

# Strengthening the Partnership

Between Families and Advisors

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## The FOX Thought Leaders Council™

FOX invites the leading advisors across all disciplines in the private wealth management industry to come together as members of the FOX Thought Leaders Council. FOX Thought Leaders currently include those who are at the top of their fields in family business and information management and reporting, integrated planning (insurance planning, investment planning, philanthropic planning, and tax and estate planning.) This diverse, working council is united by its commitment to serve the needs of ultra-wealthy individuals and families. FOX member recommendations and proven examples of advisor vision and expertise are taken into consideration for membership in this select group.

### FOX Thought Leaders Council

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**Ascent Private Capital Management**

**Asset Consulting Group, Inc.**

**BNY Mellon Wealth Management**

#### CAIS

**CTC | myCFO**

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**Warner Norcross & Judd LLP**

**Wellspring Associates**

## The FOX Thought Leaders Council Summit Participants

At the annual Summit meeting, FOX Thought Leaders work collaboratively to address strategic issues impacting families and advisors. This year we brought together some of the leading thinkers in the industry to focus on the family/advisor partnership, which is one of the many ways that FOX delivers unparalleled advice, knowledge, and education to serve its member community and the industry as a whole.

### Summit Participants

David Hubbard, **AIG**

Michael Cole, **Ascent Private Capital Management**

Daniel Tarlas, **Asset Consulting Group, Inc.**

Philip Tedeschi, **BNY Mellon**

Timothy Shannon, **CAIS Group**

John McGowan, **CTC | myCFO**

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Leslie Voth, **Pitcairn**

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Mark Galante, **PURE Insurance**

Loraine Tsavaris, **Rockefeller & Co.**

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Belinda Sneddon, **U.S. Trust Family Office**

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## Guest Contributors

This publication would not be possible without the wisdom and generosity of the FOX community. We are especially indebted to the family and advisor members who shared their stories and experiences for the benefit of the group. A special thanks goes out to members of the FOX Thought Leaders Council, FOX Executive Council and Quilvest for their support and contribution to this work.

This report synthesizes contributions from the following guest individuals, and we thank them:

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## Prologue on Trusting

Every good partnership is built on a foundation of trust between the participants in the relationship. For families with private capital to build successful partnerships, there must be an underlying capacity for the family to trust the system they have created to sustain the enterprise they have built. Trusting the system means working together as a family and constructing a system that supports the owners' goals and fairly represent your interests. Built into that structure is trusting the advisors who are called on to help strategize and implement the goals of the family.

But the issue of Trust is a complex concept, and trusting others is not something that comes easily to many entrepreneurs and enterprise families. Because success itself attracts many untrustworthy suitors, it is natural for successful people to distrust the motives of anyone who might separate them from their success – whether outsiders or family members. At the heart of most family conflicts is the ultimate distrust of some (and sometimes most) individuals.

The term Trust has many distinct nuances, but four of the key definitions are critical to building partnerships:

- Trusting someone's judgment / business acumen is the easiest to recognize.
- Trusting someone's intentions / motivations is a more subtle reading of the relationship.
- Trusting someone's ability to put the interests of others ahead of their own goals is related to the stewardship of others' interests.
- And trusting someone's abilities to follow through / execute on commitments is essential for building strong and lasting partnerships.

In a Family Enterprise, trusting the system involves building confidence in the structures that are put in place to protect the family's assets and to ensure that power is balanced among the owners. *Trusting the System* requires giving up personal control of decisions at some point (ultimately on your deathbed), in hopes that better outcomes will result over time from working as a collective group of owners/decision-makers who can engage wiser advisors than they could attract individually. Or in the extreme case, when a controlling owner leaves the scene, some system of governance structures must be installed to protect the heirs and the legacy of the founder.

Building strong partnerships requires a diligence to "trust but verify" the work of a select group of advisors whom you have brought into a special circle of confidantes who have an intimate knowledge of your aspirations and insecurities which may lie behind the stated goals. Having this type of relationship makes an advisor more than just a strategist about technical alternatives, but also a person of confidence (or a consigliere) to the owners involved. A trusted partnership involves trusting the advisors' judgment and believing in their commitment to put your interests above their own. The result is almost always better outcomes, stronger relationships and a mutual respect for each other that can transcend many years of working together – the ultimate benefit of trusting others.

We hope this study helps you enhance your family and advisor partnerships.



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Executive Director, Family Office Exchange



David Toth  
Director of Advisor Research, Family Office Exchange

# I. Executive Summary

The FOX “Strengthening the Partnership” study identifies compelling reasons to leverage partnerships, ways to construct sustainable partnerships, and how to make them productive. As you contemplate strengthening your partnerships, we offer these perspectives:

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*Ultra-wealthy families invest in building trusting partnerships to help them overcome challenges, make better decisions in an increasingly complex environment and find strategic allies for the long-term.*

Family owners, family office executives and outside advisors who have formed strong partnerships are much better prepared to manage the challenges and costs of operating in an increasingly complex global environment. By cultivating a culture of trust, the wealth owner creates an atmosphere where partnerships may thrive. In the absence of trusting partnerships, families will not fully realize the value of advisors’ expertise and place at risk the very legacy they are seeking to preserve.

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*Enduring partnerships are structured based on a shared set of principles and strengthened through an ongoing process that challenges and grows the partnership.*

Partnerships do not always succeed so they need a way to guide their formation, growth and sustainability. Strong partnerships are defined and powered by four principles: Culture, Chemistry, Collaboration and Competencies. Families and wealth owners set the tone by putting these principles into practice for themselves and outside partners.

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*Determining the right partnership model starts with a thorough understanding of family needs, the level of family involvement in advisor relationships and engagement that builds trust among all partners.*

Strong partnerships require a framework and process to make the principles operational and sustain the test of time. Partnership models are unique in design based on the characteristics of the family and, where applicable, the stage of the family office or enterprise. For example, first-generation wealth owners rely heavily on a few carefully selected “Most Trusted Advisors” while multi-generational families have created sophisticated governance systems and strategic partnerships. A strategy of treating partnerships as a three-way relationship between the wealth owner, family office executive and advisors where each plays a pivotal and clearly defined role is the best way to build partnership engagement and become better partners.

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*Lastly, managing partnerships is a process of “trusting, but verifying” by transparently seeking ways to assess and improve existing partnerships while strategically considering new partners.*

To help sustain strong partnerships, periodically check on the health of the partnership through “Strategies for Building Partnerships” found on page 21. This assessment should be shared among all parties to find out if partnerships are operating as intended, where they need further attention and what steps may be taken to close any gaps. Build partner synergy by using a selection strategy which uses a set of criterion to evaluate the fit of the new partner.

## II. The Value of Strong Partnerships

### Partnership Imperative for Wealth Owners

In order for families of wealth to secure their fortunes for generations to come and ensure their personal intentions are addressed, it is imperative that owners create a system of strong partners. Uncovering needs, identifying problems, reviewing opportunities, searching for superior technical expertise, tapping human capital resources, and unraveling complexity and cost are central concerns in the management of substantial wealth. These are a significant set of tasks and responsibilities that require a trusted team of professional partners to manage.

While partnerships are commonly considered basic life tenets, essential for personal and professional satisfaction and success, the actual course taken to build strong partnerships is an art. Many believe that in any endeavor in life, business or family, having a partner enhances the journey and usually leads to a better outcome than going it alone. Identifying and nurturing those partners involve special care and attention. Many FOX members consider working with individual partners or a team of partners as the preferred way to get things done and accomplish the goals of the family enterprise.

So why is it important to strengthen partnerships now? In a world where distrust dominates and impacts decision-making, especially for the ultra-wealthy, establishing partnerships is essential for families to better navigate the world today. Just what should a partner look like? How does one find good partners who reflect their values? How does one work towards unrivaled coordination and collaboration to achieve the highest level of potential? These are questions we have chosen to explore and address for the sake of future enterprise sustainability.

