues are not always evident. The exhibited conflicts and emotional commotion that appear in a family business serve a function. They are also an expression of an issue within the system and thus, a signal that changes should take place (Liebowitz, 1986).

Due to the interdependence between the family and the business systems in family businesses, it is impossible to intervene in the business without affecting the family and vice versa. One of the key functions of a consultant is to help the clients manage the unique tensions that arise from being in two interconnected systems (Swartz, 1989).

Behard and Dyer (1983) state that families and businesses each have an identity and culture of their own and often have competing needs and values. As long as the founder functions well by being in his or her place and role, the total system is relatively

stable. Major decisions (e.g., to sell the business, to involve a family or non family member into the executive group, or the founder's imminent departure) serve as trigger events to create an ambiguous situation which can easily become chaotic. At this time, family members try to regain stability and more control and power over their own positions.

The interaction between the family and the business is core to family business analysis. This interaction implies that any major decisions in the family firm will have significant meaning not only within the business system, but will also affect the family system (Davis & Stern, 1988).

These parallel processes – one system over the other - are conceptualized as isomorphism (iso: equivalent; morphs: structures) in the family therapy literature. Minichin and Fishman describe how family interactions are isomorphic, thus the in-depth exploration of an event informs about the rules that govern the behavior of the family in other situations (Minuchin & Fishman, 1981). Events may differ in content but are identical in form due to the consistency in human behavior. Relational patterns observed in one context are isomorphic to other situations (Liddle, 1982).

There are several family businesses that work effectively. However, there are also many that are not able to handle the particular issues that arise when combining these two systems (Davis, 1983). There exists an emotional interlock between the family system and the work system. The family system is at the heart of the family business system tying the whole system with strong emotional and loyalty bonds. Chronic dysfunction within the family spills over into the business and may threaten the survival of the firm. A key to the success of a family business requires insight on behalf of the owners and an

understanding that change is a long term process. The goal of this process is to produce higher levels of differentiation between the members of the enmeshed system since enmeshment is the main obstacle to an effective business management (Davis, 1983). In family businesses, the work system can become as enmeshed as the family that runs it and there is an open pathway for issues in any of the systems to spill over to the other system.

Unresolved issues can be displaced from one system to the other, especially in family businesses. A key factor is the degree of differentiation at home or at work. The more enmeshed the system is, the less ability it has to avoid trespassing issues. Unresolved issues in work systems and in family systems can influence one another due to interlocking triangles (Friedman, 1986). According to Davis and Stern (1988), there are four main aspects that are essential for a successful family business: clear boundary definition, emotional containment, task adjustment, and legitimizing processes.

Business consultants may encounter these issues in their practice. The question is how to better approach them with the clients. These issues can be addressed by consultants using certain strategies. Imber-Black (1986) suggested specific approaches to intervene as a consultant.

#### Intervention Strategies for Family Business Consultants

. There are recommended intervention strategies for business advisors to provide consultation on the mentioned issues. According to Imber-Black (1986), there are several issues that a business consultant should address with their consultees before and during the negotiation of a consultation contract. It is important for the consultant to

learn about the timing of the consultation. The consultant should seek answers of the following questions: Why now? Who, of all the people involved, agree that the organization needs consultation now? For what purpose? Who disagrees about this need? Who has different viewpoints about the issues? If there was no consultation now, what do people imagine would happen? The answers to these questions give the consultant a frame of reference. The consultant can determine if this request is a way of maintaining the status quo, or an agenda for change, thus if it is a way of direct the attention to one issue as a way of diffusing the attention from other more serious and deep problems. It can also be an invitation for triangulation.

Imber-Black (1986) also states that the consultant also needs to know if there have been previous consultations, if the same members who are requesting consultation now were the ones consulting previously and what were the topics and results of previous consultations. These questions should be asked to as many members involved as possible, emphasizing that there is no formal contract yet. This will release the consultant from appearing as a threat to the status quo. The answers to these questions will provide the consultant with useful information about interactional and organizational issues, will frame the parameters for a potential consultation, and help avoid triangulation.

Once the consultation has been agreed upon, the consultant must determine the length and frequency of contacts and who should be involved. A thorough assessment must be conducted before determining any intervention plan. The assessment begins before the consultation has been formally determined and continues with more specific

areas. In this assessment, the consultant must distinguish between intrasystem issues and intersystem issues and then determine the best system to intervene.

Intrasystem issues refer to what happens within the organization. The consultant must focus on asking about the problem, the elements of the problem, who considers it a problem and who does not, how the organization has previously solved similar problems. The answers will give the consultant information about alliances, splits, myths, and client's expectations of the consultant. Another dimension of the intrasystem that the consultant needs to assess refers to the beliefs and ideals: how they view their organization and how congruent is this ideal view with the actual ways of interacting. A third aspect to assess is the system's preferred focus of blame of the problems it is facing.

Intersystem issues refer to other systems that operate in relationship with the organization. The consultant should assess how the clients view the relationship between the family and the business systems (as positive or negative). This will give the consultant a sense of how these two systems are involved. The consultant should also assess how the organization views its relationship with its clients, other organizations, and the community it serves. By examining these other relationships, the consultant can determine how others see the organization, how the organization believes it is seen by others, and ways in which these relationships affect the organization's overall functioning.

Consultation can be understood as a process of separating and connecting, creating and modifying context, thus changing the relationships within and between family and business. Family business consultants can help clients find markers to separate family and business contexts (for example, using first names at work). By using

relational and contextual concepts, consultants can reflect on their position in relation to their clients and how to connect to and separate from the family business (Flemons & Cole, 1992).

Liebowits (1986) recommends a goal-directed and future oriented family systems approach where the consultant formulates questions in such a way as to help create alternative situations allowing all family members to get involved as part of the problem. Imber-Black (1986) advises to interview and ask questions according to the principle of circularity (Selvini Palazzoli et al., 1980). Questions should be asked in a way as to provoke interaction and provide information to the consultant and to the participants. Aspects such as alliances and splits, triads, themes of overinvolvement, hierarchical arrangements, and escalating issues will become apparent. The questions asked and the answers may repunctuate the system's causal reality or may reframe meanings. To invite everyone's opinion with the questioning, puts everyone in the same level of ability to solve the issues introducing a sense of empowerment and responsibility in all.

According to Imber-Black (1986), the consultant should frame his or her tasks and opinions as "experiments" because it is more likely that people will try an experiment than follow directives. The consultant must design interventions using the organization's own language. Familiarity can be useful for introducing difference and change.

Conflicts in family businesses have a special quality. Conflicts between related individuals differ from those between nonfamily members because the latter ones will not have a relationship after the conflict is settled. Also, conflicts within the family system follow a circular dynamic pattern and the repetitive sequences maintain the conflict over

time, maintaining homeostasis. An essential aspect to help resolve conflicts and improve communication is to analyze the system's typical pattern. Finally, conflicts are often defensive reactions of one member to another and also may be mechanisms used to protect the system from a fear which represents a greater threat to the system than the ongoing disputes. A key to working through these conflicts is to unlock the underlying fears (Kaye, 1991).

### Family Business Consultation

Upton et al. (1993) in their research with 617 Family Firm Institute (FFI) members concluded that consulting in family firms is different than consulting in non family firms because the family dynamics, emotions, and conflict resolution form an important part of family business. Family business consultants need to maintain the balance between family and business concerns. Further, consulting is more personal in family businesses. These authors also found that the most common mistakes made by consultants in dealing with the family firms are their inability to understand family dynamics, focusing on symptoms rather than problems, and inappropriate communication with members.

The complexities of the family business system require the integration of insights from a variety of disciplines. The FFI recommends that business advisors be knowledgeable of four main areas: law, finance, management science and behavioral science. Family business consultants, regardless of their specialized background, should have awareness and exposure to concepts, skills and techniques in all of these areas in order to optimize their effectiveness as family business advisors. Further, consultants

should be knowledgeable about the specific ethical issues and challenges that they face as family business advisors.

Swartz (1989) emphasizes the importance of providing clients with multi-disciplinary expertise by doing consultation with a multi-disciplinary group. A consulting group provides consultants with support in areas they are not experts in. Because consultants need to have knowledge and experience in family dynamics and business management, the presence of two consultants, each with an expertise in one of the arenas of the client's struggle, can help the client develop a clearer vision of the overlapping systems, and legitimizes the importance of both systems. A consulting team also can model collaboration which clients can observe and learn from. Further, family businesses are usually highly reactive and complex, thus a consulting team can help handle high degrees of emotionality without losing objectivity. Marriage and family therapists are trained at dealing with these kinds of situations thus are valuable resources for family business consulting groups.

### Conclusion

Business consultation is an area where the expertise of marriage and family therapists is needed. Marriage and family therapists are trained to understand the dynamics and processes underlying issues organizations might face. This perspective adds a new and different dimension to the individual model used by industrial/organizational psychology.

Family businesses are a special kind of business with both, positive and negative, unique qualities. These businesses are growing and have an important impact on the economy, thus need special attention and trained professionals to help them succeed. This

growing population offers marriage and family therapists a rich arena to apply family systems theories and concepts due to the unique challenges they present.

Marriage and family therapists are trained in dealing with conflicts and understanding the underlying processes instead of focusing on the symptom or content. This allows structural change to occur which is deeper and more sustainable than trying to deal with the apparent problem. The MFT curriculum provides students with basic knowledge and expertise in family systems. However, there is a lack of training in particular areas such as business consulting and, particularly in understanding of the complex challenges that family business systems face. MFTs who wish to work as family business consultants need further and specialized training. While various writers speak forcefully about the process, at present there is no clear consensus among these experts regarding intent to include or emphasize teaching family business consultation in the field of family therapy.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

Although family business consultation is an area where marriage and family therapists can apply their expertise, there is no specific training for these professionals in this particular field. The research question that guided this study asks what components a course or course content in family business consultation for MFTs should have. The purpose of this study is to generate components for specialized training in family business consultation for marriage and family therapy graduate programs based on a consensus of the opinions of experts in family therapy and family business consultation. A Delphi method using mixed methodology was used to meet the goals of this project.

#### Mixed Methods

##### *Why Use Mixed Methods?*

*Mixed methods history.* Using both qualitative and quantitative methods in one research project and understanding this combination as a distinct research approach is relatively new in social and human sciences (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007).

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, quantitative methods and a positivist paradigm dominated most methodological orientations (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). During this time, there were several studies which used interviews and observations in addition to the traditional experimental studies (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939; Warner & Lunt, 1941). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) define this period as the first phase in qualitative research and define it as the “Traditional Period”. At this time, ethnography was not seen as scientific where “only laws and generalizations are scientific facts, and

field work consists only and exclusively in the interpretation of the chaotic social reality...” (Malinowski, 1919/1944, p. 328 quoted in Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

As a critique to positivistic premises, during the period between 1950 and 1970, a postpositivist paradigm (e.g., Hanson, 1958; Popper, 1935/1959) arose. This time was also a time where the first explicit mixed methods design emerged. In Psychology, Campbell and Fiske (1959) proposed the “Multitrait/Multimethod Matrices” which is the use of diverse methods to measure one same trait in order to assure that the changes observed in the trait were not due to the method. This convergent validation has later been called “triangulation”.

During the 70’s and the 90’s, qualitative methodology grew in popularity and achieved legitimacy in the social and human sciences (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007). At this time, alternative paradigms also grew in popularity, especially constructivism and discussions about triangulation were introduced giving rise to important mixed methods studies (Teddlie & Tahsakkori, 2003).

In 1978, Denzin introduced the term triangulation meaning the combination of different data sources to study the same phenomenon. He distinguished four types of triangulation being methodological triangulation one of them. By methodological triangulation he meant the use of multiple methods to study one phenomenon (Denzin, 1978).

Within the last decade, mixed methodology has developed as a distinct discipline with basic terms and definitions and typologies of research designs (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Teddlie & Tahsakkori, 2003). The use of mixed methods has been critiqued by paradigm “purists” who stated that qualitative and quantitative methods have

incompatible underlying paradigms (Teddlie & Tahsakkori, 2003). To counter this incompatibility thesis, Howe (1988) proposed pragmatism as the underlying paradigm of mixed methods. Other mixed methodologists advocate for the transformative-emancipatory paradigm as a foundation (Mertens, 2003).

*Defining mixed methods designs: Advantages and disadvantages* Mixed methods designs refer to the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data in concurrent or sequential phases. According to the type of questions asked and the type of inferences made at the end of the study, mixed methods can be predominantly qualitative or quantitative (Teddlie & Tahsakkori, 2003). The combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis can be made within one study or among several studies in a program of inquiry (Creswell, 2002).

Several books, book chapters and articles were written about research using this type of method. They might be difficult to find because they are distributed in many journals and books (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007) and there is a big range of terms that have been used to refer to the use of mixed methods such as integrating, synthesis, qualitative and quantitative methods, multimethod, and multimethodology (Creswell, 2002). Recent researchers adhere to using the term mixed methods as defined by Teddlie & Tashakkori (2003).

There are several advantages in conducting mixed methods research rather than a single method. The method used depends on the research question, thus there are research questions that can only be answered by using mixed methods. Mixed methods can simultaneously answer confirmatory and exploratory questions, thus generate and verify theory in the same study (Teddlie & Tahsakkori, 2003). Mixed methods are also

helpful to better understand and make inferences about complex social phenomena (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). Combining qualitative and quantitative data in research can help neutralize some of the disadvantages or limitations that a certain method might have. Qualitative data can provide details that give new meaning and insight to quantitative data (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutman, & Hanson, 2002). Quantitative and qualitative data do not always converge; they might lead to different or even contradictory conclusions (Erzberger & Prain, 1997). These contradictions can then lead to reexamine the existing conceptual frameworks and the underlying assumptions. According to Johnson and Turner (2002), exposing these contradictions is a fundamental principle of mixed methods.

The fundamental advantage of using mixed methods is the quality of inferences that can be drawn from analyzing the data. Teddlie and Tashakori (2002) differentiate between results of data collected and inferences. The latter are based on the interpretations of the researcher which expand on the obtained results. These interpretations are made within a determined cultural context, thus the same results may lead to different interpretations by different researchers in different cultural contexts.

## The Delphi Method

### *Historical Background*

The Delphi method was developed at the beginning of the cold war by Olaf Helmer and Norman Dalkey (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). These two researchers worked for the Project RAND (an acronym for Research and Development) which was established by the Air Force to create a report on the future technological capabilities that

might be used by the military. They needed to forecast the impact of technology on warfare. Helmer and Dalkey developed the Delphi as a tool for forecasting future events using a series of questionnaires combined with controlled opinion feedback. Participants were selected experts in the issues related to national defense. These experts were asked to give their opinion on the probability, frequency and intensity of possible enemy attacks. They could then anonymously give feedback to the responses of the other experts. This process was repeated several times until a consensus emerged. (Dalkey, 1969; Dalkey & Helmer, 1963).

Traditional methods of pooling opinion have certain weaknesses which the Delphi had to overcome. When pooling opinions, dominant individuals can influence other participants, communication can be irrelevant and biasing, there can be group pressure for conformity, and experts can be reluctant to abandon their previously stated opinions (Dalkey, 1972; Fowles, 1978; Gatewood & Gatewood, 1983). In order to overcome these shortcomings the Delphi method consists of anonymous group interaction and responses and is a process that consists of multiple rounds of data collection with researcher-controlled statistical group responses and feedback (Cochran, 1983). Therefore, anonymity reduces the effect of dominant individuals, controlled feedback reduces irrelevant communications, and the use of statistical procedures reduces the group's pressure for compliance (Dalkey, 1972).

#### *Philosophical Assumptions*

Helmer and Reshcer provided a philosophical base for forecasting in an article written in 1959 called *On the Epistemology of the Inexact Sciences*. In this article they argue that in new fields that have not yet developed to the point of having scientific laws,

the testimony of experts is permissible. Thus, the Delphi method recognizes human judgment as legitimate and useful inputs for generating forecasts.

Scheele (1975) applies the ideas of phenomenologists such as Husserl, Merleau Ponty, and Heidegger as the underpinning philosophy and epistemology of the Delphi method. The Delphi technique can be understood as a way of constructing a reality through the group's interaction. Participants produce a common reality through their interaction of ideas. According to Scheele (1975), the production of a common reality as a result of expert participation is the most important outcome of the Delphi inquiry.

#### *Procedures of a Traditional Delphi Method*

The Delphi method consists of a series of rounds which are interspersed by controlled feedback. The objective is to gain the most reliable consensus of opinion of a panel of experts. This method is one of the most effective means to facilitate communication between experts of a field because it allows effective discussions about a topic without having to meet in one location (Fish & Busby, 1996).

The Delphi is a process to gather information from experts and find consensus among them. The traditional Delphi consists of several distinct phases and iterations of responses. Generally, three rounds are considered sufficient to obtain constancy in the responses (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

In the first phase the researcher designs a questionnaire with open ended questions and sends it to the group of expert respondents. This phase is exploratory in nature thus each participant may contribute with any additional information they feel is pertinent. This first round is called the Delphi I. Once the questionnaires are returned, the researcher summarizes the results and develops a new questionnaire. The researcher

eliminates redundancy in the responses and, if necessary, categorizes the responses. The second questionnaire is called Delphi II and usually includes a 7-point Likert scale for participants to evaluate each item. The researcher then sends this new questionnaire to the respondents who evaluate each item and return their responses to the researcher. In this second phase, the researcher reaches an understanding of how the group views the issue, and where they agree and disagree. The third phase, Delphi III, usually deals with the disagreements found by the different points of views of the participants. In this phase, the respondents have the possibility to reevaluate his or her initial answers based upon the examination of the group's response. This phase is useful for participants to explore and clarify their responses (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

#### *Strengths and Weaknesses of the Delphi Method*

There are certain aspects that the researcher needs to take into consideration when conducting a Delphi study. These are potential issues that if attended can make a difference in the outcome.

Overspecifying the structure of the Delphi might hinder the contribution of different perspectives and the researcher might be imposing his or her views and preconceptions about the problem at hand (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Also, poor techniques of summarizing and presenting the group response and making sure that the participants share interpretations of the evaluation scales used in the questionnaire can cause misleading results (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

Significance can be sacrificed for consensus when the questionnaires are not constructed creatively, or if the categories created by the researcher are too broad (Fish &

Busby, 2005). Further, ignoring and not exploring disagreements generates an artificial consensus (Linstone & Turoff, 1975).

When too many iterations are conducted, respondents tend to change their answers to become more similar to the group mean. On the other hand, this is essentially the movement toward consensus that the method seeks. There are also advantages to sending only one questionnaire with the group's mean (Fish & Busby, 2005). Too many iterations may also cause response exhaustion and, ultimately, drop out (Keeney, Hasson, & McKenna, 2005).

This method requires high levels of time commitment on behalf of the participants, thus they need to realize and feel that they are partners in the study because each round is entirely based on their responses. Gaining commitment of the participants and providing clear information on how the study will be implemented can help the respondents feel ownership on the study and reduce drop out rates (Keeney, et al., 2005).

#### *Diffusion of the Delphi and Its Use in the Field of Marriage and Family Therapy*

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Delphi methodology propagated to various fields such as health, education, psychology, sociology, political sciences, and transportation (Fish & Busby, 2005). This technique was first used in the field of marriage and family therapy by Sam Cochran who used his experience in the RAND Corporation and applied it to psychology. In the late 1970s, Cochran was a committee member of the first family therapy dissertation using the Delphi technique. This dissertation had the goal of getting consensus of opinion about a model of marriage and family therapy curriculum (Winkle, Piercy, & Hovestat, 1981). Since then, the traditional technique, as well as modifications of it, has been used in other studies in the family therapy field. Modified versions of the

Delphi eliminate the third phase because of the tendency of participants to drop out (Fish & Busby, 2005).

### The Present Study.

#### *Rationale for Mixing Methods*

I mixed qualitative and quantitative methods as a way of triangulating information. Triangulation allowed me to obtain more in-depth information and also to analyze differing perspectives. Mixing these methods allowed participants not only to learn about other possibilities, but also to discuss and exchange their ideas. This exchange helped enrich the data I was able to gather.

#### *Rationale for Using the Delphi Method*

The Delphi method is well suited for achieving consensus on issues where none previously existed (Keeney et al., 2005). This communication process can be applied to the development of curriculum (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). In this particular study, this method is specifically applicable since there is nothing written on the subject and we only have expert's experiences to rely on. Through this method I can create interaction of ideas between these experts who are dispersed throughout the county and obtain a level of consensus among these experiences.

#### *Rationale for Using Qualitative Methods*

The Delphi method aims to reach consensus among expert panelists. A focus on consensus can eliminate opposing viewpoints and differences of opinion. These differences of opinion can provide valuable information (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). This limitation may be overcome by including a qualitative aspect to the Delphi method.

Also, qualitative methods are well suited in exploratory studies (Gilgun, 1992) such as this particular research.

### *Sampling Procedures*

The panelist's knowledge is the key element to assure a high quality outcome of the Delphi method (Dalkey, 1969). For this reason, participants were purposefully selected according to their expertise and knowledge in the subject matter instead of by a random process.

For the purposes of this research selected participants met both of the following criteria:

1. Participants had specialized training in MFT. They had either graduated from an MFT program or had the necessary training and experience in MFT in addition to their primary profession (i.e. psychology or social work). This second alternative was defined by being an LMFT.
2. Having at least 5 years of experience providing consulting services to family business.

Since there is no database of marriage and family therapists (MFTs) who work as family business consultants, I selected my participants by identifying MFTs who have published articles or book chapters related with family business consulting. I also searched the internet for family business consultants and selected those that fit the selection criteria. I also contacted professionals with this background referred by the consultants of Family Business Forum at Virginia Tech and used the snowball technique by asking interested participants to give referrals.

I contacted 25 potential participants by e-mail (Appendix B) who, according to the information I had, met the criteria. I received 14 responses, 12 did not respond to my e-mail. Of those 14, 3 said they did not meet the criteria because they did not do family business consultation and one declined the invitation. This left me with my final 10 participants. Given the small universe, 10 participants appear reasonable to address the research question guiding the present study.

### *Data Collection and Analysis Procedures*

The present Delphi study consisted of three consecutive phases. Each phase provided data that were used to create an instrument to collect data from the subsequent phase. The final product of the data analysis was a model course content for family business consultation. Table 1 summarizes how these three phases interrelate in their data collection and analysis procedures leading to the creation of the course content which is the main purpose of this study.

#### *Phase I: Semi-Structured Interview*

*Data collection procedures.* As in a traditional Delphi study (Linstone & Turoff), the first phase of this study was exploratory in nature. In this initial phase I first contacted my 10 participants via e-mail and set up appointments to have a semi-structured interview (Appendix C). The objective of this interview was to explore the participants' perceptions of the core areas of a training program in family business consultation for marriage and family therapists.

A review of the existent literature allowed me to predetermine the following nine areas to consider including in a curriculum for MFTs in family business consultation:

1. Specific Issues faced by family businesses
2. MFT theories that guide consultant's work
3. Other aspects (disciplines or specific areas) consultants should be knowledgeable of
4. Differences between consultation and therapy
5. Ethical issues consultants tend to face
6. Research (specific issues, topics or methodologies)
7. Practicum
8. Supervision
9. Bibliography

These areas, previously identified in the literature, served as sensitive concepts for many of the questions that I used in the second phase of the study. Table 2 shows the areas I predetermined and the rationale I used to select each of them.

Table 1

*Data Collection and Analysis in the Three Delphi Phases*

DELPHI PHASE	DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT	TYPE OF DATA COLLECTED	DATA ANALYSIS	PRODUCT
PHASE I	Semi-structured interview	Qualitative	Summarization and categorization	On-line questionnaire
PHASE II		Quantitative	IQR and Median Merge	
PHASE II	On-line questionnaire	Qualitative	Summarization, categorization, and comparison with data from previous phase.	Wiki
PHASE III	Wiki	Qualitative	Summarization, categorization, and comparison with data from previous phases.	Model Course Contents

Table 2

*Predetermined Curriculum Areas and Rationale Used to Create Questions in Semi-Structured Interview*

PREDETERMINED AREAS	RATIONALE
specific family business issues	Family businesses appear to face unique challenges.
MFT theories applicable to family business consultation	There is a lack of literature on best MFT theories to apply.
Extent and specific content of multidisciplinary knowledge	The Family Firm Institute established four core areas for family business consultants to be knowledgeable of (behavioral sciences, management science, law, and finance).
Differences between consultation and therapy	Consultation appears to differ from therapy. MFT students should be aware of these differences.
Ethical dilemmas specific to family business consultation	Ethical issues are an important aspect in the training of MFTs.
Practicum	Practical experience is important aspect in the training of MFTs.
Supervision	Supervision is important aspect in the training of MFTs.
Research	Being this an emergent field, standardized

	guidelines appear to be needed. These can be obtained through research.
Bibliography	Students need to have access to good bibliography.

I asked the participants their feedback regarding these areas and if they thought I should add or eliminate any. Participants were free to contribute any additional information they felt pertinent.

I also used this interview as a way to get to know the participants personally and to highlight the importance of their participation. Hopefully, this created commitment in the participants and helped reduce the possibility of dropout.

*Data analysis procedures.* The outcome of this first phase was the creation of an on-line questionnaire. Therefore I focused my data analysis on the importance of the areas I had selected and any content for each area that participants might provide.

The responses to the interview main question were short and concise (e.g., important area to consider in a model curriculum: yes/no). However, some panelists developed each area further providing me with emergent data (themes not found in the literature review) to include in the construction of the final questionnaire. I summarized the data provided and included all of the new themes in the on-line questionnaire. I eliminated redundancy in the response by clustering similar responses into one theme. I included all the possibilities proposed by the panelists in the on line questionnaire to allow these ideas to be considered by the panelists to explore the degrees of consensus from other participants regarding these specific themes. Not all the participants commented beyond the main question asked (which required a yes/no answer regarding the main areas I mentioned) and not all the participants commented and amplified on the same areas. Table 5 (in Chapter 4) shows the detail of content areas that were provided by participants. The outcome of this analysis was the generation of an on-line questionnaire (Appendix D) which was applied in Phase II of the Delphi.

## *Phase II: On-Line Questionnaire*

*Data collection procedure.* This second phase, the on-line application of the questionnaire, was based on the data gathered in Phase I (the semi structured phone interview) and that obtained from a review of the literature on family business consultation.

The questionnaire consisted of nine general questions (one regarding each area). Each question was composed of several alternative answers, each to be answered in a 7 point Likert like scale. Participants also had space to make comments on the general questions or their alternative answers and to add any other alternative answers that were not included. These additional spaces allowed participants to expand on their ideas about the content areas that should be included in the model curriculum.

*Data analysis procedure.* An analysis of this phase allowed me to determine emergent themes, the degree to which the participants agree and disagree on the different topics, and topics which had a wide range of opinions. I analyzed the quantitative and qualitative data separately and then merged both analyses to determine the contents for the wiki.

*Quantitative data analysis.* The quantitative part of the questionnaire was analyzed by calculating medians and interquartile ranges (IQR) for each item. Medians provide information on the central tendency of the responses, showing where most of the items fall on the agreement-disagreement scale. Medians also inform about the type of distribution. A median of 4, for example, would show a skewed distribution towards the high end of the scale. This is important information in analyzing the degree of consensus in each item.

The IQR provides information about the range of scores that lie in the middle 50% of the cases, thus it informs the reader about the consensus of the responses on a particular item. The IQR reflects the variability in the data without being affected by extreme scores.

Generally, the level of consensus is determined according to that established by Binning, Cochran, and Donatelli (1972) to ensure that the items that formed part of the final profile are those considered most important by the participants. The items selected are usually those that receive a median of 6.00 or more and an IQR of 1.5 or less. Because of the infancy of the field, I wanted to be more inclusive in my final profile. Thus I selected the items that received a median of 5 or more and an IQR of 2 or less. I also was interested in learning about the items in which panelists' opinions were controversial. To obtain this information, I selected the items that had an IQR of 3 or more.

*Qualitative data analysis.* I analyzed the qualitative data provided by some participants through their comments or addition of other alternatives. The qualitative data obtained in this phase was not thick because not all participants included comments and not all questions had comments or alternatives added. I summarized the comments made by the panelists to eliminate redundancies and created themes. I then compared these themes with those found on the first phase to detect any patterns. This comparison allowed me to have a clearer understanding of the final profile provided by the quantitative analysis.

*Merging qualitative and quantitative analyses.* The quantitative data analysis allowed me to detect content areas where there was no consensus among panelists. The

qualitative data provided by panelists allowed me to obtain content areas that were not present on the questionnaire. The combination of both sets of data provided me with information about elements to include in final profile, elements where no consensus was reached, and new elements to take into consideration

The final analysis of this phase allowed me to create the main topics to be posted on the wiki (Appendix D). There were several aspects that met the criteria to be included on the wiki (controversial opinions and/or need for further information). However, I needed to select some because, on one hand, the wiki could not be too long since it would take too much time from the participants and on another hand, I needed to select aspects which would be of interest to my participants. Since the wiki was time consuming because it required of constant participation from the participants, commitment was a key element. I thought that participants would be more committed to themes they found interesting. Selecting few and interesting topics would increase the possibilities of participation. Table 3 shows the underlying rationale of the selected questions to be included in the wiki.

Table 3

*Selected Questions and Rationale*

SUMMARIZED WIKI QUESTION	RATIONALE
<p>Importance of structural family therapy theory in family business consultation</p>	<p>The quantitative analysis showed low consensus among panelists in regards to the importance of structural family therapy theory. This information is contradictory with the literature which reveals this theory as important to the understanding of family businesses.</p>
<p>Difference between therapy and consultation: Depth of work and therapy outsource.</p>	<p>There was disagreement among panelists about the depth of work a consultant should do. This theme seems important to better understand the differences between therapy and consultation.</p>
<p>Examples of dual relationships as ethical issues.</p>	<p>Panelists agreed that this was an important aspect to consider. Since the objective of this study is the creation of course content, examples of this important issue can provide material to create case studies.</p>
<p>Assessment tools</p>	<p>Panelists agreed on the importance of using assessment tools in their work. However, they did not mention which were used. In</p>

	order to create the content for a course, this information seems important.
Supervision	Panelists agreed that supervision was ideal but unrealistic. Because it would be ideal, a model curriculum should include supervision. Allowing a discussion on this topic might raise interesting alternatives and ways to provide supervision to students.
Challenges and learned lessons in the creation and administration of their family business consulting business.	Creating and managing a business as a family business consultant was an emergent theme from the qualitative data of the second Phase. Asking panelists to share their experiences will provide information to consider as content of a course in this subject.
Bibliographical suggestions on finance and law.	Finance and law were detected as important areas a consultant should be knowledgeable of. However, information about resources and specific aspects of disciplines to include was lacking.

### *Phase III (Wiki)*

*Data collection procedures.* A wiki is an online database that allows users to create and edit the content of a web page. Wikis are used to create collaborative websites where users can write documents in collaboration with one another. Wikis can be open to the general public or made private (ct., Wikipedia).

This last phase consisted on the use of a private wiki space to support and encourage an interaction of ideas between the participants around issues that were controversial or that needed more in-depth information to better understand. It allowed a group discussion on specific findings of interest based on the previous phases.

I gave participants a link to a wiki and asked them to comment on each question posted and/or to comment on comments posted by other panelists. Panelists were free to respond to as many questions or comments and as many times as they wished. I did not intervene during the process until the end. After two days had passed without any new postings, I revised all the data collected. There was one question posted by a participant which had no responses. I posted a comment as to encourage a response.

The wiki step provided rich data that I used to better understanding the final profile findings and its implications for a curriculum to teach family business consultation to MFTs.

*Data analysis procedures.* The data gathered in this phase were qualitative. The nature of the wiki allowed participants to elaborate on the topics presented providing more in depth data in relation to the previous phases.

I began the analysis of these data by synthesizing it into manageable elements according to the categories I had selected (the main areas considered: theoretical

understanding of family businesses, consultation vs. therapy, ethical issues, assessment tools, supervision, managing your own business, and bibliography). I used these categories to guide the exploration of data and perform an analysis of the themes that emerged. I coded the discussions and identified themes by analyzing recurrent ideas and looking for patterns in the data. I then analyzed the interrelation between themes to have a clearer idea of the content of the areas in question.

This phase provided me with a clearer understanding of emergent data and emergent concepts. The thematic analysis allowed me to examine and understand emergent themes from these codes. It also allowed me to confront similarities, differences, and find patterns by finding a degree of consistency of meaning among them. This analysis resulted in some new coded categories. It also provided important explanatory data to better understand the thinking of my panelists on important selected topics.

#### *Putting it All Together: Merging Qualitative and Quantitative Data*

The last step of data analysis consisted on merging the results obtained from both the qualitative and quantitative datasets in order to develop a complete picture of themes to include in a model course components for MFTs in family business consulting.

There were several questions that guided the analysis of both datasets: to what extent do the qualitative and qualitative data converge? How and why? To what extent do the same types of data confirm each other? To what extent do the open-ended themes support the quantitative results? This analysis allowed me to create the content of courses in family business consultation (Appendix G).

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The present study was designed to create a model course curriculum for MFTs who wish to pursue a career as family business consultants using the Delphi method. The purpose of this chapter is to report the results of the study. Due to the mixed methods research design, the qualitative and quantitative findings for each phase are presented separately. I will then present a final analysis that consists of the integration of the results of all three phases.

Demographic information on each of the expert panelists involved in this study is provided in Table 4. A total of ten participants agreed to form part of this research. All of these panelists are family business consultants and have specialized training in marriage and family therapy. Three of the panelists work primarily in academics. The other seven participants work exclusively in family business consultation.

I obtained consent from all participants of this study to disclose their identities. Given that the results of this study are dependent on the participants, it is important to know more about them. The panel of experts was composed by the following professionals:

1. Anna Beth Benningfield: Dr. Benningfield has 12 years of consultation experience. She was trained to work with families and larger systems as part of her MA and PhD curriculum in psychology. She further specialized in family business consultation by attending to the AAMFT Summer Institute (twice) in Family Business Consultation, workshops at conferences at AAMFT and also the Family Business Institute.

2. Harlene Anderson: Dr Anderson has more than 20 years of experience providing consultation to family businesses. She is a psychologist and a LMFT. She is a consultant, clinical theorist and author. Among her many awards are the prestigious 2000 *Outstanding Contribution to Marriage and Family Therapy Award* from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and the 1998 *Lifetime Achievement Award* from the Texas Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

3. Joseph J. Horak: Dr. Horak has 20 years of experience providing consultation to family businesses. He holds a PhD with MFT concentration and 13 years of training at Family Therapy Associates in Ann Arbor post degree. Dr. Horak is a Licensed Psychologist and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Clinical Member and Approved Supervisor in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and a Member of the American Psychological Association. Joe is also a past President of the Michigan Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and was appointed by the Governor to the Licensing Board for Marriage and Family Therapy, where he served as Chair. In 2004, he was appointed to a three year term on the AAMFT Ethics Committee and in 2006 he served as Chair and from 2007-2009 he served on the AAMFT Elections Council. In recognition of his professional contributions he has been awarded the All University Graduate Research and Creative Scholar Award from Western Michigan University, the Divisional Contribution Award from AAMFT and in 2003 he received the highest honor a practitioner can receive from the AAMFT, the Professional Practice Award. Dr. Horak is also the President of C.A.S.E. Worldwide, Family Business Advisors, L.L.C..

4. Andrew D. Atwood. Dr. Atwood has 13 years providing consultation to family businesses. He is a LMFT and since 1980, a LMSW, and a pastoral counselor. His main occupation for more than 30 years is marriage and family therapy. From 1986 to 1997 he served on the State Licensing Board for Marriage and Family Therapy.
5. Brian Distelberg: Mr. Distelberg is a PhD candidate at Michigan State University in family therapy and he is doing his dissertation on Family Businesses. He works as a family business consultant for 5 years now.
6. Patricia Cole: Dr. Cole has consulted with family businesses for 15 years. She holds a Ph.D. in family therapy. Dr. Cole is the founding director of the Institute for Family Business, an educational program for families businesses. She directed the Institute for 3 years and stayed on it as its advisor until it closed in 1998. To keep the program alive, she volunteers her time as the director of the Family Business Resource Center at Nova Southeastern University (NSU). In addition, she served as Director of the Family Therapy Masters Program at NSU for three years and led the Program into reaccreditation status by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.
7. Ruth McClendon: Mrs. McClendon has 27 years providing consultation to family businesses. She is a LMFT, LCSW and has specialized training in family systems theory and Redecision Family Therapy. Mrs. McClendon is a consultant with a focus on interpersonal systems and relationships, a family and couple's therapist, and an international teacher and supervisor of family therapists and family business consultants. She is co-founder of the Carmel Institute for Family Business, a founding board member and fellow of the Family Firm Institute, and past president of The International Transactional Analysis Association.

8. Leslie Dashew: Mrs Dashew has 25 years providing consultation to family businesses. She has a MSW and was trained in family therapy, group therapy and individual therapy through that program. In addition, she did 4 years of child and family therapy at Jewish Family and Children's Service in Baltimore where she was under supervision and did training in a range of models from Virginia Satir to Bowen models and integrated that along with supervised training she received at Johns Hopkins department of psychiatry to become LCSW. She worked as a family therapist with children and adolescents for the next ten years in private practice. She then developed a family business practice and continued to study Bowen and other models. Mrs. Dashew combines her background in organizational development and family therapy to specialize in consultation to family businesses and families of wealth, as well as other organizations, private and public. She forms part of the Aspen Family Business Group which is a group of international consultants for family businesses.

9. David Bork. Mr. Bork has worked as a family business consultant for 40 years. He learned from Murray Bowen and others early in that work. Mr. Bork is one of the world's leaders in the field of family business counseling. He is a proponent of the Family Systems Approach to family business and pioneered the integration of Family Systems Theory with sound business practice. Mr. Bork is the founder of The Aspen Family Business Group which provides professional services, conferences, and individual coaching to family businesses. In recognition of his contributions to the field of family business, the Family Firm Institute awarded him the Richard Beckhard Award in October 1998.

10. John Joseph Paul: Mr. Paul has provided consultation to family businesses for 20 years. He was trained in marriage and family therapy from workshops, supervision, experimentation, study groups, and 30 years of experience doing it. Mr. Paul has trained MFTs in this field through AAMFT workshops. Mr. Paul's work has been featured in both national and international media and he consults, trains and lectures around the world on family business issues to trade groups and professional associations. Besides working directly with families in business he also trains other professional advisors that serve their family business clients more effectively. Mr. Paul is a Director Emeritus of the Family Firm Institute (FFI). He was honored by the FFI with the status of Fellow because of his contributions to the field. He is the co-author and author of several family business assessment devices including *The Aspen Family Business Governance Inventory*, and *The Family Wealth Management Inventory*, *The Aspen Family Foundation Inventory*, and *The Aspen Family Leadership Inventory*.