### A Partnership Culture Must be Defined and Cultivated by the Wealth Owner

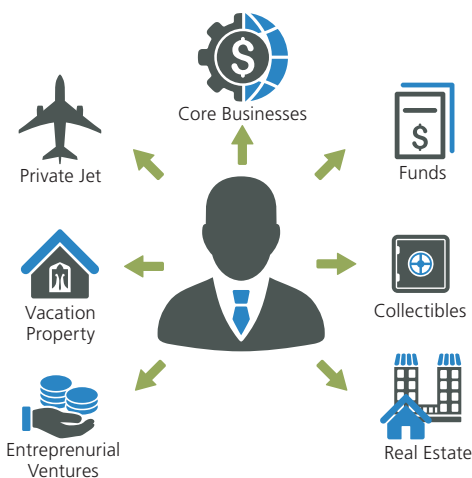
Families of wealth work hard at creating a family-advisor eco-system that includes diverse and expert partners. It is also important to note the role of the wealth owner in prioritizing the topics to be addressed among the many challenges. The carefully configured family-advisor eco-system exists in an orbit where the owner has cultivated an environment that values diversity and a variety of scenarios to solve problems. Creating a culture of trust, of give and take, of unflinching loyalty, of commitment to future generations to come, is as important as the partners themselves. A wealth owner's recognition and clear demonstration that he or she will create a trusting culture, is vital to building an eco-system that results in effective and powerful relationships that work together to achieve the family's goals.

Perceptive families and family office executives value partnerships and carefully consider whom to select as their partners. Advisors value strong partnerships not just for the potential to add depth and longevity to their client relationship, but because partners who work in concert can develop a more integrated set of solutions as a team that can better solve complex issues. Through our "Strengthening the Partnership" study, FOX has worked with families and leading advisors to identify ways to help you form, grow and sustain great partnerships that will aid families in arriving at better solutions to manage complexity today and in the long-term.

## Reasons for Pursuing a Strong Partnership:

1. Families increasingly accept that their capital assets have become more complex than they are capable of efficiently and effectively handle as they look to the future. The Family Enterprise, including the operating businesses, the family office, the family foundation, along with other related entities, requires the kind of expert management that only comes from the right team of resources. The mentality of ‘going it alone’ may have been useful in some prior life situations, but not so now, when it comes to keeping the family and their resources together in an uncertain world.

**Fig 1. The Wealth Owner and Their Assets**



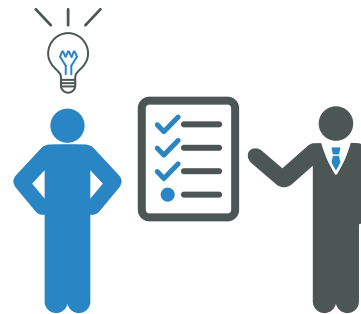
Source: Family Office Exchange Research

2. Owners continue to be concerned about the increasingly challenging and unpredictable global environment that is moving so fast, due in large part to the role of technology and the many disruptive innovations that have emerged as a result. Threats emerge at a pace that is almost impossible to keep up with and the damage that could potentially result due to improper management is severe. Risk factors of all types have multiplied with solutions obsolescing before they even hit the marketplace. Wealth owners have come to understand that there is not enough individual reach to keeping one’s “arms around” the problem, or the situation and that gathering the best advisor resources is mandatory to mitigate those risks.

3. As the opportunities to offer services and support to wealth owners expand, so too do advisors who look to increase their market share amidst extraordinary competitive pressures. The advisor community seeks to explore ways to better partner with the wealthy to indeed grow their businesses, but also to create lasting relationships that will span multiple generations, beyond just that of the wealth creator.

Enlightened advisors are working hard to demonstrate their value for a given price that will further refine and strengthen their business models and better align with the wealth owner. And the enlightened family office executive expects the value articulation to be compelling and strong as they navigate through a plethora of advisory services in search of best partners, a process that is daunting but so very important.

**Fig 2. How Does The Owner Define Value?**



4. As the worlds of the family and the advisor communities come together, the tension between and within those worlds becomes very complex. The family and advisor “eco-system” has multiple dimensions that are highly fluid, always dynamic and emotionally charged given some kind of triggering event such as death, a liquidity event, leadership transition, etc.

Families of wealth require an understanding of how to create a partnership system they can trust to manage the complexity inherent in what has now become three-dimensional communities.



## III. The Power of Partnerships

### Purpose of Partnerships

A partnership implies more than a relationship, because formally or informally there is a stronger and deeper bond that exists between two or more people or parties. The purpose of constructing a strong partnership, when it comes to the wise stewardship of family wealth, is to unravel problems and efficiently arrive at decisions that serve the best interest of the family. High-functioning partnerships serve to help cut through the inevitable complexity that accompanies family wealth.

The cost associated with weak partnerships can be quite high, and in some cases irretrievable when it comes to family relationships. For example, poor partners who do not understand (or who have not been given the chance to understand) the family enterprise from a holistic point of view, can cost the owners extraordinary financial loss when tax planning is viewed too narrowly. But even more costly, a weak partnership system can fracture the family.

The owner's intent can be compromised when the system disenfranchises some, leaving the family in a state of disharmony. Strong partners see the cost associated with this kind of failure every bit as much as the cost associated with poor technical solutions.

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*"The meeting of two personalities is like the meeting of two chemical substances. If there is any reaction, both are transformed."*

*-Carl Jung*

### Partnerships are Stronger Than Relationships

Relationships do not possess the power of partnerships. Relationships can become partnerships, but are unlikely to get there by themselves as they lack the foundation of trust that makes a partnership become truly synergistic. In fact, many of the FOX members interviewed don't expect most of their family client/advisor relationships to become partnerships.

There is a personal side of partnerships that distinguishes them from relationships. If you are part of a great partnership, it is not required that you be best friends; however if you have accomplished great things with a partner, the odds are good that the partnership goes beyond getting the job done. A personal bond or chemistry forms over time as trust builds through repeated experiences with that partner. This chemistry serves partners well because they build more trust and are favorably inclined to take on more difficult challenges together.

### Partnership Principles

Partnerships need a framework or a process to guide their formation, growth and sustainability to overcome the issues that might cause them to be ineffective. How are strong partnerships built? Four key partnership principles showed up consistently in the FOX research. These principles are at work in "one-to-one" and "one-to-many" partnership teams. The ability and desire to trust, as covered in the Prologue, is critical to the good health of a partnership.

Partners that subscribe to a common set of principles are able to fortify their partnerships with more trust, which strengthens the relationships. The four key principles defined on the next page are Culture, Chemistry, Collaboration and Competencies.

## The Power of Partnerships – Defined by FOX Members

We define the four partnership principles and provide FOX member quotes after each definition. Each quote represents the impact strong partnerships have had and the important role that each principle plays in building those partnerships.



**Culture** – Alignment in values is key to building trust in a partnering relationship. The more values are aligned between families and providers, the stronger the partnership can become. However, sharing culture does not suggest seeking people just like yourself. While polar opposites may never agree on anything, having too much in common may impede the growth of the partnership. Avoid like-minded thinkers on a team. As Henry Ford cautioned: “If two men think alike, then one of them is unnecessary.”

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*“It is essential that we share who we are... it helps our advisors bring more meaning to their work for our family.”*



**Chemistry** – A two-way street of honoring each other’s contributions builds a bridge to the second principle, chemistry. If partners possess a high degree of trust, then they are more inclined to want to work together. Chemistry is an intangible quality, leading many to say they “know it when they feel it.” It is the careful blend of having enough in common with someone and finding their unique interests complementary to a partner. Chemistry is in many ways the “spark” that keeps things going and helps overcome the frustration of vexing problems.

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*“Get to know your partners...with familiarity comes trust, and with trust a better partnership.”*



**Collaboration** – Once the partnership is underway, yet still in its formative stages, generating a high level of engagement engenders more trust. Collaborators are self-aware, knowing what they contribute to the team and knowing when to hold back or be an active listener. They are artful at processing input from others and synthesizing that information to arrive at better solutions. The principle of collaboration is often the catalyst that moves relationships to partnerships.

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*“Collaboration takes a commitment to be a better family office executive, a better advisor and a better client”*



**Competencies** – A likely starting point for many partnerships is a need for skills/competencies to solve a problem. Family office executives often look for technical competence to solve problems in their advisor relationships, but don’t consider building partnerships with advisors who don’t have the other three qualities named above. When operating in a true partnership, it is necessary to find the expertise you need and to acknowledge that the partner brings unique value to the table.