Table 4

*Expert Panelist Demographics*

1. Gender of Expert Panelists		
<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>
N = 5		N = 5
2. Years of Experience Providing Consultation to Family Businesses		
<u>5-10 Years</u>	<u>10-20 Years</u>	<u>More than 20 Years</u>
N = 1	N = 3	N = 6
3. Training /Education in MFT		
<u>MA or PhD MFT Program</u>		<u>LMFT</u>
N = 9		N = 7
4. Primary Setting for Practice		
<u>Business Consultation</u>		<u>University</u>
N = 7		N = 3

All panelists participated in Phase 1, the phone interview. Nine participants completed Phase 2 of the Delphi, the on-line questionnaire. The same 9 participants signed into the Phase 3, the Wiki, however, only 7 participated on the discussions and posted comments. A total of 80 % of the panelists completed all phases of the Delphi study.

## Results for Phase I (Semi-structured Interview)

The first phase of this study consisted of a qualitative exploration of what participants thought of the areas that should be covered in a model course curriculum in family business consultation for MFT graduate students. I extracted nine areas from the literature review. I phrased these areas as questions. I asked participants to comment on whether they thought these questions were relevant for the creation of a model curriculum for family business consultation for MFTs.

All participants gave their feedback on the relevance of the questions (which represented areas). Some participants expanded their responses and provided their answers to the questions. For this reason, the data gathered in this first phase had two parallel analyses: one on the responses to panelists' thoughts on the areas to consider and another on the personal experiences and expanded responses. I created the final on-line questionnaire by integrating the themes gathered from both sets of analysis.

The data provided by participants in this first phase expanded the initial questions I had gathered from the literature review. Participants provided alternative sub areas to consider within each main area (alternative responses for each question on the questionnaire), alternative ways of focusing the areas (e.g., if they were important or not), and relationships between the different areas. Table 5 shows a summary of the results. It shows the themes that emerged from the participants and those that emerged from the literature review. The combination of both allowed the creation of the on-line questionnaire.

All 10 participants agreed on the importance of having MFT theoretical models to understand family businesses, a multidisciplinary understanding of family businesses,

understanding the most common issues unique to family businesses, understanding of the differences between consultation and therapy, discussing ethical issues specific to this population and profession, and having good bibliographical resources.

Participants had differing opinions regarding research, practicum, and supervision. Three participants believed research was not an important component for a family business consulting curriculum. One of them focused on suggesting students cutting edge topics for research instead of having a course content concentrated to research. Three other participants mentioned the importance of creating assessment tools.

Assessment tools seemed to be related to several areas. For some participants it was related to research in the sense of creating more assessment tools. For others it was related to an important area of content to teach students, and for others a difference between doing consulting and doing therapy. According to the panelists, assessments appear to be a more important tool in consultation than in therapy.

Although participants agreed upon the importance of having practical experience and supervision, they appeared to be hesitant about its feasibility due to the small number of MFT family business consultants. Three participants phrased both supervision and practicum as being “ideal but unrealistic” in a curriculum.

Participants seem to use a variety of MFT models to inform their work. They also seemed to use business related models to understand the behavior and dynamics of the family business.

Working and collaborating with professionals from other disciplines appears to be a central part of the work as a consultant. Language seems to have an important impact

on their work with consultant professionals from other disciplines. The essence of the relationship between a client and a consultant appears to differ from the one between a therapist and a client. This aspect seems to have unique ethical implications to consultation. One participant summarized this aspect in the following way:

*“As a consultant I have a different identity, follow other ethical rules. As a therapist you go by the ethical codes defined by the AAMFT. I don’t know what the AAMFT would say about my relationship with my clients and the dual relationships I have. As a consultant you have to change some things. For instance, you have a drink with your client, a more of an equal relationship...”*

Table 5

*Summary of Findings in Phase I: Areas and Content Provided by Participants*

AREAS DETECTED FROM LITERATURE REVIEW

MFT Theories	About Other Theories	Consultation vs. Therapy	Ethical issues	Research	Practicum	Supervision
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CONTENT THEMES PROVIDED BY PARTICIPANTS

MRI	Organizational development	Consultants get involved in the business	Taking neutral position	Not important	Shadow	Co-consultation
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Solution focused	Basic Business principals	Consultants outsource treatment no in depth work	Confidentiality	Measurement Instruments	Not ethical to shadow	Reflection on skills and assets
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Post modern/ Collaborative	Wealth Management		Boundaries and differentiation between consultant and clients	Cutting edge topics	Co-consultation	Reflection on authority figures
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Contextual	Specific		Not important	Evaluations	Network	Reflection
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	industries	are part of	groups	on
		work		transference issues
Narrative	Accounting	Creation of	Group	Ideal but
		interdisciplina ry language	facilitation and dynamics	unrealistic
	Estate planning		Not realistic	
	Language used in business			

\*I do not include specific issues in family businesses because participants did not comment on them. The ones found on the on-line questionnaire were obtained from a review of the literature.

\*\*For complete bibliographical resources provided by panelists refer to question 9 in questionnaire.

## Results for Phase II (on-Line Questionnaire)

### *Quantitative Results*

The quantitative analysis of the data allowed the creation of three groups of results. The first group corresponds to those items that met the inclusion criteria (median=5 or more and IQR=2 or less). Meeting the inclusion criteria means that these items had a high level of consensus and agreement among panelists and thus qualify for being part of the final profile. The second group is composed of those items that did not meet the criteria for inclusion on the final profile (Median=4 or less and IQR=2 or less). Not meeting the inclusion criteria means that there was a high level of consensus and agreement among panelists that these items were not important to be included in a model course curriculum. The third phase is formed by items that met the criteria of inclusion on the wiki (Median=subsumed within IQR and IQR=3 or greater). This latter group refers to those controversial topics, items that had a wide range of opinions from the panelists.

*Items That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

*Question 1 (The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business course for MFTs...).* Theories that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included Bowenian, Narrative, and solution focused therapy, with Bowenian therapy rated the highest and Narrative rated the lowest. These three therapy models were considered by the panelists as important to include in the

course content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 6.

*Question 2 ( MFTs need to learn about the following FB issues...).* Family business issues that should be taught to MFTs that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included boundaries between generations, business life cycle, family life cycle, sibling rivalries, marital power conflicts, parent - offspring conflicts, gender issues, and succession planning and dynamics. All of these items were equally ranked with the highest possible rating. All of these items were considered by the panelists as important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 7.

*Question 3 (MFTs working as family business consultants need to have knowledge of the following areas in addition to their knowledge in MFT and human behavior...).* Areas additional to MFT and human behavior that MFTs should be knowledgeable of that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included basic business and organizational dynamics, organizational development, language used in businesses, legal aspects, finance, and wealth management. Basic business and organizational dynamics, organizational development, language used in businesses were ranked equally as the highest and legal aspects, finance. All of the mentioned items were considered by the panelists as important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 8.

*Question 4 (Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that...).* The differences between therapy and consultation that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included: in consultation you should work with an

interdisciplinary team and know when to bring in other professionals, in consultation you get involved in the business (leading the company, changing organizational culture, doing strategic training programs), the relationship with the client differs. In consultation you interact socially with your client (e.g. you have a drink, you play golf), and as a consultant you give more advice and in therapy you let the client get to their own conclusions. The highest ranked was the item stating that in consultation you should work with an interdisciplinary team and know when to bring in other professionals. All of the mentioned items were considered by the panelists as important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 9.

*Question 5 (Ethical issues that need to be considered when doing consultation to families working together in businesses are...).* Ethical issues that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included dual relationships, confidentiality, managing boundaries between consultant and client, taking the position of the expert: knowing when to collaborate with other professionals, ethical codes of the different disciplines involved (e.g., business, legal, financial), differentiation, and neutrality: taking a neutral position regardless of who hired you and who is paying you. Dual relationships and confidentiality were rated the highest and neutrality rated the lowest. These ethical issues were considered by the panelists as important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 10.

*Question 6 (Research and evaluative aspects to consider are...).* Research and evaluative aspects that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included cutting edge topics should be suggested to students, specific assessment instruments and methods to gather information about the family to determine an effective intervention, and an

interdisciplinary language for diagnosis should be created in order for consultants working together from different disciplines to communicate more effectively. Suggesting cutting edge topics to students was rated the highest. These research and evaluative aspects were considered by the panelists as important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 11.

*Question 7 (Practicum or internships should...).* Aspects related with practicum or internships that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included students should attend to network groups of family business; they should have exposure to meetings with business people, students should be proficient in group facilitation and group dynamics, students should co-consult with senior consultants, practicum should be a requirement: hands on experience, students should interview family business consultants, and students should shadow an experienced consultant. The two aspects that had the highest rating were students should attend to network groups of family business; they should have exposure to meetings with business people and students should be proficient in group facilitation and group dynamics. All of these practicum or internship aspects were considered by the panelists as important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 12.

*Question 8 (Supervision should...).* Aspects related with supervision that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included: supervisees should reflect on messages from their own family of origin regarding money, power, and authority figure issues, supervisors should help supervisees reflect on their skills and assets, supervisees should be required to reflect on transference issues (e.g. they could be required to write a paper and evaluate the effects of transference), supervisors should help supervisees reflect on

their motives to be a consultant, it should be done as a co-consultation, and supervision would be ideal, but is unrealistic due to the few experts in the area (MFT family business consultants).

Having supervisees reflect on messages from their own family of origin regarding money, power, and authority figure issues was the aspects that had the highest rating. This aspect was followed by in rating by supervisors should help supervisees reflect on their skills and assets and supervisees should be required to reflect on transference issues (e.g. they could be required to write a paper and evaluate the effects of transference). The aspects with the lowest rating were: supervisors should help supervisees reflect on their motives to be a consultant, it should be done as a co-consultation, and supervision would be ideal, but is unrealistic due to the few experts in the area (MFT family business consultants). All of these supervision aspects were considered by the panelists as important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 13.

*Question 9 (The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be knowledgeable of...).* Literature resources that met the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included the following:

Bork, D. (1993). *Family business, risky business: How to make it work*. Aspen, CO:

Bork Institute for Family Business.

Friedman, E. (1985). *Generation to generation: Family process in church and synagogue*.

New York: The Guilford Press

- Gersick, K.E., Davis, J. A., Hampton, M. M., Lansberg, I., (1997). *Generation to Generation: Life cycles of family business*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.
- Jaffe, D. T. (2000). *Working with the ones you love*. Fort Worth, TX: Aspen Family Business Group, LLC
- Kaslow, F. W. (2006). *Handbook of family business and family business consultation: A global perspective*. New York : International Business Press.

The first three resources were rated the highest. The last two were equally rated lowest. All these literature resources were considered by the panelists as important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 14.

*Items That did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less)*

*Question 1 (The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business course for MFTs...)*. MRI was the only theory that did not meet the criteria for inclusion for the final profile. This therapy model was considered by the panelists as not important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 15.

*Question 3 (MFTs working as family business consultants need to have knowledge of the following areas in addition to their knowledge in MFT and human behavior...)*. Areas additional to MFT and human behavior that MFTs should be

knowledgeable of that did not meet the criteria for inclusion for the final profile included accounting, estate planning, and knowledge on specific industries. Knowledge on specific industries was ranked the lowest. All of these items were considered by the panelists as not important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 16.

*Question 4 (Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that...).* The difference between therapy and consultation that did not meet the criteria for inclusion for the final profile was that in consultation your target is to help improve the business and not necessarily relationships. This item was considered by the panelists as not important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 17.

*Question 7 (Practicum or internships should...).* The aspects related with practicum or internships that did not meet the criteria for inclusion for the final profile was that practicum cannot be done because it would be unethical for students to shadow a consultant. This aspect was considered by the panelists as not important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 18.

*Question 8 (Supervision should...).* Having supervisees look for a supervisor who is an expert in an area which he or she feels needs more support was the only supervision aspect that did not meet the criteria for inclusion for the final profile. This supervision aspect was considered by the panelists as not important to include in the course content on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 19.

*Question 9 (The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be knowledgeable of...).* The literature resource that did not meet the criteria for inclusion for the final profile was:

McClendon, R. & Kadis, R. B. (2004). *Reconciling Relationships and Preserving the Family Business*. New York : Haworth Press

This book was considered by the panelists as not important to include in the content of a course on family business consultation. These results are shown in Table 20.

*Items That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on the Wiki (Median = subsumed within the IQR; IQR = 3 or greater)*

*Question 1 (The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business course for MFTs...).* Theories that met the criteria for inclusion in the wiki included structural, contextual, and collaborative/postmodern. The collaborative/postmodern model had the highest level of disagreement among panelists regarding its inclusion importance. There was a wide range of opinions among the panelists in regards to these three therapy models. These results are shown in Table 21.

*Question 4 (Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that...).* The differences between therapy and consultation that met the criteria for inclusion for the wiki included: in consultation you do not get to do such in-depth work as in therapy, you outsource treatment and that the processes observed in both settings is the same. Both of these aspects showed the same variability in the data. There was a wide range of opinions among the panelists in regards to these two differences. These results are shown in Table 22.

*Question 6 (Research and evaluative aspects to consider are...).* Research and evaluative aspects that met the criteria for inclusion for the wiki included that these subjects are not important for a curriculum in consultation and that in consultation you constantly do research or “evaluations” of your work. Both of these aspects showed the same variability in the data. There was a wide range of opinions among the panelists in regards to these two differences. These results are shown in Table 23.

*Question 9 (The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be knowledgeable of...).* The literature resource that met the criteria for inclusion in the wiki was:

Bork, D. (2008). *The little red book of family business*. Kingston, MA: Sampson Press.

The usefulness of this book showed wide variability in the data. There was a wide range of opinions among the panelists in regards to the importance of this book in a course curriculum. These results are shown in Table 24.

Table 6

*Items from Question 1 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

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Question 1

*The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business course for MFTs:*

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ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Bowenian	7.00	2.00
Narrative	5.00	1.00
Solution focused	6.00	2.00

---

Table 7

*Items from Question 2 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

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Question 2

*MFTs need to learn about the following FB issues:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Boundaries between generations	7.00	0.00
Business life cycle	7.00	0.00
Family life cycle	7.00	0.00
Sibling rivalries	7.00	0.00
Marital power conflicts	7.00	0.00
Parent - offspring conflicts	7.00	0.00
Gender issues	7.00	1.00
Succession planning and dynamics	7.00	0.00

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Table 8

*Items from Question 3 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

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Question 3

*MFTs working as family business consultants need to have knowledge of the following areas in addition to their knowledge in MFT and human behavior:*

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ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Basic business and organizational dynamics	7.00	1.00
Organizational development	7.00	1.00
Language used in businesses	7.00	1.00
Legal aspects	5.00	2.00
Finance	5.00	2.00
Wealth management	5.00	1.00

---

Table 9

*Items from Question 4 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

Question 4

*Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that:*

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
In consultation you should work with an interdisciplinary team and know when to bring in other professionals.	7.00	0.00
In consultation you get involved in the business (leading the company, changing organizational culture, doing strategic training programs).	6.00	2.00
The relationship with the client differs. In consultation you interact socially with your client (e.g. you have a drink, you play golf).	5.00	1.00
As a consultant you give more advice and in therapy you let the client get to their own conclusions.	5.00	1.00

Table 10

*Items from Question 5 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

---

Question 5

*Ethical issues that need to be considered when doing consultation to families working together in businesses are:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Dual relationships	7.00	1.00
Confidentiality.	7.00	1.00
Managing boundaries between consultant and client.	6.00	1.00
Taking the position of the expert: Knowing when to collaborate with other professionals.	6.00	1.00
Ethical codes of the different disciplines involved (e.g., business, legal, financial).	6.00	2.00

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Differentiation	6.00	1.00
Neutrality: Taking a neutral position regardless of who hired you and who is paying you.	5.00	2.00

---

Table 11

*Items from Question 6 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

---

Question 6

*Research and evaluative aspects to consider are:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Cutting edge topics should be suggested to students.	7.00	1.00
Specific assessment instruments and methods to gather information about the family to determine an effective intervention.	6.00	2.00
An interdisciplinary language for diagnosis should be created in order for consultants working together from different disciplines to communicate more effectively.	6.00	1.00

---

Table 12

*Items from Question 7 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

Question 7

*Practicum or internships should:*

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Students should attend to network groups of family business; they should have exposure to meetings with business people.	7.00	1.00
Students should be proficient in group facilitation and group dynamics.	7.00	1.00
Students should co-consult with senior consultants	6.00	0.00
Be a requirement: hands on experience.	6.00	1.00
Students should interview family business consultants.	6.00	1.00
Students should shadow an experienced consultant.	6.00	2.00

Table 13

*Items from Question 8 that Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

---

Question 8

*Supervision should:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Supervisees should reflect on messages from their own family of origin regarding money, power, and authority figure issues.	7.00	1.00
Supervisors should help supervisees reflect on their skills and assets.	6.00	1.00
Supervisees should be required to reflect on transference issues (e.g. they could be required to write a paper and evaluate the effects of transference).	6.00	2.00

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Supervisors should help supervisees reflect on their motives to be a consultant.	5.00	1.00
It should be done as a co-consultation.	5.00	1.00
Would be ideal, but is unrealistic due to the few experts in the area (MFT FB consultants).	5.00	2.00

---

Table 14

*Items from Question 9 that Met the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile (Median = 5 or greater; IQR = 2 or Less)*

Question 9

*The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be knowledgeable of:*

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
<p>Friedman, E. (1985). <i>Generation to generation: Family process in church and synagogue</i>. New York: The Guilford Press.</p>	7.00	0.00
<p>Gersick, K.E., Davis, J. A., Hampton, M. M., &amp; Lansberg, I., (1997). <i>Generation to Generation: Life cycles of family business</i>. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.</p>	7.00	1.00
<p>Bork, D. (1993). <i>Family business, risky business: How to make it work</i>. Aspen, CO: Bork Institute for Family Business.</p>	7.00	2.00

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Jaffe, D. T. (2000). <i>Working with the ones you love</i> . Fort Worth, TX: Aspen Family Business Group, LLC.	6.00	2.00
Kaslow, F. W. (2006). <i>Handbook of family business and family business consultation: A global perspective</i> . New York : International Business Press.	6.00	2.00

---

Table 15

*Items from Question 1 That did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile*

*(Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less )*

---

Question 1

*The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business course for MFTs:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
MRI	3.00	1.00

---

Table 16

*Items from Question 3 That did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile*

*(Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less )*

---

Question 3

*MFTs working as family business consultants need to have knowledge of the following areas in addition to their knowledge in MFT and human behavior:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Accounting	4.00	1.00
Estate planning	4.00	1.00
Specific industries	3.00	1.00

---

Table 17

*Items from Question 4 That did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile*

*(Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less )*

---

Question 4

*Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
In consultation your target is to help improve the business, not necessarily relationships.	2.00	1.00

---

Table 18

*Items from Question 7 That did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile*

*(Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less )*

---

Question 7

*Practicum or internships should:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
It cannot be done: it would not be ethical for students to shadow the consultant.	1.00	1.00

---

Table 19

*Items from Question 8 that did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile*

*(Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less )*

---

Question 8

*Supervision should:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Supervisees should look for a supervisor who is an expert on an area in which he or she feels needs more support (e.g. an accountant).	4.00	2.00

---

Table 20

*Items from Question 9 that did not Meet the Criteria for Inclusion on Final Profile*

*(Median = 4 or less; IQR = 2 or Less )*

---

Question 9

*The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be knowledgeable of:*

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ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
McClendon, R. & Kadis, R. B. (2004). <i>Reconciling Relationships and Preserving the Family Business.</i> New York : Haworth Press	4.00	1.00

---

Table 21

*Items from Question 1 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on the Wiki (Median =  
subsumed within the IQR; IQR = 3 or greater)*

---

Question 1

*The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business  
course for MFTs:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Structural	6.00	3.00
Contextual	3.00	3.00
Collaborative/Postmodern	5.00	4.00

---

Table 22

*Items from Question 4 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on the Wiki (Median =  
subsumed within the IQR; IQR = 3 or greater)*

---

Question 4

*Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
In consultation you do not get to do such in-depth work as in therapy.	6.00	3.00
You outsource treatment.		
Actually, the process is the same	2.00	3.00

---

Table 23

*Items from Question 6 That Met the Criteria for Inclusion on the Wiki (Median =  
subsumed within the IQR; IQR = 3 or greater)*

---

Question 6

*Research and evaluative aspects to consider are:*

---

ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Not important for a curriculum in consultation.	2.00	3.00
In consultation you constantly do research or “evaluations” of your work.	5.00	3.00

---

Table 24

*Items from Question 9 that Met the Criteria for Inclusion on the Wiki (Median =  
subsumed within the IQR; IQR = 3 or greater)*

---

Question 9

*The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be  
knowledgeable of:*

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ITEM	MEDIAN	IQR
Bork, D. (2008). <i>The little red book of family business.</i> Kingston, MA: Sampson Press.	5.00	3.00

---

## *Qualitative Results*

The on-line questionnaire was quantitative in nature and its objective was to determine those aspects that a) met the criteria for being part of the final profile, b) those that did not, and c) those that met the criteria for the creation of the wiki due to having a wide range of responses from participants. However, each question had a space for participants to comment on the global question (which represented a core area) and/or add a specific content area which had not been considered.