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*“It’s (partnerships) a two-way street. There must be respect and honoring of each other’s contributions ”*

## Partnership Principles in Practice

The landscape is populated with many stories about successful partnerships. We have selected a small range of great partnerships to demonstrate that they are guided by a common set of partnership principles.

We have chosen just one of the principles for each partnership example on pages 10 and 11 to illustrate how important that principle has been to these partnerships and the lesson that can be learned from each example.

## Culture – Hewlett and Packard

Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard formed their partnership when they were classmates in Stanford's engineering program. Following graduation, Hewlett and Packard went on a two-week camping trip. Spending two weeks in the woods with the same person would drive most people insane. Instead, Hewlett and Packard became close friends. This time together formed a bond that shaped the culture of HP years later. By investing the time to get to know one another, they formed a bond that they sustained throughout their lives.



Shortly after, with the encouragement of Stanford professor Fred Terman, they started HP. Hewlett and Packard were best friends with complementary strengths and managements styles. The founders developed a management style that came to be known as "The HP Way." In Hewlett's words, the "HP Way" is a core ideology ... which includes a deep respect for the individual, a dedication to affordable quality and reliability, a commitment to community responsibility, and a view that the company exists to make technical contributions for the advancement and welfare of humanity."

### **The following are the tenets of The HP Way:**

- We have trust and respect for individuals.
- We focus on a high level of achievement and contribution.
- We conduct our business with uncompromising integrity.
- We achieve our common objectives through teamwork.
- We encourage flexibility and innovation.

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### **Individual Partnership Principle Lesson**

Hewlett and Packard created a culture by instilling a supportive work environment that contradicted the times. This "Partnership Culture" was their innovative work ethic that enabled HP, its employees and their business partnership to thrive.

## Chemistry – Butler University

For over 100 years, Butler has influenced and shaped how young adults behave and what they do as a team by living the Butler values. In the past decade, Butler's men's and women's teams have captured 29 conference championships and have made appearances in NCAA National Championship Tournaments in eight sports. The Bulldogs have carried on the winning traditions set forth by Tony Hinkle, famed teacher, coach and athletic administrator at Butler. Butler does not attract more than their fair share of talent so they "fight above their weight class." So how do they do it? They recruit to their values or better known as the "Butler Way."



"The Butler Way" demands commitment, denies selfishness, accepts reality, yet seeks improvement every day while putting the team above self. By instilling these values, Butler generates unique chemistry that bonds teammates together and results in winning as a team while willingly sacrificing the accomplishments of individuals.

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### **Team Partnership Principle Lesson**

It is one thing to say that a partnership has shared values. It is quite another to demonstrate that those shared values lead to sustainable success and the betterment of the team. Butler has created a legacy with their values in a way that, by design, builds exceptional chemistry and makes the "Butler Way" experience transformational for their student/athletes.



## Collaboration – The World Wildlife Fund

One of the world's leading conservation organizations, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), works in 100 countries and is supported by close to six million members globally. WWF's unique way of working combines global reach with a foundation in science, involves action at every level from local to global and ensures the delivery of innovative solutions that meet the needs of both people and nature.



WWF's mission is to conserve nature and reduce the most pressing threats to the diversity of life on Earth including Forests, Oceans, Fresh Water (lakes, rivers, etc.), Food, Climate and, of course, Wild Life.

To ensure that the value of nature is reflected in decisions made by individuals, communities, governments and businesses, WWF has structured one of the most comprehensive partnering arrangements to foster collaboration and partnership among foundations, governments, businesses, communities, individuals and members to conserve many of the world's most ecologically important regions. WWF is dedicated to creating a platform for partnership that makes a difference at a scale that matters, and changes humanity's relationship with the planet among parties who, at best, do not always believe they have shared interests.

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### Team Partnership Principle Lesson

Partnerships play a role in solving simple and complex problems on small or massive scales. Structuring the partnership comes before solving the problem, and experience in that partnership contributes to improving it. To achieve a high level of engagement, a strong partnership embraces highly structured collaboration to help participants to answer these questions: who do we need?, how will we work together?, how does the partnership evolve and sustain in the face of mounting challenges?



## Competencies – Buffett/Munger

For over 50 years, the iconic firm of Berkshire-Hathaway has been powered by an extraordinary and resilient partnership between Warren Buffett and Charles Munger. Much has been written about their success,



especially in the investing world. What has made their partnership exceptional is that their manner of partnering was based on a high level of understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses. Their mutual respect of each other spans what they have in common as well as their differences. They share an exceptional work ethic that they learned together at a young age working side-by-side at Buffett's grandfather's store.

The two get along personally, saying they may disagree about investments or politics, but they've never had an argument. It is interesting that Buffett and Munger can disagree, but not be disagreeable, showing us that "what is right is more important than who is right" for both of them.

Despite their geographic separation, Munger is in California and Buffett in Nebraska, they speak more than once a day as they have done for decades. The art of their communications with each other was summed up by these quotes. Munger said, "(we) don't agree totally on everything, and yet we're quite respectful of one another." Buffett said that whenever they do disagree, Charlie says, "Well, you'll end up agreeing with me because you're smart and I'm right."

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### Individual Partnership Principle Lesson

While it's likely you will find a partner based on what you have in common, it is more likely it will thrive based on your differences. Mutual respect for those differences, whether skill-based or style-based, is an essential ingredient to making the most of each other's strengths.

## What Does the Power of Partnership Mean to FOX Members?

Great partnerships can be transformative. Whether participating in an individual partnership like Buffett/Munger or serving as a member of a successful team, we hear how members experiences of partnerships have better outcomes and that their lives have been changed by the partnership experience. Great partnerships have made an indelible mark on who they are and how they do what they do. Does the same opportunity exist for wealth owners, family office executives and advisors to build great partnerships that are transformational?

Much like the examples we found outside of the world of private capital, families and their advisors invest time and attention to form meaningful partnerships for the very same reasons as everyone else—to achieve a better outcome. During the course of our work we found that there is a genuine belief that without strong partnerships the ability to achieve the family’s objectives may not be possible or, at the very least, the outcomes may be less optimal.

When members are asked to reflect on partnerships and what they mean to them, they often reference a pivotal point where having a strong partnership made a difference or when sustaining partnerships over a long period made the journey possible.

Reviewing the many quotes we gathered during our work, it is compelling to hear how partnerships have helped families engage with their advisors. For advisors, partnerships have helped to overcome the inevitable challenges that arise with their clients. Partnerships have made the family office executive’s job more impactful by getting the most out of advisor relationships and enhancing family relationships.

The following represents examples behind the experiences of each of the quotes (Figure 3) below.

**Power of Family Capital:** A family member who learned a lifetime lesson when she saw all her family’s money “get old and die” due primarily to a lack of partnering between the Wealth Owner, the Family and the Advisors. Absent a strong partnership and shared purpose, the money became more important than the people. Now as an advisor, she shares the lessons about her own situation and promotes “partnerships” that develop each generation as stewards energized to sustain wealth and for the human capital to become the most important asset.

**Power of Perseverance:** Advisors understand that there will be client challenges and that a constant state of avoiding conflict will weaken the partnership. They seek ways to turn difficult situations with clients into opportunities to strengthen their partnerships. A significant family event or transition (sale of the business, death of a key family member, change in governance structure or a difficult personal family issue) often tests the strength of a partnership. Advisors that have made the investment of time, talent and trust in the early years of the relationship are more likely to weather these transitions and enhance their chances of being “retained” by the next generation.

**Power of Ideas:** Complex problems need the best thinking and Family Office Executives (FOEs) on behalf of their families, retain talented people within their office to solve these problems. In addition, FOEs, rely on outside advisor partners to be thinking about their client issues and bring ideas that they would not get to on their own. Getting the best thinking by investing in partnerships means as one FOE put it: “I want them to call me first with that great idea.”