Participants were not required to comment on the questions. Thus, not all questions or core areas had information to analyze. The analysis of these data was similar to that of the first phase which was exploratory in nature. The analysis of these data consisted of summarizing it and looking for patterns and relationships.

Each question represented the preliminary core areas to consider in a model curriculum. The analysis shows interrelation between the different areas considered. There were also emergent areas that appear to be important to include in a curriculum. I will present the qualitative analysis for each area and show how these interrelate. These results also make sense and give more meaning to the results obtained in phase I.

### *Theoretical Understanding of Family Businesses*

Qualitative data seems to suggest that there are overarching theories that can help understand family businesses. Business and psychological models seem particularly compatible with family systems theories. The integration of these theories may serve to help students better understand family business dynamics.

### *Specific Issues Faced by Family Businesses*

The qualitative data suggests that the relational issues faced by families working together appear to be related with the dynamics and organization of the business.

Therefore, in order to fully understand the specific issues families tend to face when working together, a consultant would apparently need to have an understanding of the dynamics of the broader system beyond the family system.

#### *Therapy vs. Consultation*

Therapy and consultation appear to have a common ground as well as several differences. A participant summarizes this theme:

“System dynamics and change process are very similar in both systems but the content is very different.”

#### *Ethical Issues*

Qualitative data suggest that there ethical issues that can arise when adhering to the AAMFT code of ethics. Further, participants mention that ethical codes from other disciplines seem to be important to consider. A participant illustrates how these ethical codes differ and their usefulness in the consultation process:

“I think our MFT ethics are much more stringent than business ethics so following MFT ethics will keep you above business ethics. But actual legal business ethics may be important so that consultants can identify these behaviors in their clients. And they happen A LOT!”

Dual relationships appeared to be an important ethical issue for participants. Apparently, to deal with this issue family business consultants seem not to adhere

completely to the MFT code of ethics. The following comment by one participant shows how a family business consultant appears to apply different ethical codes than a marriage and family therapist due to the context they operate in:

“The AAMFT code of ethics would probably have a problem with me.

I'm in a dual relationship with my clients. If I say to them, “tell you what,

let's set a baseline today and if I can help your team to increase xyz by

3/1/10 I would like to receive my retainer plus 10% of the increase”

The latter comment implies a dual relationship issue because of the way he/she has decided to charge. This charging method implies getting involved in the business and in its productivity. In a sense, the consultant and the business owner are now business partners. Both will be affected by the business' productivity.

### *Research*

There were very few comments on the subject of research. The ones that were posted supported the importance of research. The following is a sample of the comments made:

“Qualitative data suggests that since family business consultation is a new

field with a developing body of knowledge, it is important that

practitioners and researchers collaborate to enhance our knowledge base.”

### *Practicum and Supervision*

Participants commented that students do not always have the opportunities to shadow or co-consult with a senior consultant. The following comment reflects this issue:

“Supervision and internships would be nice, but there are very few opportunities for this in the real world. So students should take advantage of these opportunities when they are available, but having it as a requirement may not be possible.”

There were some specific issues that emerged in regards to supervision. Participants seem to have different opinions as to how to do supervision. Some participants thought that supervision should be provided by experts in a variety of disciplines. Other participants questioned if students should be supervised because each consultant should find out his or her own way of doing consultation before they work with a supervisor who would probably impose his/her way of doing consultation.

### *Other Important Aspects to Consider*

An aspect mentioned by participants that was not contemplated in the literature review which may represent a content area to be included in a model course curriculum involves teaching how to set up a consulting business. According to the data, consultants should take into consideration modalities of charging and marketing. The following comments illustrate this theme:

“Invoicing and charging for your work is hugely different. Retainers... Negotiation of fees....and then how to manage your own money.”

“Self-promotion, self-marketing, etc. You get business differently.”

This aspect appears to be worthy of understanding more in depth since not more information was provided.

### *Looking for Relationships*

I began this research with an idea of core areas to consider in a model curriculum in family business consulting for MFTs. I predetermined these areas from a review of the literature on both, family businesses and MFT training. The qualitative data gathered in this phase led me to understand relationships between these areas and merge some areas into more comprehensive categories.

Consultation to family businesses requires an understanding of family businesses and the unique issues they tend to face. MFTs working as family business consultants encounter ethical issues related with the different ways of relating with clients than in therapy. A consultant should also be knowledgeable of managing a business. All of these aspects can be clustered under a broader category of consultation and family business.

A second broad category appears to be the theoretical understanding of family businesses. There appear to be interdisciplinary theoretical approaches which a family business consultant should be knowledgeable of. Besides MFT theories, consultants should integrate theories from other disciplines such as psychology, business, law and finance. The specific content of these areas mentioned by participants will be very useful

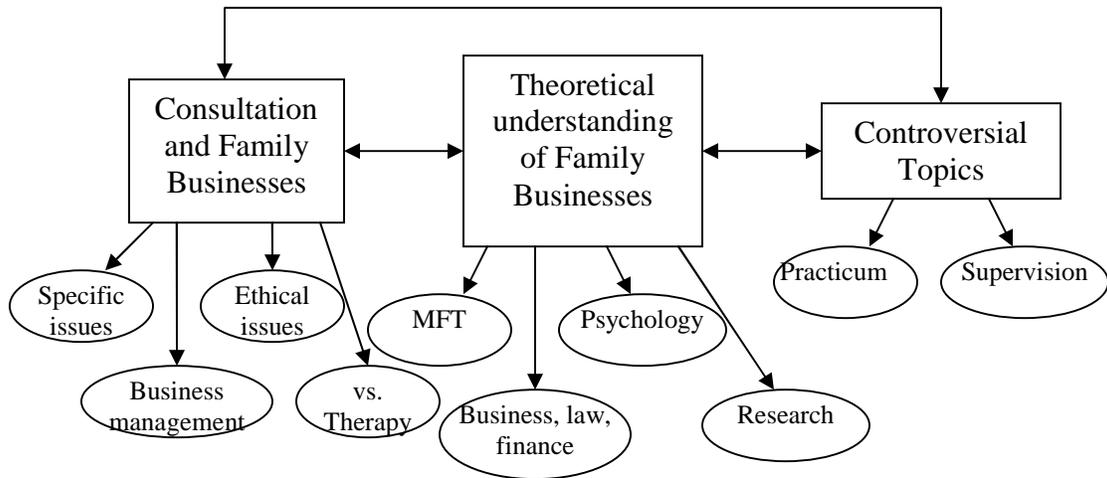
in the creation of the content of a course. An aspect that was supported in the data provided was the importance of research. Research can be added into this category since its outcomes can provide growth in the understanding of family businesses. Like all of the mentioned content areas, research is related with the practice of consultation and better understanding of family businesses.

A third broader category refers to aspects where panelists seem to hesitate on its feasibility. Practicum and supervision enter in this category as controversial topics. I consider them controversial because panelists acknowledge it would be ideal to have them be part of the training of MFTs in family business consultation, however, they appear to be unrealistic.

The three main categories mentioned are interrelated. A thematic map shown in Figure 1 represents these results.

Figure 1

*Thematic Map Showing Final Three Main Themes*



### Results for Phase III (Wiki)

The third phase of this study consisted of the creation of a wiki to allow participants to discuss and exchange ideas on certain topics. A wiki is an on-line web page that can be used to generate discussions among members. All members are allowed to edit the wiki pages by adding comments.

The initial questions posted on the wiki emerged from an analysis of the results of the previous two phases. I chose these specific themes because they involved either controversial opinions or because I needed more in-depth information on selected issues in order to create a model course curriculum. I could not choose all the themes that met the latter criteria because the wiki would have become prohibitively long. Therefore, I selected those I believed would be of interest to the participants. I selected seven final themes for discussion: Structural therapy, therapy and consultation, ethics, assessments, supervision, getting started as a consultant, and bibliography.

Participants were not shy in engaging one another in wiki discussions, which allowed me to collect rich data with many examples. I will detail the results obtained from each of the seven topics selected.

#### *Theoretical Understanding of Family Businesses*

From the quantitative analysis of the previous phase I could detect that there was no consensus among panelists regarding the importance of including a structural understanding of family businesses as part of the content of a course in family business. Further, according to the existing literature, structural theory is key to the understanding of family business dynamics. These inconsistencies led me to ask the experts to help me

understand their thinking regarding the importance of structural family therapy theory in family business consultation.

According to the qualitative data analyzed, participants seem to think that structural theory is important to understand power in the family business: its distribution and how it shapes the system. Although they believe that this theory is important, they also seem to agree that other theoretical orientations are useful as well. Each participant had their preferred model for understanding family business dynamics. It also appears that experience helps a consultant detach from being constantly cognizant of the theory and techniques used. Participants agreed that an experienced therapist and consultant has internalized and integrated various theories. They have become part of their selves, guiding everything they do. The following comments are a good example of these results:

“...inexperienced therapists and consultants... desire to look clever and pin “the problem”... too focused on trying to make the territory of clients’ lives conform (with) our personal map of reality. In the meantime we are likely to miss “what is really going on...”

“At a certain stage of one's career, we are able to just 'be' but the theory is still there and our beliefs and theoretical models are shaping everything we do for better or for worse. So whether it is SFT or another model, FOB (family business) consultants need to have a way of understanding power distributions and how these forces shape systems.”

### *Therapy vs. Consulting*

Data analyses from phase I and II suggest that panelists tend to agree that there is a difference between the role of a therapist and the role of a family business consultant. However, there was disagreement regarding the depth of the work a family business consultant should do with families. I asked participants if they believed a family business consultant should provide therapy to family members as part of his or her consultation or if they should outsource therapy.

This was the most controversial and discussed topic of the wiki. Apparently, it is an issue that MFTs working as family business consultants face constantly. The discussion focused mainly in trying to determine the differences between therapy and consulting. The differentiation of both does not seem to be an easy one to determine. However, participants agreed on the importance of its differentiation and definition since this is a new field and what the client can expect from a MFT doing family business consultation is still being defined.

The data suggest that there are some similarities between therapy and consulting. It appears to be that both deal with the same relational dynamics and also both are considered by panelists as agents of change.

An important theme emerged regarding the definition of the client. This appears to be a central issue since it defines the scope and depth of the work of the consultant. Participants had different ways of defining the client. While some participants defined the client to be the business, others defined the client as the families that own the business. These differences appeared to give consultants different ways of approaching and understanding the work they do with their clients. Participants agreed, however, that

their therapeutic skills helped them understand relational issues and intervene in ways that are beneficial to the business and family members. The following comments can help summarize this discussion:

“I think of the essence of our work being the facilitation of differentiation of both individuals and sub-systems (shareholder group, a real Board of Directors, a Family Council).”

“As a therapist my contract was focused on the individual in whatever system they came within to my office. As a family business consultant my client is the larger system and I work primary in the family business system. The clients expect that I will help the individuals and subsystems to be more effective and help them remove obstacles to enhancing harmony in the family and sustained prosperity in the business. If the issues are severe and require in-depth therapy, that is not our contract and I refer them elsewhere. So I guess to me it is not so much our impact that is defining as our contract with the client and boundaries that we establish.”

Another interesting theme was the punctuation of different professional identities of consultants and therapists. Participants tended to refer to their previous work and life as therapists as their “former identity”. The participants refer to themselves and identify themselves as primarily being consultants, not therapists. Professional identity seems to

be related to several interconnected themes: quality of relationship established with client, ethics, roles, and depth of work.

The qualitative data reflects that the quality of relationships between a consultant and his/her client differs from that of a therapist with his/her clients. The relationships that a consultant established with his/her clients appear to be closer and in a different context than the relationships that a therapist tends to establish with his/her clients.

“...we often operate in the context of the clients' environment (even staying at their homes from time to time) and it would be difficult to maintain the therapeutic "posture" in these contexts. I believe there are different ways in which we use our "selves" as consultants and as therapists.”

The type of relationship established between a consultant and his/her clients appears to bring up ethical issues addressed in the AAMFT code of ethics. One such issue involves dual relationships. Apparently, to be able to relate with clients in a close way requires for the therapist to have a different professional identity, then a different code would apply.

“...since boundaries are a major issue in this work, it is difficult to call what we do therapy because therapy requires a stricter reliance on therapeutic boundaries. ... I've done things in this work that I would never do as "therapist" like go to a company dinner, or golfing with a client. These actions seem to be important in this work, but are shunned in therapy. But the purpose is to gain trust and buy in, just like a therapist

might allow a client to tell their story and empathize with them to get that client to buy in to the process. So calling what we do "Therapy" may limit our ability to use tools that work in family businesses, and may create legal action against us.”

The consultant-client relationships established also seem to be related to the role of the consultant being different from that of a therapist. Although participants agreed that the roles of a therapist differ from that of a consultant, participants seemed to have difficulty defining those roles and their differences beyond the more informal role of the consultant mentioned above. This theme was not easy to define for consultants. However, participants seemed to agree that the roles they have tend to fluctuate according to the situation and established goals with the family business. The following comment is an example of this fluctuation:

“I have sometimes thought of my "shape shifting" being among the roles of advisor to the leadership---facilitator of process--and, the voice of the business.”

Participants agreed that it is not easy to differentiate between therapy and consultation because there is always some overlap. Therapeutic behaviors tend to remain and participants perceive them as important for their work. The difference, in part, appears to be the depth of the work done. Some participants’ reflections on this topic include:

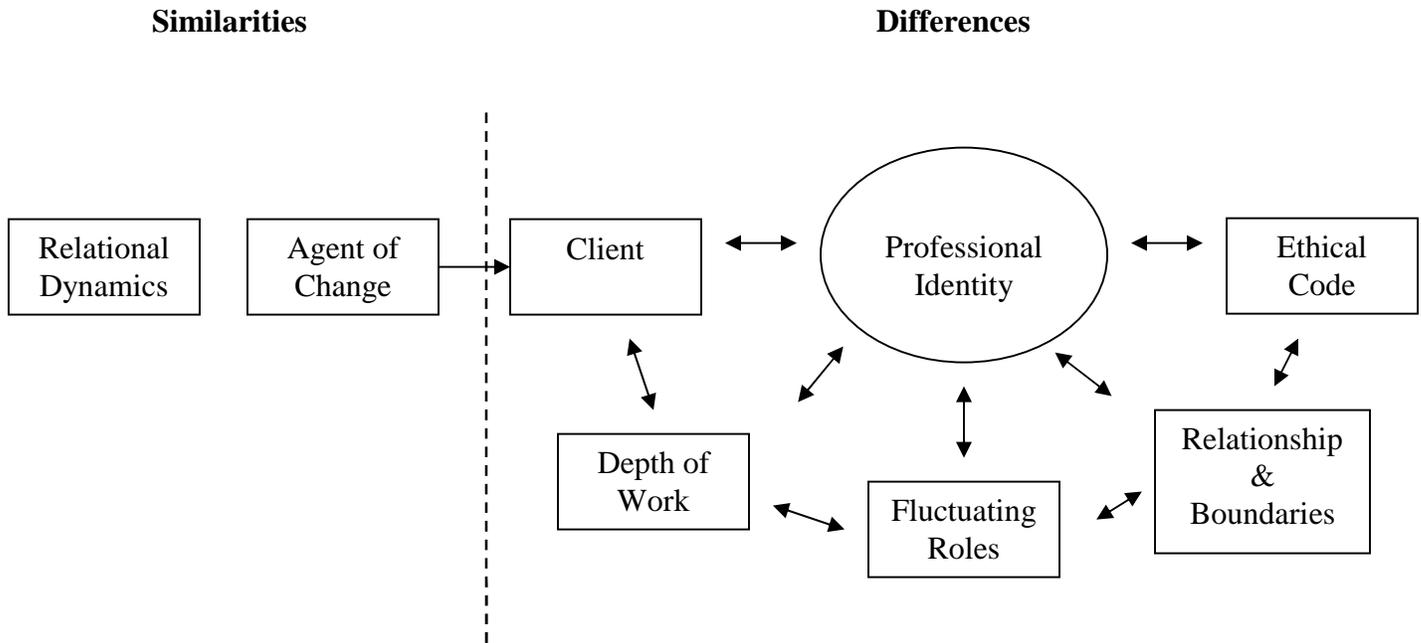
“I think a lot of family business consultants are engaging in therapeutic behaviors whether they call themselves a therapist or not. I use lots of the techniques I used as an LMFT.”

“How deep do we go. If my focus begins to be one person and the work is extensive, then that changes the nature of the relationship.”

Figure 2 shows a thematic map illustrating the results of this analysis.

Figure 2

*Thematic Map Showing Final Themes to Consider in Consultation Vs. Therapy.*



## *Ethics*

Dual relationships were identified by panelists as an important ethical issue in phase II of this study. I asked participants to give an example involving dual relationships from their own experience that could be used as a case study in an ethics course.

Three participants answered this question. They provided examples of self disclosure, different professional identities and roles in a long term relationship with a family business, and advice on how to keep different relationships and roles “clean”. The following comment made by one panelist illustrates this issue:

“I happen to have begun my career as a clergyman, and still am. LMFT, LMSW, and consultant to family businesses, and businesses that feel like family. I've married the owner and his girlfriend of many years. That came after working with his two sons, separately, around issues of differentiation and role and function in the family. I've been in the owner's home, vacation home, and I took him to his retirement party. I also was the one he called when there was a fatality among his employees. None of this took place in my office. I worked with this company for 12 years and took staff on strategic planning retreats, went along on golf outings, a dozen Christmas parties, difficult meetings with bankers and accountants, and interventions with other business owners. The owner even bounced me 10k one year. A friendship developed here; steel on steel.”

## *Assessments*

Results from previous phases reflect that panelists seemed to agree on the importance of using assessment tools throughout the consultation process. I asked participants which specific assessment tools they have found the most useful in their work as a family business consultants and how they have been useful.

Participants mentioned two types of tools: psychological instruments and organizational instruments. These instruments appear to be used mainly for pre-employment assessment, team building, career development, personal coaching, and selection of successors.

Among the psychological instruments, participants mentioned the following:

- 16 PF

Cattell, R. B., Eber, H. W., & Tatsuoka, M. M. (1970). *Handbook for the sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF) In clinical, educational, industrial, and research psychology, for use with all forms of the test*. Champaign, Ill: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing.

- Hogan Battery

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (1995). *Hogan personality inventory*. Tulsa, OK: Hogan Assessment Systems.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (1997). *Hogan development survey*. Tulsa, OK: Hogan Assessment Systems.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (1996). *Motives, values, preferences inventory*. Tulsa, OK: Hogan Assessment Systems.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (2006). *Hogan business reasoning inventory*. Tulsa, OK: Hogan Assessment Systems.

- MBTI (Myers and Briggs Type Indicator)

Myers, I. B. (1998). *MBTI manual: A guide to the development and use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

- Strengths Finder

Rath, T. (2007). *Strengths Finder2.0*. New York: Gallup Press.

In regards to the organizational instruments, participants mentioned using the following:

- 360°

Edwards, M. R. (1995). *Creating competency-based 360° assessment systems to support leaders & teams*. Tempe, AZ: TEAMS.

- Aspen Family Business Inventory

Jaffe, D., Paul, J., Bork, D., Lane, S., & Dashew, L. (1993). *Aspen family business inventory*. Aspen, Co: Aspen Family Business Group.

- Aspen Family Wealth Inventory

Jaffe D., & Paul J, (2005). *Aspen family wealth inventory (version 9.0)*. Ft. Worth, TX: Aspen Family Business Group, LLC

- DISC

Personal discernment inventory, the DISC profile system: An instrument for understanding yourself and others. (1993). Atlanta, GA: Team Resources.

Panelists discussed the importance of creating new instruments specific for this type of business. Apparently, there are few instruments due to the newness of the field. The qualitative data also seem to show that individual interviews and a close review of the business data are important components of assessment in addition to the data obtained from the instruments.

### *Supervision*

According to the data analysis from the previous phases, there was a high level of consensus among panelists regarding supervision being ideal but unrealistic due to the few MFTs who do family business consultation. I asked participants how this issue might be addressed and their thoughts of alternative ways of providing supervision (e.g. use of technology) and/or having supervisors from a different field (e.g. a family business consultant expert in finance).

This topic appears to be an important issue. There were several comments and discussions around it. There seem to be different approaches to the conceptualization of supervision (hierarchical or equal relationship) and different ideas as to who should provide it (MFTs or other professionals). However, participants tended to agree that the goal of supervision should be to help and guide the consultants find his or her own voice. While some panelists agreed that it is important to be supervised by an MFT because being supervised by professionals from other fields is essentially different, other panelists stated that they have had good learning experiences from professionals from other professions. Part of the difficulty in finding consensus among panelists appeared to be related to different conceptualizations of the nature of the supervisory relationship. According to some participants, being supervised by professionals from other disciplines

implies an equal relationship. For other participants, supervision implies a hierarchical position. The following comments can help exemplify this controversial theme:

"Supervision" as I have received it, and delivered it, only happens on a peer level with a whole host of colleagues: other MFTs, accountants, lawyers, marketing people... leaders in any and all the disciplines that I frequent."

"By virtue of the word, supervision, there is an implicit hierarchy where someone with more of something works with another person who has less of that something..."

Other panelists integrated the two previous positions in regards as to who should supervise (and MFT supervisor vs. supervisors from other professions) and the nature of supervision (hierarchical vs. peer level). Participants seemed to associate supervision ideally with an MFT and complement it with consultation or mentoring with experts from other disciplines. One of the participants summarizes these themes in one of his comments:

"At the very least an MFT doing this work has to have a good MFT supervisor who gets family businesses. It is also best to have a mentor who has done this family business work. I agree with Andy...professionals need multiple mentors and supervisors for this work. Human Resource, accounting, business, lawyers all have great advice to give, and one should look around for FFI groups or other FOB

groups and get involved for the purpose of learning how to work together.

And to echo Joe, an MFT doing this work is not the same as an accountant doing this work.”

An aspect that was briefly discussed as an alternative way for students to receive supervision from an MFT family business consultant is through the phone or internet. Apparently, there is such a service offered by The Couples Institute ([www.couplesinstitute.com](http://www.couplesinstitute.com)).

#### *Getting Started as a Consultant*

The importance of teaching students about creating their own family business consulting practice was an emergent theme from the questionnaire. I asked participants to, through the wiki, share the biggest challenge(s) and/or lessons learned in creating and/or administering their own consulting practice.

A theme that emerged from the data analysis was the apparent importance for MFTs to learn to relate with a population very different from the one they are typically used to. According to the panelists, as family business consultants, MFTs, need to learn to relate with consultants from different disciplines and with business owners. Apparently, working with business-oriented individuals differs greatly from working with mental health professionals. Some comments in regards to this topic were:

“Business consultants are very different than MFTs”

“Learning how to deal with strong willed entrepreneurs can be a challenge.”

Another theme that emerged was the attitude a consultant needs to have. Participants discussed the importance of perseverance. Beginning a consulting business appears to be a slow and arduous process. Some of the comments that summarize this theme are:

“...many consultants I speak with don't have standard consulting practices, they have a handful of businesses that they work with for a long time. They just kind of pop in and out their lives over the course of their relationship...So the lesson is: use your MFT background but add to it through reading, research and experience. Also don't expect to have a booming practice with hundreds of clients, but rather develop quality relationships with a few and do really good work with that handful and the rest will come.”

“The biggest lesson from my business career of service to family business is PERSISTENCE. It sounds so simple and that is deceptive.”

Participants gave several tips for a consulting business to start off. They agreed on the importance and challenges of marketing. Participants recommended to constantly promote services through professional or trade organizations. They also agreed on managing client's expectations by letting them know that a consultant does not have *the* answer but they do have the skills to direct a process that will help the client find some answers. Panelists suggested advertising the services in solution focused therapy terms.

Specifically David, a panelist with 40 years of experience doing family business consulting states:

“Sell the *process* that will produce the workable solution; the client wants something that will work.”

Other tips for a consulting business were related to billing and charging.

Participants agreed that a good system to use for billing is the retainer system. Retainer billing is a way of assuring the consultant of his/her pay. The client must deposit in the consultant's account an agreed amount of money before the consultant begins his/her work. Once the consultant has finished his/her work, he/ she must return any excess of the initial retainer. A comment made by one participant provides a good example of this theme as it relates to his consulting experience:

“For about 3/4 of my business career I have used the retainer system for billing. As I learned more about what was possible, I would use a project fee and get a portion up front. Once I did this, I was operating my business using the client's \$\$\$\$. It is a rare case when a start up consulting practice is OVER funded.”

In regards to charging, participants highlighted the importance of MFTs changing their mindset and see consulting as a profit-oriented business. An important skill to develop to learn appears to be negotiation. According to participants, negotiation is related with the processes of charging, billing and contracting. Participants also commented that the consultant needs to know what the added value of his/her services

have in order to be able to make good negotiations. Some comments made by participants can help exemplify this theme:

“...MFTs ... get tangled up with their original motivation to enter that field, then can be reluctant to charge differently when working in the business arena. They think "Hourly Rate," rather than project. As I see it, the issue is to get unhooked from hourly or daily rate and think VALUE. How do I add value and what is it worth to the client?”

“Negotiating skills have to be learned, and I didn't learn them when trained to be a therapist...”

### *Bibliography*

Data collected in the previous phases underlined the importance for MFTs to learn about other disciplines, however, all the bibliography suggested by the participants were MFT related. For this reason, I asked participants through the wiki for references of literary resources in other disciplines (basic finance, basic business management and dynamics, basic legal aspects) and any good case studies that could be used in a course on family business consultation.

Participants did not refer any direct resources for law and finance. They tended to either reference business related literature or relational related literature.

Participants suggested the following resources in the business category: Harvard Business Review, Soundview book summaries, Audiotech book summaries, Harnish, V. (2002). *The Rockefeller Habits*. NY: Select Books

Poza, E., (2009). *Family Business*. Cincinnati, Ohio: South-Western College Publishing.

In the relational related literature, some participants mentioned the importance of having both, consultants and the families they are working with read the following books:

Travis, C., & Anderson, E. (2007) *Mistakes Were Made (but not by me), Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts*. Orlando, FL: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Harvey S., (2009). *The Wilderness: A novel*. NY: Bantam Dell Publishing Group.

### Conclusion

A literature review allowed me to predetermine general areas to include in a model curriculum for training MFTs in family business consultation. This review also provided me with ideas regarding the content of each area. This content, however, was not exhaustive or rich due to the little literature specific in family business consultation for MFTs. The analysis of the data provided by the panelists allowed me to add content to the areas, add and merge areas, and understand how these are interrelated.

After the analysis of the data, the nine areas I initially determined (unique issues faced by family businesses, MFT theories, additional areas to be knowledgeable of, consultation vs. therapy, ethical issues, research, practicum, supervision, and bibliography) can be merged into three main categories (family business consultation, theoretical understandings of family businesses, and practicum and supervision). I present a matrix to show how I reached these final three categories in Table 25.

Table 25

*List of Categories and Themes (to be read from the bottom up)*

<b>CATEGORIES</b>					
Theoretical understanding of FB		FB Consultation		Practicum and Supervision	
<b>THEMES</b>					
1. MFT Theories		4. Introduction to Consultation			
2. Complementary Theories		4A. Consultation vs. Therapy		4B. Managing own Business	
3. Introduction to FB				5. Practicum	
				6. Supervision	
<b>SUBTHEMES (SPECIFIC CONTENT AREAS)</b>					
1. MFT Theories				5A. Group facilitation.	
2A. Psychological Theories		3A. Defining FB		4B1. Marketing	
2B. Business Theories		3B. FB specific issues		4B2. Billing	
2C. Finance				4B3. Charging	
2D. Law		Bibliography		4B4. Contracting	
				4B5. Negotiation	
				5C. Networking	
				5D. Consulting	
Bibliography				6A. Self of consultant	
				6B. Self of therapist	
				6C. Ethics	
				Bibliography	

FB: Family Businesses

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to create a model curriculum for MFTs in family business consultation. I develop this chapter around the model curriculum which I created from the analysis of the data collected from the panel of experts through a Delphi method. I also discuss the study's findings and their implications for future practice and research. I finally present limitations of this study and general conclusions.

Throughout this chapter I use the term "course" which can be limiting. By course I mean organized content material which potentially could be used in several ways such as workshops, self training, course contents, and/or courses. I use the term curriculum in the sense of an integration and interrelation between the courses.

#### Overview

Family business consultation is an emerging field where marriage and family therapists have a unique contribution to make. Marriage and family therapists' training does not typically offer specialized courses in family business consultation. The purpose of this study is to fill this gap by creating a model curriculum for marriage and family therapists in family business consultation. This curriculum can be used as content for graduate courses, professional workshops, and self study. A Delphi method allowed me to address this need by gathering experts in the field to discuss the ideal content a training program for MFTs should have. A mixed methodology allowed me to examine both controversial and consensual data.

## Curriculum: Potential Content for Courses, Workshops, and Self Study

The results of this study allowed me to determine the following three main categories to include in a curriculum: theoretical understanding of family businesses, family business consultation, and practicum and supervision. These three main areas are interrelated and complement each other. Each category includes subcategories I denominated courses. The goal of the curriculum is to provide a comprehensive framework to the understanding and consulting to family businesses. A summarized version of this curriculum is shown in Appendix G.

Each of these three categories contains themes which could be converted into a subject or course. I will present each subject with its main pedagogical objective, specific aspects to cover, recommended group and individual activities and bibliography. The content of this model curriculum emerged from the data provided by the panelists. In some cases I include some references in addition to those recommended by the participants to enhance comprehension on the subject matter. I obtained these references from a literature review.

### *Interrelation Between the Three Main Categories*

An integrative theoretical understanding of family businesses will allow the student to be knowledgeable of the dynamics, structure, and organization of family businesses. Understanding family business consultation can provide students with information about family business in particular and the specific work a consultant does.

Practicum and supervision would expose students to the field of consultation with family businesses.

There can be a logical chronology to teaching these core subjects. For students to fully understand the specific issues faced by family businesses, they would need to have a multidisciplinary understanding of the complex system of family businesses. Further, in order to enhance the learning of any practical experience, students should have knowledge of the basics of family businesses and the consultation process.

#### *Assumptions Underlying the Curriculum.*

An essential element to the courses created is the activities and/or case studies. The ideas underlying this style of teaching are supported by transformational theory as developed by Paulo Freire, Phyllis Cunningham, Laurent Daloz, and Jack Mezirow. These theorists consider sociocultural and personal dimensions as essential in a learning style that transform the individual (Dirkx, 2000).

Transformative learning implies psychological changes since it assumes that it changes the way people see themselves and their world (Baumgartner, 2001). Much of the learning in adulthood consists of adding information to *what* we know. However, transformational learning allows an individual to change *how* he/she knows by taking personal experience into consideration (Kegan, 2000).

According to Daloz (1999), the transformational learning process is intuitive, holistic, and contextually based. In this process, the instructor guides students in a learning journey contemplating the student's social environment, including family dynamics and social class. A way to take into account these aspects, some specific

strategies can be included in a course. According to Cranton (1994) questioning techniques, consciousness-raising exercises, and experiential activities are some strategies that can be used to stimulate Transformational Learning.

Following these theoretical assumptions, all the courses I created in the curriculum include case studies and activities. The objective of such activities is to stimulate critical thinking and analysis, integrate the different content areas. All are experiential in nature.

A fundamental aspect to consider in the application of these strategies is the class' environment. Mezirow (2000) states that a safe, open, and trusting environment allows transformational learning. Such characteristics give way to participation, collaboration, exploration, critical reflection, and feedback from students. Therefore it is important for instructors to create such an environment.

### *Curricular Components*

#### *1. Theoretical Understanding of Family Businesses*

Family business consultants need to have a multidisciplinary understanding of family businesses (Swartz, 1989). A way of organizing such a multidisciplinary approach specifically for MFTs is to divide this category into two main subjects: MFT theories and complementary theories.

*MFT theories.* Although each participant had a personal integration and preference for theories guiding their work as family business consultants, they agreed that some theories can better help understand family businesses' dynamics and unique issues. These specific theories (Bowenian, Narrative, Solution Focused, Structural, Contextual,

and Collaborative/Postmodern) can form part of the specific contents to include in this topic. Ideally this course would be taught to MFTs who already possess a basic knowledge of these theories, thus the objective of this course could be to help them apply and integrate these theories to understanding and family businesses and the consulting process.

It is important to train therapists to practice from a strong theoretical base. Instructors can help students to examine and develop their own model and work toward an individual theoretical integration in practice (Kelly, 1996). In order to realize a personal theoretical integration, students need to have good knowledge of theories. This course can provide students with this basic knowledge and its application to family business consulting. Students can then apply those that best suit them in supervised practice.

The following activities could help meet the objectives of this course:

#### Activity 1.

Students can be asked to pick a theory and apply it to understanding family businesses and make a presentation to the class. The instructor can facilitate a class discussion in order to better understand the application the student has made.

There are very few MFT writings in family business or consultation by family therapy scholars. To help bridge this gap, students could be encouraged to write a publishable paper on the application of MFT theoretical approaches to family businesses and submit it to an MFT journal.

#### Activity 2.

Students can be encouraged to reflect on their own theoretical approach by thinking and writing about how they think change occurs, what theories inform their work, what do they think of integrating theories? Pros? Cons?, and how can their own theoretical approach could be applied to family businesses?

*Complementary Theories.* According to the participants, MFT theories can be complemented with psychology, business management (organization and dynamics), finance, and law. An understanding of family businesses requires knowledge of each of these interrelated disciplines. The content of this subject includes the specific aspects of each of these disciplines that seem essential for MFTs to learn about.

The objective of this course can be to help students integrate and apply theories from a variety of disciplines used to the understanding of family business and the consulting process.

The following class activities can help meet this objective:

Activity 1.

Invite guest lecturers from psychology, business, finance, and law who specialize in providing consultation to family businesses. These lecturers can give a class on their theoretical understandings of family businesses.

Activity 2.

Students can be asked to interview family business consultants from these different disciplines taking special attention to the following aspects:

- Language used
- Ways of understanding and conceptualizing systems,

- Ethical codes they adhere to (differences and similarities between them and MFT's)

- How they felt in this interaction
- How different or similar it is to interact with MFT colleagues.

Students could be encouraged to share these experiences with the group and process on their thoughts and feelings.

### Activity 3

Students could be encouraged, by writing a reflective paper, to think about how psychological theories can help them understand family businesses and how they might be complementary to systemic theoretical approaches. The following questions can help guide their thoughts:

- How is MFT different from psychology?
- As a family business consultant, how is the job of an MFT different from that of an I-O psychologist?
- What is the unique contribution of MFT to family business consultation?
- Which psychological theories do you feel more comfortable with? How do these theories relate with your preferred MFT theories? What similarities and differences do you see? Can they be complementary? If so, how?

## 2. *Family Business Consultation*

Family business consultants need to understand the unique dynamics characteristic of family businesses as well as the consultation process. Therefore, family

business consultation could be taught through the introduction of two interrelated subject matters: family businesses and consultation.

*Introduction to family businesses.* An introduction to family business could begin with a definition of this term (Astrachan and Shanker, 2003) and what makes family businesses different from other businesses. The emotional ties of family relationships blended with business give these organizations unique strengths and unique challenges they need to overcome in order to be successful (Kaslow & Kaslow, 1992; Kaye, 1991; McKlendon and Kadis, 1991, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2007/2008).

Since theories provide ways to interpret and understand phenomena, thus this course should be complementary with theoretical understanding on how family businesses operate. The objective of this course can be to allow students to acquire basic knowledge and understanding of the fundamental dynamics, strengths and challenges that family businesses tend to face.

The results of this study reflects the following as important challenges to consider:

- Boundaries between generations
- Sibling rivalries
- Marital power conflicts
- Parent - offspring conflicts
- Gender issues
- Succession planning and succession dynamics

With the exception of succession planning, all of the issues mentioned are also seen in any clinical setting. However, in family businesses the context is different and broader. These issues should be analyzed along with the business' life cycle stage, the family's life cycle stage and also the individual's life cycle stage.

Students could be encouraged to consider the relational challenges family businesses tend to face within a broad systems perspective by incorporating interrelationships between the different systems that form part of this whole. A way to help students meet this objective can be through case studies. Based on the data provided by panelists of this study, I created eight illustrative case studies containing the main issues faced by consultants. To further challenge students to think in a broader systems perspective, I created eight discussion questions to help analyze the case studies.