**Fig 3. Quotes from FOX Members**

### Power of Family’s Capital

*“Partnership is a way to make all family members become valuable assets.”*

*-Family Member*

### Power of Perseverance

*“Great partnerships help weather the storm of problems that arise between clients and advisors.”*

*-Advisor*

### Power of Ideas

*“Great advisor partners are those that connect me to the broad marketplace of ideas.”*

*-FO Executive*

*Source: Family Office Exchange Research*

## Defining Partnerships – Terms of Engagement

At the FOX Thought Leaders Council Summit and the FOX Executive Council meetings, we asked our Council members to provide us terms they use to describe what a great partnership means to them. We supplemented that work through individual interviews with Wealth Owners and Family Office Executives. We aligned the terms they used to describe each principle around the four partnership principles mentioned below (Figure 4). The terms used by all parties were not only consistent, but they provided a flow that represents the progression of a partnership. Note that the terms in larger print were used most often by members such as: “Trust,” “Engagement” and to “Listen.”

## Terms of Engagement in Action

Vanessa Strike, FOX Thought Leaders Summit guest and Professor of Applied Family Business Studies, studied how advisors “capture attention, become attuned to family firm members to influence attention, and how they aid family members to collaboratively interrelate.” Her article, published in “Family Business Review” using a series of 40 open-ended interviews with wealthy families and their advisors, linked together common themes of a “Most Trusted Advisor.” We included two quotes from her work, one from a family client and one from an advisor, that emphasize one of the key traits in a family client and advisor partnership: listening.

**Fig 4. Terms of Engagement for Most Trusted Advisors**



Source: Family Office Exchange Research

*“The Most Trusted Advisor has to really understand the personalities of the family. I think that’s really important because you have to speak differently to each type of person. Everybody hears different things...I think understanding the needs of each family member and attending to the different needs will create more harmony amongst us.”*

-Quote from family client describing a Most Trusted Advisor (MTA)

*“I listen carefully at lots of different levels and in different places. Listening to what the concerns are, the areas of discomfort and trying to understand... Sometimes you can sense discomfort or anxiety or excitement but they are not necessarily expressing what it is exactly. So you have to think and listen to understand because people often don’t communicate those things so clearly”*

-Quote from a Most Trusted Advisor<sup>1</sup>

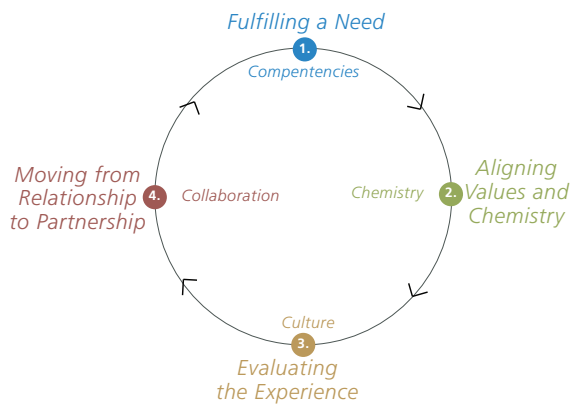
<sup>1</sup>Source: Vanessa M. Strike, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University, “The Most Trusted Advisor and the Subtle Advice Process in Family Firms”, “Family Business Review, p. 300-301



## Four Steps in the Life of a Partnership

By adapting the “Defining Our Partnership” diagram it can serve as a useful way to think about how partnerships form, grow and sustain. We put this diagram (Figure 5) to work by adding steps in the partnership process. Progressing around this diagram with the same partner illustrates how a partnership may grow, evolve and strengthen. We uncluttered the chart by removing the “Terms of Engagement for Most Trusted Advisors,” but they still apply to this simplified diagram. The partnership steps are as follows:

**Fig 5. Steps in a Life of a Partnership**



Source: Family Office Exchange Research

**1. Fulfilling a Need** – Every partnership begins with a specific family client need or opportunity and an advisor or family member that possesses the skills to meet that need or set of needs. The guiding thoughts and questions families should keep in mind when initiating a partnership include the following:

- Can this provider work with me to solve my problem?
- Does he/she have what it takes to guide my family business to success?
- Will my pressing challenges be resolved?

**2. Aligning Values and Chemistry** – This phase involves families assessing the values driving the business practices of providers. The level to which providers’ values align with that of families will determine the strength of the partnership. This step is highlighted in Strike’s “attributes to capture attention” as a key turning point in creating a solid

foundation for a partnership.

- Will family members “relate” to this provider?
- Does the provider have the depth to appeal to multiple generations?
- Are there shared outside interests between the provider and the family?

**3. Evaluating the Experience** – Families determine their satisfaction for services provided. This is the time when family clients and providers reassess expectations. Honest and open communication is key at this phase of the process. In her research, Vanessa Strike identifies this phase as “attuning to influence attention” during which the provider (or MTA) takes the time to understand, support and provide objective advice to the family.

- How will family members rate the service provided?
- What words do family members use to describe the provider and the individual advisors that work with them?
- Is the provider open and flexible about changes to the current relationship and the team servicing the family?

**4. Moving from Relationship to Partnership** – A successful partnership is the result of strong relationships that intentionally transition to deeper engagement. Continued open dialogue, adjustments to the service delivery model and embracing one common vision are key to deepening a partnership. From Strike’s study, this is the moment where the trust established between family members and MTA allows the advisor to work with the family and help members interrelate and collaborate toward one common goal.

- How has the provider inter-related with the family during a particularly difficult and sensitive period?
- Has the relationship grown or diminished since that time?
- Has the provider demonstrated that they place the family’s interests above all other interests?

## IV. Partnership Roles and Models

### Partnership Roles – How to be a Better Partner

Partnerships derive much of their strength from a “Three-Way” connection of roles between Wealth Owners, Family Office Executives and outside Advisors. We spoke to members of our Executive Council to gain their insights. This council is made up of Family Office Executives representing some of the most sophisticated and thoughtful families in the FOX membership. These Family Office Executives helped to describe the roles in that three-way partnership and how the participants can become better partners.

The **Wealth Owner** sets the tone for the partnership by being a part of the process and creating a “Culture of Partnering” by imprinting their vision on the partnership, taking care to encourage the partnership to grow while resisting the instinct to control the process. The involvement of the Wealth Owner is critical. When they do not engage at this level, partnerships are not as effective.

The **Family Office Executive** gives the partnership life by serving as the key communicator and facilitator “connecting the dots” for the partners, respectfully challenging thinking in the interest of getting to an optimal outcome and providing feedback to all partners to foster growth in the partnership.

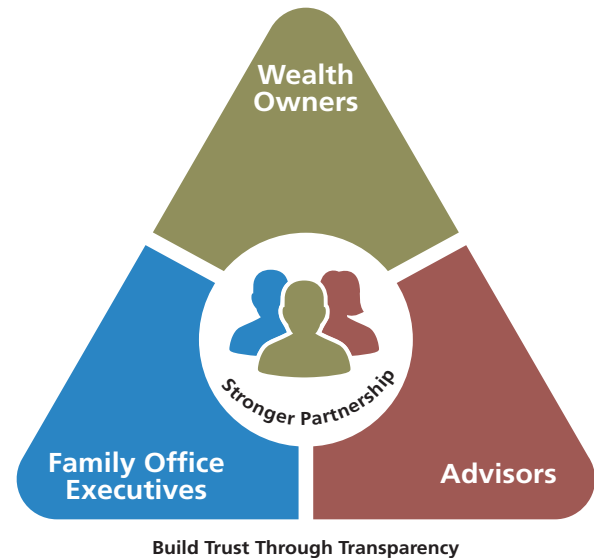
**Advisors** are key to sustaining the partnership by being first and foremost exceptional listeners, excelling in their area of expertise and collaborating with others to arrive at better solutions in service to the family client. As a most trusted advisor shares:

*“My role is to be a key contributor to a multi-disciplinary team while serving to establish or further develop a cohesive partnership that benefits the family.”*

–Dennis Wright  
Wellspring Associates

Lastly, for all participants, always being transparent in their dealings with each other will build greater trust.

Fig 6. Three-Way Partnership



Source: Family Office Exchange Research

### Characteristics of Strong Partnerships

#### Wealth Owners

- Develop a culture of partnering by being a part of the process
- Acknowledge the value of diverse talents
- Clarify “owner expectations” about partnership performance

#### Family Office Executives

- Respectfully challenge owners to arrive at best decisions
- Construct metrics that define success for all partners
- Provide feedback that optimizes interactions

#### Advisors

- Be an exceptional listener
- Educate and be willing to be educated
- Collaborate with other partners to arrive at creative solutions



## Structuring the Partnership – Partnership Models

Partnership principles provide guidelines for developing partnerships and roles are essential to sustain the partnership. Partnership models offer structural design options for a family based on their unique set of characteristics.