#### Case 1: Parent/Offspring Tensions

You receive a call from a business CFO that is seeking consultation services. He mentions the following:

“I have worked with my Dad for 10 years. Since the beginning I was kind of my father's partner. However, I used to feel that I needed to remain on the backstage because of his dominant personality. It was hard to jump in. I learned a lot from him and have always respected what he had to say. But as I gained experience, some tension began to build up. I felt more confident as I learned more. Sometimes I felt like my ideas were better than his. However, he is a very stubborn person. I finally dared to tell him to let me run my own show. He became very angry. What can I do? Can you help us?”

## Case 2: Parent/Offspring Tensions

You receive a call from a business owner that is seeking consultation services. He mentions the following:

“My son is the general manager of the company but honestly I think I do more managing than he does. I have a lot of experience and believe I can see things he cannot. This is a family business, and the fact that “general manager” is not my job title, does not mean that I cannot get involved if the circumstances deemed it. My son went on leave for a year, during which time I was in charge of the business. I turned it around. Our business then went from being small to being one of the biggest in the area. My son is now resentful and our relationship has become very distant since then. What should I do? Can you help us?”

## Case 3: Spouse Tensions

*Husband:* “My wife has the bad habit of wanting to be the boss and thinking she knows it all. When someone is working, she interferes. She may say, for example, they are not doing things the right way, when she doesn’t even know anything about the business. Instead of doing that, she should ask me. As you might imagine, her comments are not well received by the employees. As a result, there is a fever of low motivation in the company.”

*Wife:* “My husband will say that he will listen to me, but he never does. He doesn’t like feedback, especially when I have something negative to say. I want him to listen to me. I also want him to do something, to act on what I have to say.”

#### Case 4: Spouse Tensions

*Wife:* “My husband often wants me to do more than I sometimes feel like doing. He wants me to help him and for this he expects me to be up to date in so many different areas - sales approaches, money forecasting, and finance-. Honestly, I do not feel like I should or want to invest so much time and effort. He expects me to know everything and to always be there for him. I guess he is worried about his health since he has been diagnosed with high blood pressure. He might be afraid that if something happens to him, nobody will be able to do his work. But this is exhausting for me. He does not understand that I have to take care of the house and three children in addition to my “real” job responsibilities, which I don’t even know what they are any more.”

*Husband:* “It is good to have my wife because she is always there. I call her my “back up” person. Whenever I need someone in a hurry, I call her and she is always available. It is different than asking an employee, whom you have to ask for anything ahead of time. It’s better with her, she is there.”

#### Case 5: Succession and Gender Issues

John is the CEO and owner of a successful family owned business. He has two children, Tom and Mary. Fifteen years ago, John brought his son to work with him and did not make an offer to Mary because he believed she could not commit to the family business and raise a family. Mary began her own business which has grown to be extremely successful.

*John:* “When I eventually leave this world, everything will be evenly divided among my two kids. However, I will leave the business in charge of Tom because in that way, I can rest assured that the company will stay in the family. Mary would probably bring in her husband and that is the way you start losing the essence of the family business.”

*Tom:* “I have always relied on my father’s experience. The business went well with Dad’s management style. I kind of was expected to be here and continue with the legacy of the business. I am not sure I would have chosen a business route otherwise. I always liked music. I am more of the creative type.”

#### Case 6: Succession Conflicts

*Son:* “Dad will simply not let go. He is 70 now and left the presidency to me 2 years ago. I am the president on paper, but in reality he still runs the company. He comes to my office and makes decisions, tells others what to do and tells me how I should run the business. He always finds a way to get the financial statements to find out how the business is doing and, of course, it is never as good as it would be if he had made the decisions.”

*Father:* “I am not ready for retirement yet. I left the presidency of the company to my son because of health reasons. I am, however an advisor to him. I have experience and have done this for over forty years.”

#### Case 7: Sibling Rivalry

“I think things are unfair between my brother and me and I really don’t understand my father’s decisions. He is only twenty four years old and makes more money than I do and

I definitely work harder than he does. I had to start as a salesman and made my way up. My brother came directly to a higher position, earning more money.”

#### Case 8: Sibling Rivalry and Substance Abuse

“My sister just sits there and does nothing. She never calls customers or anything. Lots of people have told me that the company would not last two months if I left. I recently learned that she used to sneak money away from the business and make checks out for more than what she would put on the stub. She oftentimes arrives late for work or does not show up at all. I know she has been late because of drinking and partying. She always liked alcohol, but recently things appear to be getting worse. But what is even worse is that Mom and Dad appear to be blind to all this. I guess they are used to me doing all the work”

Discussion questions for all cases:

1. If you accepted the job as family business consultant, what would you do? How would you approach this issue?
2. What do you think the underlying issue is?
3. What would the goal of your intervention be?
4. How would you intervene?
5. How would this help the family business? What are you prioritizing: family or business?
6. Which theories are informing your work?
7. What other systems are involved? How?

8. What would you guess is happening in the business? How do you conceptualize the family dynamics? What processes are at work? Can you see any isomorphism between the business and family dynamics?
9. What can you say about boundaries and differentiation within family members, between generations, between family subsystems, and between the businesses' subsystems?

### *Introduction to Consultation*

The results of this study show that a consultant-to-be should have knowledge of several aspects of consultation. They need to learn about the business of consultation as well as the differences and similarities between therapy and consultation.

*Consultation: becoming a business person: Managing your own business.*

One of the emergent themes in this research was the importance of educating MFTs to run their own businesses. The objective of this course can be to give students the tools to set their own business. According to the data of this research, it would be good for students to learn about basic aspects of the creation and management of a business such as marketing, billing, charging, creating contracts, and developing negotiation skills.

These themes are supported in the literature on private practice management for counselors and psychologists. In addition to the aspects mentioned by the panelists, emotional aspects related to managing a private practice and the importance of supervision (Morgan, 2006, Richards, 1990). These aspects were shared by participants through their experiences.

The following class activities can help students gain insight on this subject:

Activity 1: Group Activity on Negotiation.

You want to create a company with a team of family business consultants.

Discuss:

Who will you partner with?

How will you find them?

What is important for you in a partner?

Imagine that you now have new partners. You now need to figure out how your new family business consultation business will work:

Discuss the following:

How will you charge?

What type of contract will you have among you? Is a contract necessary?

What will you sell?

What is your added value?

How will you advertise/market your business?

How do you finance your business?

How will you obtain legal advice? From whom? For what?

Who does what?

## Activity 2: Individual and Group Activity: Getting Hired

A. Briefly, write down your answers to the following questions:

- How would you present yourself to a CEO?
- What is the service you offer?
- Why should he/she hire you?
- How can you help him/her?
- How will you charge?
- How much time will you take?
- How would you explain the process of consultation?
- What language would you use? Why?

B. Each person in groups of three role plays the following situations:

Situation A:

A CEO has agreed to see you. He is curious as to how you can help him and his family business. You do not know much about him, you are simply marketing your services.

How do you present yourself and your services?

Situation B:

You have been working with a client for several months now. He wants you to help him with his anxiety and insomnia. After some time, he began mentioning his work. You realize that his issues are symptoms of the stress and position he holds in his family business. You think it is a good idea for you to intervene at a business level. How would you approach this situation?

C. Discuss as a class the whole role play experience.

Activity 3: Group Debate on Charging Modalities and Negotiation

- Divide the class in two.
- Have one group think on the pros of charging by the hour and cons of charging by results.
- Have the other half think on the pros of charging by results and cons of charging by the hour.
- Give each group 15 minutes to change the mind of the other group.
- Ask about any ethical issues implicit in each approach.

*Consultation vs. therapy.* Although important, the difference between being a consultant and being a therapist is not easy to establish. The relationship with the client, the type of feedback given to clients, the depth of the work, and the use of assessment tools appear to be important differences. These main differences are supported by the existing literature on this specific topic (McDaniel, Wynne, & Weber, 1986).

Many of the assessment tools mentioned by participants are psychological. They provide information on personality traits. Students can be encouraged to use the information provided by these instruments and integrate it to a systemic theoretical approaches. A list of the assessments recommended by the participants to use in family business consultation is provided in Appendix F.

An interesting finding from the qualitative data analysis was the change of professional identity that appears to happen from being a therapist to being a consultant. This change appears to be related with the scope of work, type of relationship with the clients, and ethical codes to which the professional adheres.

As a course objective, students should be able to understand the basic differences between consultation and therapy. Although the differences between therapist and consultant can be discussed and the student can be knowledgeable of them, they would need to be experienced in practice to be fully comprehended. For these reasons, I link this particular theme with practicum and supervision where students can have the opportunity to experience these issues.

### *3. Practicum and Supervision*

The importance of practical experience in the training of mental health professionals is well documented (e.g. Dana & May, 1987). The AAMFT (as well as the different associations for mental health practitioners such as social work and psychology) require supervised practicum as a central subject in accredited graduate program curriculums.

Both practicum and supervision were topics of controversy due to the idea that, although ideal, they might not be feasible because of the few opportunities a student has and because of the few MFTs who have expertise as supervisors of family business consultants. Some participants provided alternative ways of supervision that could help undermine these limitations such as using technology. For example, group supervision through the phone or internet as provided by The Couples Institute ([www.couplesinstitute.com](http://www.couplesinstitute.com)).

Practicum and supervision make sense together, however, each has specific challenges. Therefore, I will explain each separately below.

#### *Practicum*

Results of this study indicate the importance for students to learn to deal with business oriented professionals in order to better understand their language, ethical codes, and ways of understanding systems. In “complementary theories” I present alternative ways for students to begin this multidisciplinary interaction. In addition to them, students could merge into the field of consultation through the following activities:

- Shadow an experienced consultant
- Co-consult with senior consultants

- Interview family business consultants from different disciplines (e.g., MFT, psychology, psychiatry, finance, business management, and law) and discuss with them their similarities and differences.
- Attend network groups of family business advisors (the Family Firm Institute has some study groups in different areas of the country) and local forums for family business owners (e.g., Virginia Tech and Wake Forest University host these types of programs).

*Group facilitation.* Participants also agreed that consultants should be proficient in group facilitation and group dynamics, thus, students should certainly gain more practice facilitating such groups. As MFTs, we are trained to work with families, which are a type of group. However, the family business consultation setting sometimes involves working with groups with a combination of family and non family members. Students should be challenged to think of the differences and similarities of the dynamics of these groups and how to approach them.

*Ethical issues.* An integration of the results of this study suggests that particular ethical issues need to be addressed when working in family business consultation. From the data gathered in this study, I created the following examples of case studies along with discussion questions that could be included in an ethics discussion during practicum.

#### Case Study 1

You are working with a family business that also has non family members as part of the managerial group. You need to work with them to help with “team building” since they seem to have poor communication. As your work progresses, issues arise regarding how non family members feel by not being part of the family.

### Discussion Questions.

What ethical issues would you consider?

How would you deal with confidentiality?

How would you deal with these issues?

How would this be different than your work as a therapist with a family?

### Case Study 2

You have been working with this family business for eight years now. They call you every time some family issue begins to get in the way of the business. With each intervention, you spend time with the family at their vacation home and go golfing with the owner, consequently, your relationship with the family has become closer. You even find yourself self disclosing more than what you would regularly do in therapy. Then an issue came up. The youngest daughter, who holds an important directory position, arrives late for work and sometimes does not appear at all. She also appears to be distant from everyone and appears to have stopped caring about her work. Her behavior is damaging the organizational climate and the productivity of the company. Some at the company believe she is into drugs. You have been called in as a family business consultant.

### Discussion Questions.

What ethical issues do you see?

How would you approach this situation?

What would you work on?

Who would you include in your work?

How do your feelings for the family and close relationship with them play a part in your work?

Would you recommend a referral to a therapist? Why and for what?

What would be your role vis a vis the therapist's role?

### Case Study 3

You are hired by a family business to help the family members communicate better. The three adult children hold managerial positions and the father is the GM of the company. The children feel they are not heard and that their father dictates what everyone should do. One of the sons called you to get help. When you meet with the father, you realize that he is not very open to working with you. It somehow reminded you of your relationship with your father and how he often made you feel not worthy.

### Discussion Questions:

Would you accept the job?

Which ethical codes apply to your decision of working or not with this family?

How does your experience shape what you hear and see?

Would you work without the father?

If not, how would you get him involved?

Why or why not do you think it is important to have the father involved?

## *Supervision*

Ideally, according to the participants of this study, students should be supervised by an MFT who is, at least, knowledgeable of family business consulting. Due to the few MFTs who have this expertise, alternative ways of supervision with the use of technology could be applied (i.e. tele or video conferences). In addition to this supervision, participants recommend having mentors and/or co consultants from other disciplines who might be more accessible. An alternative could be to pair with an MBA program. In such collaboration students could get advice from business management and finance experts. Results show that law is another important area to learn about. Programs could similarly collaborate with law schools or business law partners in an MBA program.

Aspects related to the self of the therapist or consultant appeared important to consider. A key theme that emerged in this study is that one's identity as a consultant seems to be different from one's identity as a therapist. Also, it is important to understand why one wants to pursue this route and analyze and deal with one's own issues regarding money, power and authority. The student should also reflect on his or her identity and the assets he or she can bring to the role of a consultant. For some, this may be marketing ability, for others, empathy. According to participants, it is important how one sells his or her services and presents him or herself and, ultimately, how one works.

Taking into account the mentioned skills that a student should develop in supervision, I created the following illustrative activities:

Activity 1: Money, Power, and Authority in my Family

1. Make a three-generational genogram of your family.

2. Concentrate on the role and dynamics of money, power and authority figures.
3. How can you relate to these issues as they existed in previous generations?

## Activity 2: Analyzing Transference

Transference is when an individual unconsciously directs his or her desires/feelings for one person towards another.

### *2.1. Thinking of Transference*

Find or write up a story where transference issues are evident. For example, you meet the son of the CEO. He appears so familiar, you immediately like him. You are not sure who he reminds you of. After some reflection, you realize that he reminds you of an ex boyfriend/girlfriend with whom you had a significant relationship.

### *2.2. Group Analysis of Stories*

Form a group of 3 and share your stories:

- Find similarities: process vs. content
- Do you see any ethical issues?
- Reflect on how transference is part of your work as a therapist and as a consultant.

Are they different? How?

- How do you deal with this potential risk?

## Activity 3: Identity

Write up a paper about yourself and your career so far. Reflect on the following topics:

- What motivated you to be a therapist?

- How does your identity as a therapist relate with who you are in your family?
- Is there a family story behind your decision?
- What attracts you to family business consultation?
- How do you see yourself as a consultant?
- Do you think there are differences between identifying as a therapist identifying as a consultant? If so, what would these differences be?

#### Activity 4: Being a Therapist vs. Being a Consultant

Give students the following two different situations to analyze.

*Situation 1:* You are meeting with a therapist to begin working on issues you are having with your spouse.

*Situation 2:* You are a family business owner and CEO who is meeting with a consultant. He/she is here to help you improve your marketing strategy.

After giving each situation ask students to reflect and answer to the following questions:

- What idea (image, concept) comes to your mind?
- What feelings are associated with this representation?
- What are your expectations?
- Where (setting) does this take place?
- How do you imagine the relationship with him/her?
- Is there hierarchy?
- How does power play a role in this relationship?

Ask students to compare the answers to each question in each situation. Discuss as a group the similarities and differences found.

### Implications for Future Practice and Research

There are few MFTs who actually apply their knowledge and dedicate their career to family business consultation. However it is an important area where the special expertise of MFTs can be useful. The application of this model curriculum within a graduate program or graduate course in family business consultation would be an opportunity to introduce MFTs to this field. It would be the first step in opening a promising alternative field of practice and study for MFTs.

The results of this research indicate a lack of MFT assessment instruments for use in family business consultation. MFT assessments could be modified, normed, or validated to be applied to family business consulting.

Another finding in this study is the integrative theoretical approach used by the participants. There is no literature in this area. The creation of an integrative theoretical model to apply to family business consultation could aid to fill this gap.

Participants of this study agreed on the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to consultation, where law and finance play important roles. However, participants did not specify the legal and financial aspects they have had to learn to better serve the client. Future research could focus on which specific aspects of these disciplines complement a MFT in consulting to family businesses.

Another aspect that was brought up by participants was the difficulty of communicating with consultants from other disciplines. Future research could help create a common language among consultants from the different disciplines that advise family businesses.

An interesting phenomenon of this research is that the participants that did not complete all phases of the study are academics. With the exception of one participant, all those who participated in all phases of the Delphi work primarily as consultants. This brings up an interesting phenomenon which could be associated with the little MFT literature that exists in family business consultation. Since academics tend to focus more on teaching, research and publishing than on practice, one would expect them to show interest in research by participating. Future research could explore the profile of MFTs writing in family business consultation and the reasons for the low tendency of MFTs working primarily in an academic setting to do research and write about family business consultation.

In order to provide consultation to family businesses, it is important to have the involvement of the owners. The owners are not always the ones looking for help. Research could help determine aspects related with owner involvement.

The lack of guidelines for MFTs entering the field of family business consultation is evident. The creation of such guidelines is fundamental for education and training purposes, as well as for determining the scope of practice. It would be ideal to establish guidelines that could be recognized by the AAMFT. These guidelines could contain the following aspects:

1. Determination of FB consultation (or consultation in general) by MFTs:

Differentiation with the other mental health professions, determination of the role of a MFT providing consultation, ways to approach consultation. Basically: what do we do, how is it different from other professions and how do we do it.

2. Development of specific ethical codes: Consider the essential differences between clinical and organizational work and relationship with clients. Evaluate MFT ethical codes and create ethical standards that are coherent with this specific type of work.

3. Recognition of family business consultation as a MFT specialization. A creation of an association for family business consultants as a sub area of the AAMFT could provide practitioners with an identity and legitimize this specialty.

### Limitations

The results of this study reflect the ideas and experiences of one group of knowledgeable panelists. For this reason, they cannot be generalized. Also, the size of the group was relatively small. However, the universe of MFTs who do business consultation also appears to be small.

The first two phases of this Delphi study maintained the panelists' confidentiality. However, in the third phase confidentiality was an issue. Participants were asked to sign up with a pseudonym. Only one did. The other participants wanted to be recognized and commented with their full names. They all knew each other. The potential risk of having the names exposed is that comments posted by experts with more experience and/or recognition could have impacted the ideas and comments of those with less experience.

In the wiki phase, some technical issues arose. Three of the nine participants enrolled reported to me that they were not able to post their comments because their browser was incompatible. This problem was easily resolvable with the aid of a technician (I provided the technician's phone number). This did not require more than a 3 minute phone call. Two of the participants solved their problem and participated fully in the wiki. One did not. It may be that this participant did not participate in this phase for this reason. There was another participant who signed in to the wiki but never posted a comment.

### General Conclusions

Marriage and family therapists can offer family businesses resources to better deal with some of the unique challenges they tend to face. Apparently, there are very few family therapists providing this type of work. Some family business needs (e. g. personality profiles) appear to be addressed adequately by other behavioral sciences such as psychology. Psychology, for example, has a specialized area in industrial/organizational psychology. Courses in this discipline are also taught in MBA programs.

Marriage and family therapy is a distinct discipline, much younger than psychology, but essentially different. According to the panelists, the systemic approach and understanding of human relationships equips them to be particularly well suited to help family businesses. Specialized training in this area can help therapists to provide better services to family businesses and can provide an additional career avenue for the field of family therapy.

This study provides a model curriculum to help improve the training of MFTs in family business consultation. The mixed methodology helped provide a richer and broader picture of themes that could be integrated to create such a curriculum.

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Appendix A  
IRB Exempt Approval

DATE: December 15, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fred P. Piercy  
Ines Castanos

FROM: Carmen Green 

SUBJECT: **IRB Exempt Approval:** "Family Business Consultation: A Delphi Study to Develop Courses for Marriage and Family Therapists", IRB # 08-767

I have reviewed your request to the IRB for exemption for the above referenced project. The research falls within the exempt status. Approval is granted effective as of December 15, 2008.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in the research protocol. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

cc: File

## Appendix B

### Invitation Mail

Dear Reader:

I am contacting you and a few other professionals with experience in family business consulting to help me determine answers to a question that should be helpful to both you and me: What do experts believe are the most important curricular components in coursework in family business consultation for the field of marriage and family therapy? If you help me with this important study, I will be happy to share the results with you.

Since you are an expert in the area of family business consulting, I would like to ask you to take part in this study by a) completing a brief phone interview with me, b) filling out one questionnaire, and c) reacting - through an online wiki - to the results of the questionnaire and/or to the reactions of other panelists to the resulting profile. The total time commitment will be less than 2 hours. I thank you for your participation, you will receive a complete report of the findings which I hope you will find useful in your own work.

I have selected you as an expert panelist since you meet the following criteria: Licensure in MFT, FFI members, and having at least 5 years of experience providing consultation to family businesses. I would also like to ask you to nominate other experts who might meet these criteria and who might be interested in participating in this study. I anticipate having about 12 panelists, thus you will be an integral part of this study. With your help, this research will help create specialized courses for family therapists who

wish to pursue family business consultation as a career. I look forward to working with you in the weeks to come.

If you wish to be part of this research, please reply to this mail by providing the following information:

- Complete name:
- Phone number:
- E-mail:
- Expert nominees who you believe meet the criteria above;

1.

- Name
- Phone number or e-mail

2.

- Name
- Phone number or e-mail

Thank you very much in advance for your time.

Respectfully,

Carolina Castanos

## Appendix C

### Semi-Structured Phone Interview Protocol

Thank you very much for agreeing to talk with me today. This interview is a fundamental part of the research I am conducting for my dissertation.

Today I would like to talk with you about the general areas that I should focus on while creating specialized courses for MFT graduate students who wish to specialize in family business consulting. Based on your feedback and that of other panelists, I will create a questionnaire which will be sent to all experts. This questionnaire will be the backbone of the content of the course(s) that will be created.

I have come up with the following topics based on a thorough literature review. After I read them to you, I would like to know if you have any comments and/ or additions to suggest.

#### Interview Questions:

1. What are the most common (and unique to family business) issues faced by family business consultants? How are these issues different from issues faced by a therapist working in clinical settings?
2. Which MFT theoretical models are the most applicable to the understanding and intervention of family business consultation? Why?
3. Beyond these models, what else should a family business consultant know?
4. How does consultation differ from therapy?
5. What books should be required for family business consultants?

6. Are there particular ethical issues that should be covered in coursework on family business consultation?
7. Are there specific research issues, topics and/or methodologies that need to be addressed?
8. What practical experience should be built into the training of family business consultants?
9. Should supervision be required? What qualifications should a supervisor have?

Appendix D  
On-Line Questionnaire

## Welcome to the Second Delphi Phase!



You are one of 10 participants in this study. Your input, therefore, is tremendously important.

It will not take you more than 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire. You must complete the questionnaire once you begin taking it since answered questions cannot be saved.

The questionnaire consists of 9 questions, each with a number of answers on a Likert-like scale (1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree). Each question also has a space for you to add any alternatives that are not included. There is also a space for you to comment on the questions or add any suggestions you might have.

As you answer the questions, please keep in mind that we are creating a model curriculum on family business consultation for MFT graduate students. Thus, these students already possess the knowledge on MFT and behavioral sciences provided by their program. This model curriculum should equip MFTs with sufficient tools to allow them to be competent family business consultants.

Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Carolina Castaños at 540 320 7481 or by email at [carocas@vt.edu](mailto:carocas@vt.edu).

**Thank you very much for your time and support.**

1. The following theories or models should be included in an introduction to family business course for MFTs:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Structural *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Bowenian *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Narrative *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Collaborative/Postmodern *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Contextual therapy *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
MRI *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Solution focused *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions

2. MFTs need to learn about the following issues:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Boundaries between generations *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Business life cycle *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Family life cycle *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Sibling rivalries *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Marital power conflicts *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Parent - offspring conflicts *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Gender issues *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Succession planning *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions



4. Doing therapy in a clinical setting is different than doing consultation in that:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
The relationship with the client differs in consultation you interact socially with your client. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
In consultation you get involved in the business (leading the company, changing organizational culture, doing strategic training programs). *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
In consultation you give more advice and in therapy you let the client get to their own conclusions. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
In consultation your target is to help improve the business, not necessarily relationships. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
In consultation you should work with an interdisciplinary team and know when to bring in other professionals. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
In consultation you do not get to do such in-depth work as in therapy. You outsource treatment. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Actually, the process is the same *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Other                      1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions

5. Ethical issues that need to be considered when doing consultation to families working together in businesses are:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Dual relationships *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Taking a neutral position regardless of who hired you and who is paying you. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Taking the position of the expert: Knowing when to collaborate with other professionals *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Confidentiality *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Ethical codes of the different disciplines involved (e.g., business, legal, financial) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Managing boundaries between consultant and client. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Differentiation *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
These issues are not that important to consider in a curriculum. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions

6. Research and evaluative aspects to consider are:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
Not important for a curriculum in consultation. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Specific assessment instruments and methods to gather information about the family to determine an effective intervention. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Cutting edge topics should be suggested to students. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
In consultation you constantly do research or "evaluations" of your work. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
An interdisciplinary language for diagnosis should be created in order for consultants working together from different disciplines to communicate more effectively. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions

7. A practicum or internship should:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Be a requirement: hands-on experience. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Students should shadow an experienced consultant. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
It cannot be done: it would not be ethical for students to shadow the consultant. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Students should co-consult with senior consultants. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Students should interview family business consultants. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Students should attend to network groups of family business; they should have exposure to meetings with business people. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Students should be proficient in group facilitation and group dynamics. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions

8. Supervision should:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Be done as a co-consultation *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Help supervisees reflect on their motives to be a consultant *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Help supervisees reflect on their skills and assets *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Supervisees should reflect on messages from their own family of origin regarding money and power. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Supervisees should reflect on messages from their own family of origin regarding authority figure issues. *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Supervisees should be required to reflect on transference issues (e.g. they could be required to write a paper and evaluate the effects of transference) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Supervisees should look for a supervisor who is an expert on an area in which he or she feels needs more support (e.g. an accountant). *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Would be ideal, but is unrealistic due to the few experts in the area (MFT FB consultants) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other:

Comments/suggestions

9. The following are literature resources that an MFT family business consultant should be knowledgeable of:

	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	7 Strongly Agree
Generation to Generation (Friedman, E., 1985) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Generation to Generation: Life cycles of family business (Gersick, K.E., Davis, J. A., Hampton, M. M., Lansberg, I., 1997) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Family Business, Risky Business (Bork, D., 1986) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Working with the ones you love (Jaffe, D. T., 2000) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Reconciling Relationships and Preserving the Family Business (McClendon, R. and Kadis, R. B., 2004) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Handbook of Family Therapy (Gurman and Kniskern, 1981) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Handbook of Family Business and Family Business Consultation (Kaslow, F. W., 2006) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
The Little Red Book of Family Business (Bork, D., 2008) *	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						
Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>						

Please specify Other

Comments/suggestions

## Appendix E

### Wiki: Discussion Questions



## Welcome to the Third and Final Delphi Phase: The Wiki !!!



You are now about to enter a wiki: A discussion space.

I'm including topics from the previous survey upon which some of you disagreed, as well as a few issues that might need further discussion.

On the right side of your screen you will find a sidebar titled "Topics for discussion" which has links to different pages. Each page consists of a topic. You can enter each page and add your comments by clicking on the "Add comment" link located **at the bottom of each page**. You can make a comment to the general statement and/or to other posted comments. (I encourage you to comment on the comments of others. Perhaps we can get a few useful discussions going.)

You will receive email notifications of any new comments that are posted. If you wish to reply to those comments, simply log on and add your new comment.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [carocas@vt.edu](mailto:carocas@vt.edu).

**Once again, THANK YOU!!!**



### Topics for discussion:

[Theoretical Understanding of FB](#)

[Therapy vs. Consulting](#)

[Ethics](#)

[Assessments](#)

[Supervision](#)

[Getting started as a consultant](#)

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### TheoreticalUnderstanding



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### Topics for discussion:

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[Home](#) » [TheoreticalUnderstandingOfFb](#)

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Last Modified By: Carolina / Feb 26, 2009, 9:40am

Some panelists thought that a structural understanding of family businesses was important and others didn't.

Could you please help me understand your thinking regarding the importance of structural family therapy theory in family business consultation?

Thanks.

#### Page Comments:

Comment by [Brian](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 8:52am: Made on Current Version

I believe that one could do this type of work with many different theoretical orientations. For example narrative and other post modern theories have great application. But there is a strong structural component in FBs. Also SFT equates well to org theories of adaptation and flexibility such as Daffs work. So learning SFT will make it easier to converse with other professionals from other fields. But I do believe that other theories can be useful.

Brian

Comment by [Joe](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 4:45pm: Made on Current Version

I agree with Brian. I think an FOB consultant can use many different models, but SFT is an important one in understanding how

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Panelists said that there is a difference between the role of a therapist and the role of a family business consultant. However, there was disagreement regarding the depth of the work a family business consultant should do with families.

Should a family business consultant provide therapy to family members as part of his or her consultation or should the consultant outsource therapy?

Page Comments:

Comment by Joe on Mar 2, 2009 - 4:48pm: Made on Revision 12

I hate to say 'it depends', but ... ok. I work with business consultants who delve more deeply into the business issues. This allows me to do therapy types of things, but again it is different than straight forward therapy. I like utilizing a team approach. When I work with the family and other consultants work with the family business, we can provide a very indepth and integrated approach where the interventions can be conducted with the team knowing the intimate details of the family and business. I think this has greater impact.

Comment by Andy Atwood on Mar 2, 2009 - 6:17pm: Made on Revision 12

It depends. Joe is correct. I've worked with a partner who focused more on the biz while I focused on the family issues/therapy side. That 18 month engagement was a dance between us, back and forth, depending on who we worked with in the family, and in the business. When working solo much of what I do is "therapeutic" - more like coaching, and framed that way. Although, I a current engagement involved me working with Mom and Dad for 2 years before they trusted me enough to bring me into the family and their 5 married kids, etc. It depends. What would be the next logical question?

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Ethicsnbsp



Dual relationships were identified by all panelists as an important ethical issue.

Could you please give an example involving dual relationships from your own experience that could be used as a case study in an ethics course?

Page Comments:

Comment by Joe on Mar 2, 2009 - 4:52pm: Made on Revision 7

I have met with families in their homes and/or business site. I met with a family once a month in their home (in front of a cool fireplace) for four hours every Friday morning for 18 months. We had a lunch as part of the process. During breaks, they discussed many issues and also I disclosed more issues about myself (I had some articles in the local paper that they inquired about that led to some of these discussions). I do more self disclosure in these consultations.

Comment by Andy Atwood on Mar 2, 2009 - 6:28pm: Made on Revision 7

I happen to have begun my career as a clergyman, and still am. LMFT, LMSW, and consultant to family businesses, and businesses that feel like family. I've married the owner and his girlfriend of many years. That came after working with his two sons, separately, around issues of differentiation and role and function in the family. I've been in the owner's home, vacation home, and I

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Last Modified By: Carolina / Mar 4, 2009, 2:10pm

Panelists agreed on the importance of using assessment tools throughout the consultation process.

Which specific assessment tools have you found the most useful in your work as a family business consultant? How have they been useful?

Page Comments:

- Comment by [Joe](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 4:54pm: Made on [Revision 10](#)  
I am working on developing a tool that will build on the GLOBE study that studied culture, leadership and organization in 62 countries around the world. We are adding a scale that we are developing on family resiliency. There is a great need for measurement instruments as the field is very new.
- Comment by [Andy Atwood](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 6:36pm: Made on [Revision 10](#)  
Routinely I use the Strengthsfinder from Gallup, the MBTI, the DiSC, and the 16pf. Most recently I have added the 360 that has been created by www.changewise.biz. I have also helped one company to set up and use a third party service for assessing hourly employees. These are used for pre-employment assessment, team building, career development, and for personal coaching.
- Comment by [Brian](#) on Mar 3, 2009 - 8:53am: Made on [Revision 10](#)  
Assesments are great, and we need more. Specifically those that are normed on family businesses. We're creating one for values in family businesses...e.g. are you a family business with a big "B" or a big "F". it seems as though there is a difference in how resources are transfered and future goals depending on the FOB value orientation. SO yes assessments are good and they help clients wrap their mind around what has to happen to make things better.



Topics for discussion:

- [Theoretical Understanding FB](#)
- [Therapy vs. Consulting](#)
- [Ethics](#)
- [Assessments](#)
- [Supervision](#)
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Last Modified By: Carolina / Mar 4, 2009, 2:08pm

There was a high level of consensus amongst panelists regarding supervision being ideal but unrealistic due to the few MFTs who do family business consultation.

How might this issue be addressed? What are your thoughts of alternative ways of providing supervision (e.g. use of technology) and/or having supervisors from a different field (e.g. a family business consultant expert in finance)?

Page Comments:

- Comment by [Joe](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 4:56pm: Made on [Revision 7](#)  
I think it is important to have supervision with someone who has done this. Meeting with those outside MFT would also be helpful, but it isn't the same thing as understanding how to be an MFT doing FOB consulting.  
  
j7888
- Comment by [Andy Atwood](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 6:41pm: Made on [Revision 7](#)  
"Supervision" as I have received it, and delivered it, only happens on a peer level with a whole host of colleagues: other MFTs, accountants, lawyers, marketing people... leaders in any and all the disciplines that I frequent. I'm forever sharing and learning from mature professionals. When it comes to actually applying knowledge gained to FOBs or Partnerships, I will likely consult with one or more of the three MFTs who do business consulting in my community. I also have a very smart non MFT who works with FOBs, and he is available for consult as well.  
  
Research has indicated that the FOBs primary consultant is his or her spouse. I think the MassMutual study reported that Well so

Supervision



Topics for discussion:

- [Theoretical Understanding FB](#)
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The importance of teaching students about creating their own family business consulting practice was an emergent theme from the questionnaire.

Could you share the biggest challenge(s) and lessons learned in creating and/or administering your own consulting practice?

#### Page Comments:

Comment by [Joe](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 4:58pm:  

Made on [Revision 5](#)

I made the mistake of partnering with a consultant who was not trustworthy. Collaborating and working with a team that I can trust has taken me time to establish. Business consultants are very different than MFTs.

Comment by [Andy Atwood](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 6:49pm:  

Made on [Revision 5](#)

I was invited out to work with a professional firm in 1995, and that opened the gate. I was invited from there to others. I had to read, study, learn... learn... learn. I looked for someone to partner with, to share the load, to use for feedback, and it wasn't until 2005 that I found someone. We worked hand-in-glove for 2+ years, and then he dropped dead from a heart attack. Well.... at least I can frankly challenge the owner who lacks a contingency plan!

Learning how to deal with strong willed entrepreneurs can be a challenge. Marketing on an ongoing basis is a challenge. A lot of this is personality based. I can put on a tux and go to a black tie New Years eve party, and I can go on a run with a bunch of guys on motorcycles. I work with a nonprofit that is composed of 25 women, and I fit in. Somebody... help me understand this!

Comment by [Brian](#) on Mar 3, 2009 - 8:39am:  

Made on [Revision 5](#)

#### Topics for discussion:

[Theoretical Understanding FB](#)

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Do you have good books or articles to suggest on:

- Other disciplines (basic finance, basic business management and dynamics, basic legal aspects)
- Good case studies that could be used in a course on family business consultation

#### Page Comments:

Comment by [Andy Atwood](#) on Mar 2, 2009 - 6:52pm:  

Made on [Revision 5](#)

Frankly, this would take some time to compile. I have 5 notebooks full of useful articles from a variety of magazines. I have subscribed to the Harvard Business Review since 1995. Also, I highly recommend soundview book summaries and audiotech book summaries. The Rockefeller Principals by Vern Harnish. I could go on and on. I'll try to come up with some easy way to collect some recommendations, if anyone is interested enough to warrant my expenditure of time.

Comment by [Leslie Dashew](#) on Mar 4, 2009 - 8:34am:  

Made on [Revision 5](#)

**The Body of Knowledge Books that FFI have put out are good.**  
**There are 3 books out regarding consulting with family business:**  
**Working with Family Businesses A Guide for Professionals (Bork et al)**  
**Jane Hilburt-David and Gibb Dyer's Book**  
**Family Business and Family Business Consultation: A Global Perspective (edited by Kaslow)**

Comment by [Joe](#) on Mar 4, 2009 - 6:08pm:  

Made on Current Version

I use Poza's Family Business when I teach an undergrad class in the Business Department of my local university. I think it is very useful and my students seem to like it (which means they don't grumble too much ;).

#### Bibliography



#### Topics for discussion:

[Theoretical Understanding FB](#)

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## Appendix F

### Recommended Assessments

#### *Psychological Instruments:*

- Strengths Finder (Gallup)

Rath, T. (2007). *Strengths Finder 2.0*. New York: Gallup Press.

- MBTI

Myers, I. B. (1998). *MBTI manual: A guide to the development and use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

- 16PF

Cattell, R. B., Eber, H. W., & Tatsuoka, M. M. (1970). *Handbook for the sixteen personality factor questionnaire (16 PF) In clinical, educational, industrial, and research psychology, for use with all forms of the test*. Champaign, Ill: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing.

- Hogan battery.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (1995). *Hogan personality inventory*. Tulsa, Okla: Hogan Assessment Systems.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (1997). *Hogan development survey*. Tulsa, Okla: Hogan Assessment Systems.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (1996). *Motives, values, preferences inventory*. Tulsa, Okla: Hogan Assessment Systems.

Hogan, R., & Hogan, J. (2006). *Hogan business reasoning inventory*. Tulsa, Okla: Hogan Assessment Systems.

*Organizational Instruments:*

- DISC

Personal discernment inventory, the DISC profile system: An instrument for understanding yourself and others. (1993). Atlanta, GA: Team Resources.

- 360

Edwards, M. R. (1995). Creating competency-based 360° assessment systems to support leaders & teams. Tempe, AZ: TEAMS.

- Aspen family business inventor

Jaffe, D., Paul, J., Bork, D., Lane, S., & Dashew, L. (1993). *Aspen family business inventory*. Aspen, Co: Aspen Family Business Group.

- Aspen inventories for family wealth, family foundations and family legacy properties.

Jaffe D., & Paul J, (2005). *Aspen family wealth inventory (version 9.0)*. Ft. Worth, TX: Aspen Family Business Group, LLC

## Appendix G

### Model Curriculum in Family Business Consultation for MFT Graduate Students

#### *Theoretical Understanding of Family Businesses*

##### *1. MFT Theories*

Objective: Students should be able to integrate and apply MFT theories to the understanding of family business and the consulting process.