### Partnership Models

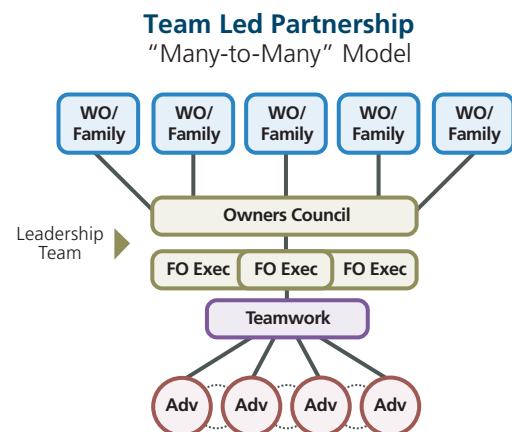
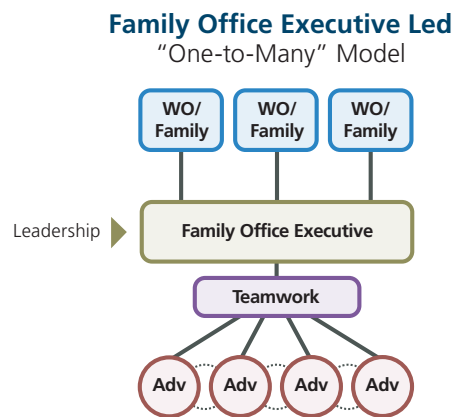
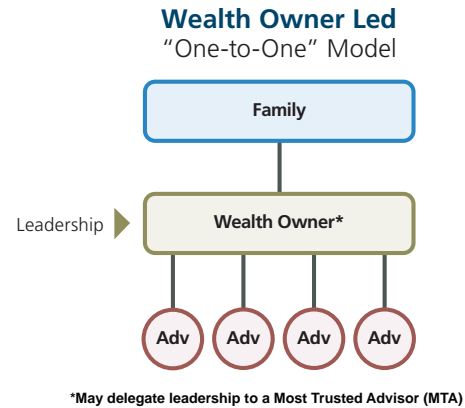
Through our research, FOX has identified three models (Figure 7) across a spectrum that represent the basic structures in place between family and advisor partners. For all models, partnerships function with “Leadership” who sets the operating framework for those on the team to establish goals based on the wealth owner’s objectives as well as the basic rules of engagement. At the outset, wealth owners or office executives typically adopt this leadership role. Responsibilities include identifying the goals and managing the flow of information, structure and frequency of meetings as well as access to family members. The Leader is the constant across all three models, however the person in that role may change to accommodate each model. As the family evolves, the Leader may be the Wealth Owner (WO), Most Trusted Advisor (MTA), Family Office Executive (FOE) or a Family member who runs the family office.

### Teamwork

Teamwork takes on different levels of importance with each model which impacts the Leadership role. In the Wealth Owner Led model, the Leader (typically the Wealth Owner or a Most Trusted Advisor) seeks to maximize one-to-one partnerships with each advisor to streamline decision-making. Teamwork between advisors is not typically a key part of this model. Teamwork becomes an essential component of the Family Office Executive (FOE) Led model. In this model, the FOE comes to decisions by encouraging teamwork among advisors to get their best thinking in return. Team interactions reach another level under the Team Led Partnership model. Teamwork is the method by which insights are gained, input is achieved and decisions are made. Teams are often populated by family members, family office staff and advisors.

It is best to think of each partnership model as an ecosystem with expected behaviors, rules of engagement and a set of shared values. It follows that the person or persons playing the Leadership role sets the tone and exercises a high degree of control over advisor selection and what role advisors play on the team.

**Fig 7. Partnership Models**



Source: Family Office Exchange Research

## Wealth Owner Led Partnership Model

### Description: Managing a Team of Rivals

Under the Wealth Owner Led (Figure 8) or “One-to-One” partnership model, the “Leadership” role is held by the Wealth Owner, or a Most Trusted Advisor (MTA) who operates in a virtual office or works for a family with complex needs that has not hired full-time staff for this work. The “Leader” relies on an outsourced team to get everything done by maximizing contribution from each individual advisor. Like Abraham Lincoln’s selection of his cabinet in the book “Team of Rivals,” the “Leader” is wise enough to find the most talented team possible regardless of their relationship with each other and to manage each relationship on a one-to-one basis. As the country’s interest must take priority over any individual’s interest, Lincoln impressed upon his cabinet members that there was no greater cause than to keep the country united at a time when that was very much in question. The family’s mission must take precedence over any individual’s interest among the advisors.

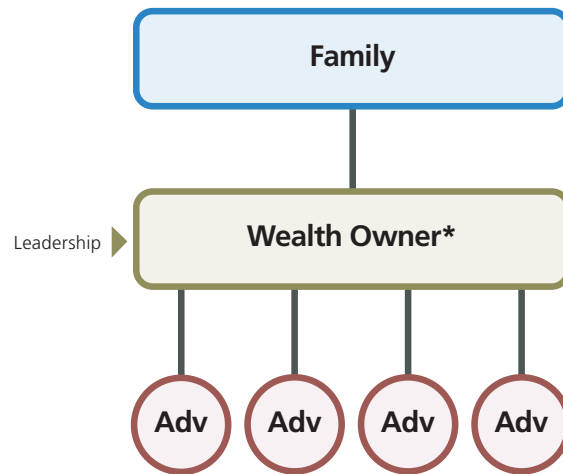
The political will, if not the will to succeed, on the part of the Leader is constantly tested in this model. Being both resource and time-starved, it is essential that the Leader forms great partnerships to not just get the job done but to source ideas that will help serve the family well in the future.

### Model in Action

The “Wealth Owner Led” model requires that the wealth owner increasingly builds trust in the advisors they have chosen and/or their Most Trusted Advisor to enable partnerships to form. We learned that when problems arise for the wealth owner, sometimes unexpectedly, it results in a great opportunity for advisors to become that Most Trusted Advisor (MTA).

**Fig 8. Wealth Owner Led Partnership**

“One-to-One” Model



**\*May delegate leadership to a Most Trusted Advisor (MTA)**

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Description</b>  | Managing a team of rivals                                  |
| <b>Benefits</b>     | Maximize Advisors Individual Contribution, Greater Control |
| <b>Leadership</b>   | Wealth Owner (or delegated to a Most Trusted Advisor)      |
| <b>Key Features</b> | Clarity for Advisors                                       |
| <b>Challenges</b>   | Sustainability   |

Source: Family Office Exchange Research

### Takeaways from Wealth Owner Led Model

The biggest advantages of this model are clarity, control, and simplicity while the glaring challenge is sustainability. Partnerships established by the Leader can prepare advisors well for a transition but the Leader typically has no clear line of succession. Our work revealed that the Leader in this model may have sought out a mentor early in their career to advise them on how to establish great partnerships. In turn, the Leader then becomes a mentor to a potential successor instructing the successor on the process and intricacies of leading the partnership model. We believe this mentoring legacy is critical to sustain this model.

## Family Office Executive Led Model

### Description: Partnership Legacy

Family Office Executive Led (Figure 9) or “One-to-Many” partnership model is clearly more complicated than “One-to-One” and is accompanied with a higher degree of execution risk. An eco-system begins to develop with all participants having a direct or near direct impact on each other, so there is an increased need for trust to make the eco-system function properly. While its benefits are many, it is clearly not for every family or advisor. In its fully evolved state, this model helps to create a “Partnership Legacy” that can fundamentally shape future generations’ approach to interactions with the Family, the Family Office and Advisors.

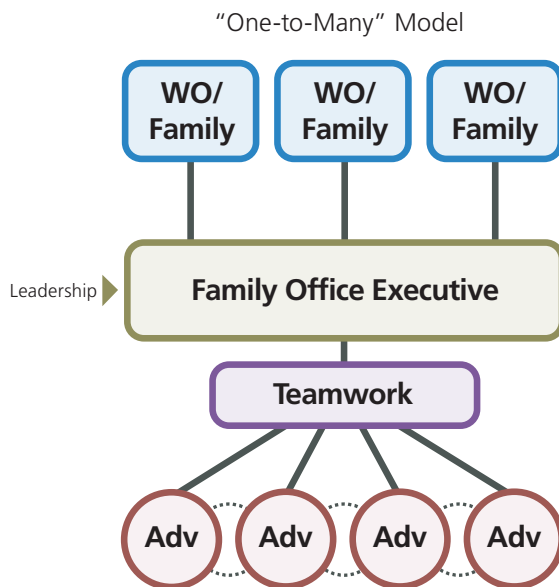
### Model in Action

The Family Office Led model represents a key pivot point at which the Wealth Owner is willing to put their full trust into a Family Office Executive and has found someone who has earned that trust. In turn, the FOE begins to establish their own network of partners that they trust. From an FOE in this position we heard:

*“To develop a true long-term relationship with an outside advisor I need world class talent that demonstrates they can balance their commercial interests with their duty to my client.”*

–Bryan Dunn  
Family Office, CEO  
Kinship Trust

Fig 9. Family Office Executive Led Partnership



|                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Description</b>  | Partnership Legacy           |
| <b>Benefits</b>     | Sustainability, Continuity   |
| <b>Leadership</b>   | Family Office Executive      |
| <b>Key Features</b> | Collaboration Among Advisors |
| <b>Challenges</b>   | Complexity                   |

Source: Family Office Exchange Research

### Takeaways from the Family Office Executive Led Model

This model is most suitable for those families who are transitioning into a more complex ownership model as well as multi-generational families. The Wealth Owners delegate to the FOE who is prepared to devote the necessary time and energy to make the partnership model work.

## Team Led Partnership Model

### Description: Balance of Power

At the end of the spectrum of partnership model options is the Team Led (Figure 10) “Many-to-Many” model. This model is best suited for enterprise families and advanced generations when the center of power from the early generations is no longer present. There are multiple family members engaged in this democratized state of decision-making. Partnerships become much more complex as family needs grow, the number of participants expand, and interactions among all members of the eco-system connect. It is the most sophisticated partnership model featuring a team of Family Office Executives working together that allows the principals represented by the “Owners Council” to trust the system.

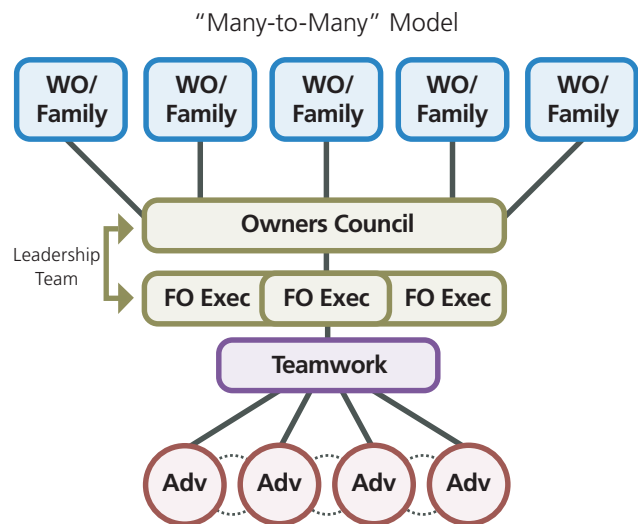
### Model in Action

Families that operate in a “Balance of Power” model find that they have to trust the model - both in terms of the individual partners and trust the “system” to work on their behalf believing that the structures that have been put in place and honed over time will represent their interests fairly. As the head of a very large family office put it:

*“Being responsible for a very large family office, I have realized that families are truly effective in managing their wealth when they celebrate the accomplishments of the advisors and the advisors are celebrating the accomplishments of the family”*

–Francesco D’Amico  
Executive Committee  
Quilvest (Switzerland) Ltd.

**Fig 10. Team Led Partnership**



|                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Description</b>  | Balance of Power         |
| <b>Benefits</b>     | High Level of Engagement |
| <b>Leadership</b>   | Embedded Partnership     |
| <b>Key Features</b> | Collaboration Among All  |
| <b>Challenges</b>   | Complexity               |

Source: Family Office Exchange Research

### Takeaways from the Team Led Partnership Model

The Team Led model is designed for families who have invested in developing the necessary architecture including information-sharing technology that allows the system to operate across a large number of participants who may reside in several countries. This model thrives in an environment where families possess a collective enterprise view across all their business and family endeavors.

## Leadership Succession Across all Models

It would be an oversight to cover these partnership models without considering the potential for leadership succession. In the Wealth Owner Led model, (in the absence of an internal family office staff) there is high risk that an orderly succession may not occur. The strength of the partnerships created under the Wealth Owner Led model will be tested during this transition which can take years to fully evolve. The challenge is finding someone who can fit the mold of the former Leader.

Succession in a Family Office Executive Led model is focused on replacing the FOE with a similarly talented person. FOEs are concerned that by becoming indispensable to the family that their potential absence then becomes the family's main risk.

Ultimately, families following the Team Led Partnership model should be best prepared to weather a leadership succession. The structure allows for engagement, participation and leadership education, which are a part of the family's partnership culture. This culture provides a greater likelihood that leaders will be groomed and prepared to lead when the opportunity presents itself.

While transitions are never easy, having great partnerships in place means that all partners, having worked in collaboration with the team, are better prepared to manage such transitions.

## V. Strategies for Building Partnerships

### Selecting a Partnership Model

Partnerships don't always succeed, and there are many reasons that lead to failure. The list we gathered from our members includes: "unresolved issues," "miscommunication about objectives," "bad chemistry," "over-promising and under-delivering," "getting too comfortable," "service creep," "lack of transparent communications," "absence of trust," "failed generational transitions," and "no unity of vision." These are challenging issues and worthy of attention as the damage that failed partnerships inflict have a serious impact on the family's ability to perform and succeed. However, steps can be taken to improve the odds that the partnerships will succeed.

### Resourcing a Partnership Model

Once a model is selected to serve as the framework, review the following partnership requirements and consider how you might resource your partnership model now and in the future.

#### Establish Leadership Requirements

- The Wealth Owner Led model requires an experienced manager who is resourceful at finding the right partner for the right assignment and keeping that partner engaged. This Leader must possess considerable experience in executing a hands-on leadership style.
- Family Office Executive Led model requires a leader who can get the most out of partners by getting them to work together. This leader is skilled at strategically sourcing outside expertise and resources within the family office while setting expectations that these teams should work collaboratively. Leaders who have past experience requiring them to coach talented teams to solve complex problems have an edge.

- The Team Led Partnership model leader needs to exhibit skills in creating/maintaining systems, prudent sharing of information and harnessing technology. The Leader's imperative is to ensure that all partners are engaged by receiving the appropriate level of information that enables them to contribute at a high level. A background that includes a deep understanding of how people, process and systems optimally interact is a considerable benefit.

#### Establish Wealth Owner and Family Member Engagement Goals

- Articulate what partnership culture means to the family.
- Define how family will provide support to those appointed to leadership roles.
- Establish expectations for involvement in any and all tasks required by leadership.