Specific Theories to cover:

- Bowenian
- Narrative
- Solution focused
- Structural
- Contextual
- Collaborative/Postmodern

Recommended Activities:

Activity 1:

- Ask students to pick a theory and apply it to understanding family businesses and make a presentation to the class.
- Facilitate a class discussion in order to enrich the application the student has made.
- Encourage student to write a publishable paper on the application of MFT theoretical approaches to family businesses and submit it to an MFT journal.

## Activity 2:

- Ask students to reflect on their own theoretical approach.
  - How do they think change occurs?
  - What theories inform their work?
  - What do they think of integrating theories? Pros? Cons?
  - How could their own theoretical approach be applied to a family business?

## Recommended Readings:

Friedman, E. (1985). *Generation to generation: Family process in church and synagogue*. New York: The Guilford Press

Friedman, E. H. (1986). Emotional process in the marketplace: The family therapist as consultant with work systems. In L. C. Wynne, S. H. McDaniel, and T. T. Weber (Eds.), *System consultation: A new perspective for family therapy* (pp. 398-422). New York: Guilford Press.

Deacon, S. A. (1996). Utilizing structural family therapy and systems theory in the business world. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 18(4), 549-565).

Flemons, D. G., & Cole, P. M. (1992). Connecting and separating family and business: A relational approach to consultation. *Family Business Review*, 5(3), 257-269.

## 2. *Complementary Theories*

Objective: Students should be able to integrate and apply theories from a variety of disciplines used to the understanding of family business and the consulting process.

Specific areas to cover:

- Business:
  - Basic business and organizational dynamics and development:
    - § wealth management
    - § governance issues
    - § knowledge management
    - § distribution of power, authority, and delegation
  - Three circle model (Gersick, Davis, Hampton, and Lansberg, 1997)
    - § family life cycles (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988)
    - § business organization life cycles (Miller, 1989)
  - stages of ownership (Gersick, Davis, Hampton, and Lansberg, 1997)
  - Language used
  - Ethical codes
- Psychology:
  - Adult development (Levinson, 1990)
  - Cognitive Behavioral Theory (see Dobson, 2002)
  - Redirection therapy (Goulding & Goulding 1979; Lennox, 1997)
  - Transactional analysis (Berne, 1996)
- Finance
  - General knowledge of how finance plays a role in businesses
  - General issues consultants tend to deal with
  - Language used
  - Ethical codes.

- Law
  - General knowledge of how law plays a role in businesses
  - General issues consultants tend to deal with
  - Language used
  - Ethical codes.

Recommended Activities:

Activity 1:

Invite guest lecturers specialized in all these areas to give the class.

Activity 2:

Have students interview family business consultants from different disciplines.

Ask students to take note of:

- Language used
- Way of understanding and conceptualizing systems
- Ethical code differences and similarities
- How they feel in this interaction? How different or similar is to interact with MFT colleagues.

Activity 3

Students could be encouraged, by writing a reflective paper, to think about how psychological theories can help them understand family businesses and how they might be complementary to systemic theoretical approaches. The following questions can help guide their thoughts:

- How is MFT different from psychology?

- As a family business consultant, how is the job of an MFT different from that of an I-O psychologist?
- What is the unique contribution of MFT to family business consultation?
- Which psychological theories do you feel more comfortable with? How do these theories relate with your preferred MFT theories? What similarities and differences do you see? Can they be complementary? If so, how?

Recommended Readings:

Berne, E. (1996). *Games People Play: The Basic Handbook of Transactional Analysis*.

New York: Ballantine Books.

Carter, B., & McGoldrick, M. (Eds.). (1988). *The changing family life cycle: A*

*framework for family therapy* (2nd ed.). New York: Gardner Press.

Dobson, K. S. (Ed.). (2002). *Handbook of cognitive-behavioral therapies*. New York :

Guilford Press.

Gersick, K.E., Davis, J. A., Hampton, M. M., Lansberg, I., (1997). *Generation to*

*Generation: Life cycles of family business*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business

School Press.

Goulding, R. and Goulding, M. (1979). *Changing lives through rededcision therapy*. New

York: Brunner/Mazel, Publishers

Lennox, C. (1997). *Rededcision Therapy: A brief, action-oriented approach*. Northvale,

New Jersey: Jason Aronson, Inc.

Levinson, D. J. (1990). A theory of life structure development in adulthood. In C.N. Alexander & E. J. Langer (Eds.), *Higher stages of human development* (pp. 35-54). New York: Oxford University Press.

Miller, L. M. (1989). *Barbarians to bureaucrats: Corporate life cycle strategies*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter.

#### Journals:

- Harvard Business Review
- Family Business Review

#### Electronic Resources:

- Soundview book summaries: <http://www.summary.com>
- Audiotech book summaries: [www.audiotech.com](http://www.audiotech.com)

### *Family Business Consultation*

#### *1. Introduction to Family Businesses*

Objective: Students should be able to have basic knowledge and understanding of the fundamental dynamics, strengths and challenges that family businesses tend to face.

#### Specific areas to cover:

- Defining family businesses
- Unique advantages
- Unique challenges:
  - Boundaries between generations

- Sibling rivalries
- Marital power conflicts
- Parent - offspring conflicts
- Gender issues
- Succession planning and succession dynamics

### Recommended Activities: Case Studies

#### *Case 1: Parent/Offspring Tensions*

You receive a call from a business CFO that is seeking consultation services. He mentions the following:

“I have worked with my Dad for 10 years. Since the beginning I was kind of my father’s partner. However, I used to feel that I needed to remain on the backstage because of his dominant personality. It was hard to jump in. I learned a lot from him and have always respected what he had to say. But as I gained experience, some tension began to build up. I felt more confident as I learned more. Sometimes I felt like my ideas were better than his. However, he is a very stubborn person. I finally dared to tell him to let me run my own show. He became very angry. What can I do? Can you help us?”

#### *Case 2: Parent/Offspring Tensions*

You receive a call from a business owner that is seeking consultation services. He mentions the following:

“My son is the general manager of the company but honestly I think I do more managing than he does. I have a lot of experience and believe I can see things he cannot.

This is a family business, and the fact that “general manager” is not my job title, does not mean that I cannot get involved if the circumstances deemed it. My son went on leave for a year, during which time I was in charge of the business. I turned it around. Our business then went from being small to being one of the biggest in the area. My son is now resentful and our relationship has become very distant since then. What should I do? Can you help us?”

*Case 3: Spouse Tensions*

*Husband:* “My wife has the bad habit of wanting to be the boss and thinking she knows it all. When someone is working, she interferes. She may say, for example, they are not doing things the right way, when she doesn’t even know anything about the business. Instead of doing that, she should ask me. As you might imagine, her comments are not well received by the employees. As a result, there is a fever of low motivation in the company.”

*Wife:* “My husband will say that he will listen to me, but he never does. He doesn’t like feedback, especially when I have something negative to say. I want him to listen to me. I also want him to do something, to act on what I have to say.”

*Case 4: Spouse Tensions*

*Wife:* “My husband often wants me to do more than I sometimes feel like doing. He wants me to help him and for this he expects me to be up to date in so many different areas - sales approaches, money forecasting, and finance-. Honestly, I do not feel like I should or want to invest so much time and effort. He expects me to know everything and

to always be there for him. I guess he is worried about his health since he has been diagnosed with high blood pressure. He might be afraid that if something happens to him, nobody will be able to do his work. But this is exhausting for me. He does not understand that I have to take care of the house and three children in addition to my “real” job responsibilities, which I don’t even know what they are any more.”

*Husband:* “It is good to have my wife because she is always there. I call her my “back up” person. Whenever I need someone in a hurry, I call her and she is always available. It is different than asking an employee, whom you have to ask for anything ahead of time. It’s better with her, she is there.”

#### *Case 5: Succession and Gender Issues*

John is the CEO and owner of a successful family owned business. He has two children, Tom and Mary. Fifteen years ago, John brought his son to work with him and did not make an offer to Mary because he believed she could not commit to the family business and raise a family. Mary began her own business which has grown to be extremely successful.

*John:* “When I eventually leave this world, everything will be evenly divided amongst my two kids. However, I will leave the business in charge of Tom because in that way, I can rest assured that the company will stay in the family. Mary would probably bring in her husband and that is the way you start losing the essence of the family business.”

*Tom:* “I have always relied on my father’s experience. The business went well with Dad’s management style. I kind of was expected to be here and continue with the legacy of the

business. I am not sure I would have chosen a business route otherwise. I always liked music. I am more of the creative type.”

*Case 6: Succession Conflicts*

*Son:* “Dad will simply not let go. He is 70 now and left the presidency to me 2 years ago. I am the president on paper, but in reality he still runs the company. He comes to my office and makes decisions, tells others what to do and tells me how I should run the business. He always finds a way to get the financial statements to find out how the business is doing and, of course, it is never as good as it would be if he had made the decisions.”

*Father:* “I am not ready for retirement yet. I left the presidency of the company to my son because of health reasons. I am, however an advisor to him. I have experience and have done this for over forty years.”

*Case 7: Sibling Rivalry*

“I think things are unfair between my brother and me and I really don’t understand my father’s decisions. He is only twenty four years old and makes more money than I do and I definitely work harder than he does. I had to start as a salesman and made my way up. My brother came directly to a higher position, earning more money.”

*Case 8: Sibling Rivalry and Substance Abuse*

“My sister just sits there and does nothing. She never calls customers or anything. Lots of people have told me that the company would not last two months if I left. I recently

learned that she used to sneak money away from the business and make checks out for more than what she would put on the stub. She oftentimes arrives late for work or does not show up at all. I know she has been late because of drinking and partying. She always liked alcohol, but recently things appear to be getting worse. But what is even worse is that Mom and Dad appear to be blind to all this. I guess they are used to me doing all the work”

Discussion questions for all cases:

1. If you accepted the job as family business consultant, what would you do? How would you approach this issue?
2. What do you think the underlying issue is?
3. What would the goal of your intervention be?
4. How would you intervene?
5. How would this help the family business? What are you prioritizing: family or business?
6. Which theories are informing your work?
7. What other systems are involved? How?
8. What would you guess is happening in the business? How do you conceptualize the family dynamics? What processes are at work? Can you see any isomorphism between the business and family dynamics?

Recommended Readings:

- Astrachan, J. H., & Shanker, M. C. (2003). Family businesses' contribution to the U.S. economy: A closer look. *Family Business Review*, 16(3), 211–219.
- Bork, D. (1993). *Family business, risky business: How to make it work*. Aspen, CO: Bork Institute for Family Business.
- Bork, D., Jaffe, D. T., Lane, S. H., Dashew, L., & Heisler, Q.G. (1996). *Working with family businesses : A guide for professionals*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Bork, D. (2008). *The Little Red Book of Family Business*. Kingston, MA: Sampson Press.
- Jaffe, D. T. (2000). *Working with the ones you love*. Fort Worth, TX: Aspen Family Business Group, LLC
- Kaslow, F. W., & Kaslow, S. (1992) The family that works together: Special problems of family businesses. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *Work, families and organizations* (312-361). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Kaslow, F. W. (1993). The lore and lure of family business. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 21, 3-16.
- Kaye, K. (1991). Penetrating the cycle of sustained conflict. *Family Business Review*, 4(1), 21-44
- McClendon, R., & Kadis, L. B. (1991). Family therapists and family business: A view of the future. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 13(6), 641-651.
- Poza, E., (2009). *Family Business*. Cincinnati, Ohio: South-Western College Publishing.

Journals:

- Family Business Review

## 2. Consultation

### 2.1 Consultation: Becoming a business person.

Objective: Give students the tools to set up their own business.

Specific areas to cover:

- marketing
  - managing expectations
  - knowing what you offer, who you are, and what you do
- billing
- charging
- creating contracts
- negotiation

Recommended Activities:

*Activity 1: Group Activity on Negotiation.*

You want to create a company with a team of family business consultants.

Discuss:

Who will you partner with?

How will you find them?

What is important for you in a partner?

Imagine that you now have new partners. You now need to figure out how your new family business consultation business will work:

Discuss the following:

How will you charge?

What type of contract will you have among you? Is a contract necessary?

What will you sell?

What is your added value?

How will you advertise/market your business?

How do you finance your business?

How will you obtain legal advice? From whom? For what?

Who does what?

*Activity 2: Individual and Group Activity: Getting Hired*

Briefly, write down your answers to the following questions:

How would you present yourself to a CEO?

What is the service you offer?

Why should he/she hire you?

How can you help him/her?

How will you charge?

How much time will you take?

How would you explain the process of consultation?

What language would you use? Why?

Each person in groups of three role plays the following situations:

Situation A:

A CEO has agreed to see you. He is curious as to how you can help him and his family business. You do not know much about him, you are simply marketing your services.

How do you present yourself and your services?

Situation B:

You have been working with a client for several months now. He wants you to help him with his anxiety and insomnia. After some time, he began mentioning his work. You realize that his issues are symptoms of the stress and position he holds in his family business. You think it is a good idea for you to intervene at a business level. How would you approach this situation?

Discuss as a class the whole role play experience.

*Activity 3: Group Debate on Charging Modalities and Negotiation*

- Divide the class in two.
- Have one group think on the pros of charging by the hour and cons of charging by results.
- Have the other half think on the pros of charging by results and cons of charging by the hour.
- Give each group 15 minutes to change the mind of the other group.
- Ask about any ethical issues implicit in each approach.

Recommended Readings:

Hilburt-Davis, J. & Dyer W. G. (2002). *Consulting to family businesses: Contracting, assessment, and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass/Pfeiffer

2.2 *Consultation vs. therapy.*

Objective: Students should be able to understand the basic differences between consultation and therapy. (This topic should be given along with supervision since a fundamental aspect appears to be the professional identity).

Specific areas to cover:

- Relationship with client
- Depth of work
- Feedback to client
- Ethical issues (specifically dual relations)
- Professional identity
- Assessments (list on Appendix H)

Recommended Activities:

- See practicum and supervision

Recommended Readings:

Kaslow, F. W. (2006). *Handbook of family business and family business consultation: A global perspective*. New York : International Business Press.

Wynne, C., McDaniel, S. H., and Weber T. T. (1986) *System consultation: A new perspective for family therapy*. . New York: Guilford Press.

## *Practicum and Supervision*

### *1. Practicum*

Objective: Provide students with supervised experience in family business consultation.

Specific areas to cover:

- Group facilitation
- Learning how to relate with business professionals
- Learn about the work a consultant does
- Practice explaining the scope of work of a family business consultant
- Networking

Recommended Activities:

- Shadow an experienced consultant
- Co-consult with senior consultants,
- Interview family business consultants from different disciplines (MFT, psychology, psychiatry, finance, business management, and law).
- Attend to network groups of family business advisors (the Family Firm Institute has some study groups in different areas of the country)
- Attend to local forums for family business owners (e.g., Virginia Tech and Wake Forest University host these types of programs).
- Reflect on ethical issues (case studies)

## Case Studies

### *Case Study 1*

You are working with a family business that also has non family members as part of the managerial group. You need to work with them to help with “team building” since they seem to have poor communication. As your work progresses, issues arise regarding how non family members feel by not being part of the family.

#### Discussion Questions.

- What ethical issues would you consider?
- How would you deal with confidentiality?
- How would you deal with these issues?
- How would this be different than your work as a therapist with a family?

### *Case Study 2*

You have been working with this family business for eight years now. They call you every time some family issue begins to get in the way of the business. With each intervention, you spend time with the family at their vacation home and go golfing with the owner, consequently, your relationship with the family has become closer. You even find yourself self disclosing more than what you would regularly do in therapy. Then an issue came up. The youngest daughter, who holds an important directory position, arrives late for work and sometimes does not appear at all. She also appears to be distant from everyone and appears to have stopped caring about her work. Her behavior is damaging the organizational climate and the productivity of the company. Some at the

company believe she is into drugs. You have been called in as a family business consultant.

Discussion Questions.

- What ethical issues do you see?
- How would you approach this situation?
- What would you work on?
- Who would you include in your work?
- How do your feelings for the family and close relationship with them play a part in your work?
- Would you recommend a referral to a therapist? Why and for what?
- What would be your role vis a vis the therapist's role?

*Case Study 3*

You are hired by a family business to help the family members communicate better. The three adult children hold managerial positions and the father is the GM of the company. The children feel they are not heard and that their father dictates what everyone should do. One of the sons called you to get help. When you meet with the father, you realize that he is not very open to working with you. It somehow reminded you of your relationship with your father and how he often made you feel not worthy.

Discussion Questions:

- Would you accept the job?

- Which ethical codes apply to your decision of working or not with this family?
- How does your experience shape what you hear and see?
- Would you work without the father?
- If not, how would you get him involved?
- Why or why not do you think it is important to have the father involved?

Recommended Readings to Share With Clients:

Travis, C., & Anderson, E. (2007) *Mistakes Were Made (but not by me), Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts.* Orlando, FL: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Harvey S., (2009). *The Wilderness: A novel.* NY: Bantam Dell Publishing Group

2. *Supervision*

Objective: Supervise student's practical work as consultants. Help students reflect on themselves and grow as consultants.

Specific areas to cover:

- Self of the consultant and self of the therapist.

Recommended Activities:

*Activity 1: Money, Power, and Authority in my Family*

Make a three-generational genogram of your family. Concentrate on the role and dynamics of money, power and authority figures. How can you relate to these issues as they existed in previous generations?

## *Activity 2: Analyzing Transference*

Transference is when an individual unconsciously directs his or her desires/feelings for one person towards another.

### *2.1. Thinking of Transference*

Find or write up a story where transference issues are evident. For example, you meet the son of the CEO. He appears so familiar, you immediately like him. You are not sure who he reminds you of. After some reflection, you realize that he reminds you of an ex boyfriend/girlfriend with whom you had a significant relationship.

### *2.2. Group Analysis of Stories*

Form a group of 3 and share your stories:

- Find similarities: process vs. content
- Do you see any ethical issues?
- Reflect on how transference is part of your work as a therapist and as a consultant.  
Are they different? How?
- How do you deal with this potential risk?

## *Activity 3: Identity*

Write up a paper about yourself and your career so far. Reflect on the following topics:

- What motivated you to be a therapist?
- How does your identity as a therapist relate with who you are in your family?
- Is there a family story behind your decision?
- What attracts you to family business consultation?
- How do you see yourself as a consultant?

- Do you think there are differences between identifying as a therapist identifying as a consultant? If so, what would these differences be?

*Activity 4: Being a Therapist vs. Being a Consultant*

Give students the following two different situations to analyze.

*Situation 1:* You are meeting with a therapist to begin working on issues you are having with your spouse.

*Situation 2:* You are a family business owner and CEO who is meeting with a consultant. He/she is here to help you improve your marketing strategy.

After giving each situation ask students to reflect and answer to the following questions:

- What idea (image, concept) comes to your mind?
- What feelings are associated with this representation?
- What are your expectations?
- Where (setting) does this take place?
- How do you imagine the relationship with him/her?
- Is there hierarchy?
- How does power play a role in this relationship?

Ask students to compare the answers to each question in each situation. Discuss as a group the similarities and differences found.

Recommended Resources:

The Couple's Institute. Couples supervision/consulting. In *Resources 7 Tools for*

*Therapists*. Retrieved March 26, 2009, from

<http://www.couplesinstitute.com/professional/consulting.html>