#### Build a Partnership Education Culture

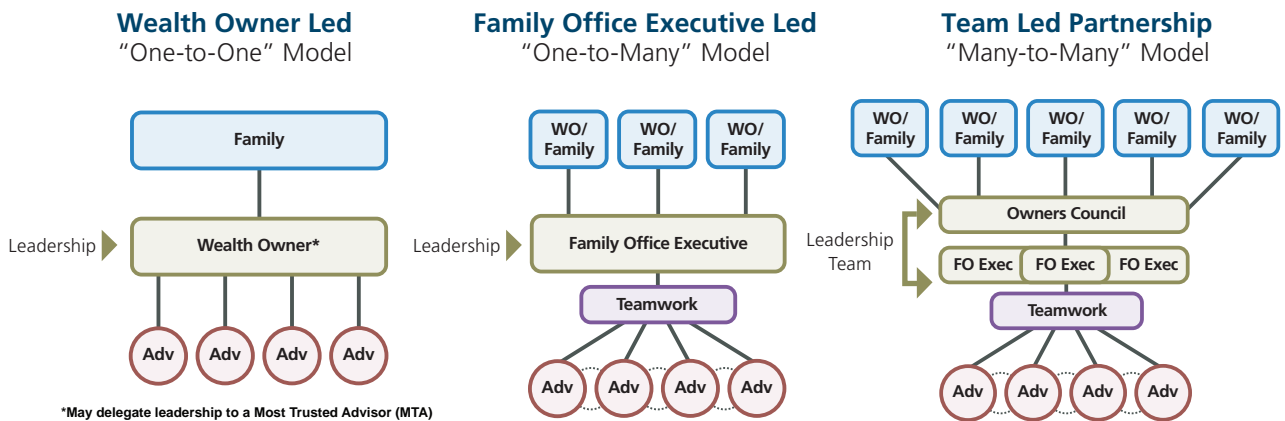
- Identify emerging leaders among family members and most trusted advisors.
- Create a skills inventory for each potential leader including what skills they possess and skills that they may need.
- Consider what education requirements and experience will be needed to fill the skill gaps identified in the inventory and how to fill those gaps.
- Assign a mentor for an emerging leader and, in turn, ensure that all present leaders have a mentee.
- Ensure that your partnership education is part of your overall family and leadership education efforts.

### Develop and Embed a Partnership Process

- Many of our members have begun a process to select partners. Take the time to share the best practices that you have learned through your experience. It's a great way to get started.

- Review the next section on “Strategically Managing Partnerships” to help assess current partners and select new partners. Build these steps and tips into your process or use them to get your process launched.

**Fig 11. Partnership Models**



|                                    |                                 |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Characteristics</b>             | Managing a Team of Rivals       | Partnership Legacy                 | Balance of Power                |
| <b>Type of Office</b>              | Virtual or Limited Staff Office | Established                        | Multi-Generational              |
| <b>Staff Overlap with Business</b> | Significant Overlap             | Some Involvement                   | Little to No Involvement        |
| <b>Family Involvement</b>          | Minimal                         | Increasing with Succession Plan    | Family Member Led               |
| <b>Servicing</b>                   | Extensive Outsourcing           | Internal Team Support              | Internal Team Covers Most Needs |
| <b>Governance</b>                  | Hold Each Other Accountable     | Individual and Team Accountability | System of Checks and Balances   |

## Strategically Managing Partnerships

We believe in taking a strategic approach to managing your partnerships. Whether you have selected and resourced a partnership model or not, we have provided a way to go about strengthening your partnerships. Below is a three part exercise to help you get to work immediately by: 1) inventorying your current partnership eco-system; 2) assessing your current partnerships; and 3) screening for new partners.

### Part I: Partnership Eco-System

A good way to understand existing partnership dynamics is to view them as part of a larger eco-system. Figure 12 provides a blueprint to place members around the family members at the center. Keep in mind that this is not a judgmental exercise of who potentially should or should not be in the “Inner Circle”, it is simply a portrayal of the shape of the present eco-system.

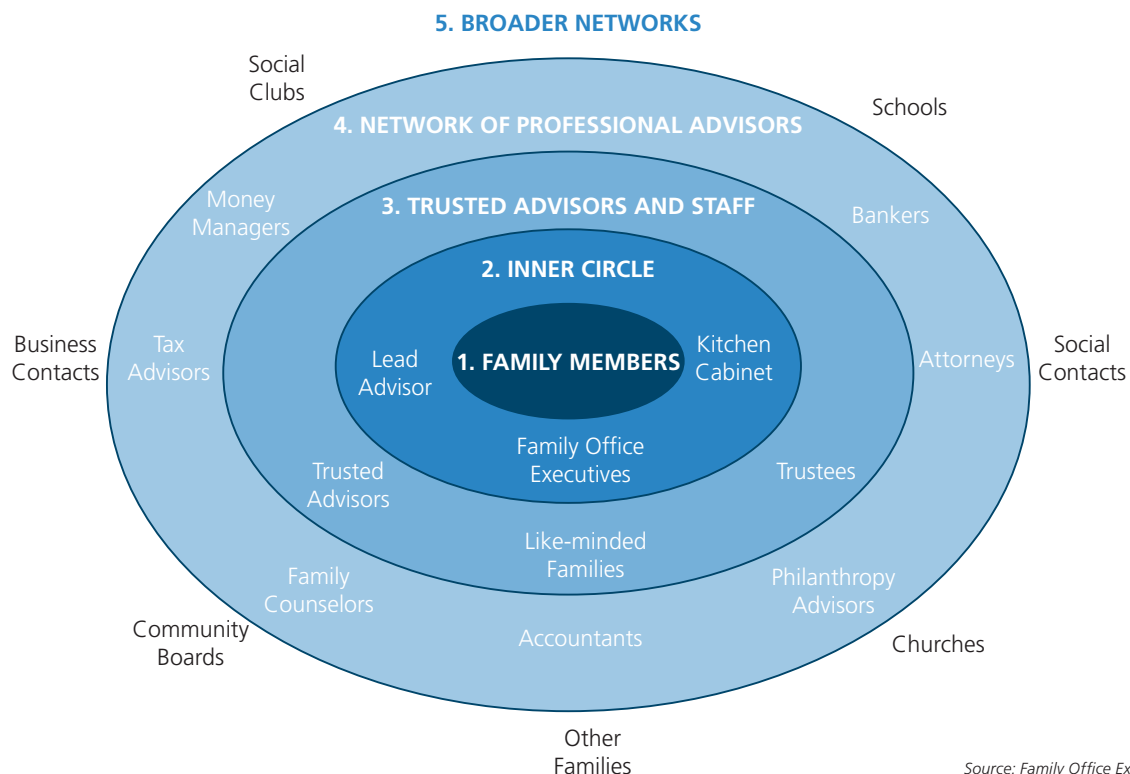
**Step 1:** Identify all of the partners that you determine to be active in your eco-system.

**Step 2:** Consult the “Partnership Eco-System” chart (Figure 12) to determine where each partner fits in the five concentric circle groups including: family members, inner circle, trusted advisors and staff, network of professional advisors or broader network groups. It is possible that one individual fulfills more than one role, so you may place them in more than one group.

**Step 3:** For those partners you have identified in the “Inner Circle,” create a separate list of those partners. What behaviors do you believe they exhibit that make them part of this trusted group?

**Step 4:** Share your completed eco-system and your observations with others, including family members. Do they agree with who you place in each group? Who would they change? Who do they see as potentially graduating to the “inner circle” and why?

**Fig 12. The Partnership Eco-System**



Source: Family Office Exchange Research



## Part II: Partnership Assessment

*“Doveriyai, no proveryai” – (Russian proverb meaning: Trust, but verify)*

*-President Ronald Reagan*

Assessing the state of partnerships is a delicate balance of gathering information and input from all related parties. Too much information will over complicate the assessment and too little input will damage the integrity of the effort. Operating in the spirit of a partnership, the assessment should possess a high level of transparency and participation as the process itself demonstrates a commitment to making partnerships a priority for all you deem to be your partners. Further, the process of assessing the partnerships should serve as a component part of strengthening your partnerships. We suggest starting that process with the following exercise. We have outlined steps below and an accompanying guide below (Figure 13).

**Step 1:** The Partnership Assessment exercise is initiated by the Leader, or it may be shared with Advisors as part of their on-boarding process or annual reviews. We suggest that you conduct this exercise once a year or as part of your regular assessment of performance reviews of the Family Office and Advisors.

**Step 2:** All Family Members, Family Office Executives and Advisors directly involved in the partnership should answer all the questions. It is important that each partner recognize that they are assessing all who are involved in the partnership. A Partner Feedback process for each member should be a separate exercise, and their individual contribution to the partnership should be part of that overall feedback process.

**Fig 13. Annual Partnership Assessment**

| Assessment Questions   | Tips to Strengthen the Partnership   |
|--|--|
| <b>Q1.</b> Are you being constructively challenged by your partner(s)? | If your partner(s) are not challenging you with new thinking, then ask them to bring new thinking to an old problem and see how they respond.  |
| <b>Q2.</b> Have you won the hearts and minds of your partners?         | Having a great partner means they are fully engaged. Be sensitive to cultural differences. The “softer issues” are often the most difficult to tackle, but most lucrative when you get them right. |
| <b>Q3.</b> How well do you really know your partners?                  | Anticipate and evaluate your partners value proposition. Get inside their head and know what’s important to them. It will help avoid surprises and enable solutions that work for all partners.    |
| <b>Q4.</b> How constructive are you being in your negotiations?        | Take care to frame proposals in a positive and constructive manner. Provide options and avoid “take-it-or-leave-it” deals.   |
| <b>Q5.</b> Are you prepared for disagreements?                         | Establish review and dispute steps in the negotiation and implementation process early on.   |
| <b>Q6.</b> How much support do you have from all stakeholders?         | Communicating the benefits to all participants along the way will help keep up momentum and increase support. It also keeps spirits up when times get tough.                                       |

*Source: Family Office Exchange Research*

**Step 3:** The Leader conducts a session where each partner shares their review of the partnership and comments constructively on how to improve the partnership. The “Tips” provide a few ideas and a way for partners to see how ideas may be shared. For the Leader, try to avoid entertaining discussions outside of that meeting and encourage candor from all parties.

**Step 4:** Based on the discussion, identify and prioritize the critical issues, potential alternatives and the owners of the analysis of possible solutions. It is unlikely all of that will be accomplished in one meeting, so be patient with your progress, but do make sure there are updates along the way so momentum is not lost.

**Step 5:** At the next “Annual Partnership Assessment” recapitulate the issues, resolutions, progress and remaining items from the last assessment.

### Part III: Partner Selection Screening

Beyond questions that you may routinely ask as part of any advisor due diligence, there is another level of questions for those you are considering to add to your partnership team. We have provided sample questions (Figure 14) accompanied by tips on what to look for from the candidate’s answers. It is worth noting that we gleaned these tips from FOX members who have deep experience in forming great partnerships and have learned much from unsuccessful partnerships.

**Fig 14. Advisor Partner Selection Screening**

| Advisor Partner Selection Questions   | Tips – What to Listen For   |
|---|---|
| <b>Q1.</b> Describe your ideal client relationship?   | In their answers look for words or phrases or stories that let you know: 1)They put client interest above self-interest; 2) They demonstrate that they are good listeners.  |
| <b>Q2.</b> Tell me the reasons why a client left your firm?   | You want to know what they learned from losing a client and how they have adapted. Did they care enough to find the real reasons why a client departed?   |
| <b>Q3.</b> Why do clients hire you? What do you do that they value the most?  | Do they express how they: 1) Pro-actively work with the family to know what is important to them on a regular basis; 2) Diligently pay attention to the small things.   |
| <b>Q4.</b> What are your thoughts about (insert name of an Advisory firm that you know and they know)? Have you worked with them? | It is important to hear how the partner candidate works with others to serve the best interest of the client. Can they share a story of how they partnered with other advisors to bring about a better solution.                  |
| <b>Q5.</b> Why do you do what you do?   | This question can be quite disarming, so give it some time and probe a bit. You are seeking what motivates them. See if they will share a client story about how they helped improve the working relationship among all partners. |

Source: Family Office Exchange Research

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November 3, 2016

# About Family Office Exchange

**Family Office Exchange (FOX)** is the world's leading peer-to-peer network for ultra-wealthy family enterprises and their family offices, and is the leading authority related to matters of sustaining wealth. With more than 25 years of experience, and a staff of 40 people based in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Madrid, and Sydney FOX is a thought leader in the areas of family strategy and governance, family office best practices, and family risk and legacy planning.

FOX serves family groups and their advisors in 20 countries, providing trusted insight and best practices for managing family wealth. The network includes 330 ultra-wealthy families, as well as 120 multi-family offices (MFOs) and advisory firms. More than 6,000 individual family members are served by the FOX global community.

Members rely on FOX ([www.familyoffice.com](http://www.familyoffice.com)) to help them make better, more informed decisions about their family legacy and their wealth management practices and providers. FOX has established a safe, confidential environment of common interest and mutual trust to enable members to compare experiences and learn from the collective knowledge of other members in the network. Resources available to FOX members include proprietary research on wealth management best practices, peer benchmarking, bi-monthly webinars on current trends, and an extensive library of articles and whitepapers, as well as online discussion forums, regional peer roundtables, and a variety of educational workshops and forums.

FOX offers six forums a year for members. The Forums address many of the issues of greatest concern to wealthy families and their advisors in the areas of legacy and leadership. Perhaps most valued by members is the collective intelligence of the FOX network. This accumulated wisdom has been methodically captured by the FOX staff, with full respect for confidentiality and discretion, and archived in a secure searchable database for the exclusive use of FOX members. This collective knowledge is what truly sets FOX apart.

Sara Hamilton founded FOX in 1989 to provide objective information and advice on family wealth, family leadership, and different pathways available to sustain wealth across generations. Helping members preserve and enhance their true family wealth by providing education, insights, and peer exchange is the sole focus of FOX. The firm's success is measured by the quality and value of the experience of its many private investors, family offices, multi-family offices, and wealth advisor members. True to this original vision, FOX strives to address new challenges and to provide insights on current trends and issues regarding investing, philanthropy, and owner education. As an advocate for wealth owners, FOX provides leadership in the private wealth field, helping to shape the industry and develop standards of performance for industry professionals.

## Peer Community

Families and executives come to FOX to meet counterparts from other families and learn what they are doing.

- [FOX Forums](#)
- [Regional Member Briefings](#)
- [FOX Peer Councils](#)
- [Private Online Discussion Group](#)

## Education

Raising the next generation to be responsible adults who are able to manage their wealth knowledgeably requires thoughtful education.

- [Live Webinars](#)
- [FOX Workshops And Events](#)
- [University Of Chicago Booth School Of Business - Private Wealth Management Course](#)

## Advice

FOX provides on-going guidance on best practices and how to respond to new challenges you haven't faced before.

- [Experienced Relationship Manager](#)
- [FOX Member Networks](#)
- [FOX Advisor Directory](#)

## Knowledge

We know you would like a place to find objective research and discussion on family governance, family office operations, and wealth planning strategies.

- [FOX Knowledge Center](#)
- [FOX Benchmarking](#)
- [FOX Insights Blog](#)
- [FOXConnects™ Newsletter](#)

## About Quilvest

**Quilvest Switzerland Ltd (QVS)** is an international multi-family office, serving the founding family and a selected circle of families and individual entrepreneurs. QVS is part of Quilvest Wealth Management, an independent banking group, providing private wealth management solutions since 1917 in Europe, Latin America and Asia.

Since its foundation (1932), QVS has assisted the founding family in the management of its wealth as well as the design and management of its family governance. Over the past ten years, QVS has shared its operating platform, experience and expertise with more than 30 families. Today, QVS is one of the largest and long-established international Multi-Family-Office operating under a Swiss banking licence with almost 100 professionals.

Our core values are: independence, transparency and principle approach.

We are part of a solid, independent group controlled by an international family—today at the seventh generation—living in 16 countries and controlling a number of operating businesses. The fact that the QVS is not part of a commercial or corporate banking group mitigates conflicts of interests in pushing products.

With the founding family being both client and shareholder of QVS, the quality of the services is constantly monitored. Shareholders as clients of Quilvest (Switzerland) Ltd. are a guarantee for transparency.

Each solution, or investment provided to our shareholders, is also provided to our clients with the same price and same team of professionals. In advising on family governance, estate planning or investments, we share our experience, solutions and we co-invest with our clients with a partnership spirit.

### **QVS offers the following services:**

#### **A. Family Office Services**

Governance (Family, Investment, Operating)  
Estate/succession planning (and related legal structures)

Fiduciary services (Trusts, foundations and corporates)

Wealth Consolidation Reporting

#### **B. Investment Services**

Asset Allocation and managers selection  
(Marketable, Private equity, Real Estate)

Discretionary portfolio management or investment advisory mandates

Private/Family Investment Committees

#### **C. Banking Services**

The approach of each QVS professional is to establish a long-term relationship with our clients based on mutual trust. This is the precondition to advising on family matters and—foremost—to be able to share our expertise for the benefit and longevity of the family unity and wealth.





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