

GROWERTALKS

Inside Look

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Don't Be Like Logan Roy

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If you're a regular watcher of TV, you've probably heard of the HBO show "Succession." If you haven't, it centers around Logan Roy, a millionaire businessman played by Brian Cox who owns this big conglomerate. When his health starts to fail, his four adult children start fighting over who will eventually take over the company when Old Man Roy dies.

I know the show has earned rave reviews and multiple Emmy nominations/wins, but I couldn't get past the fourth episode of the first season.

I was watching it, thinking, "These people are just so ... unlikeable." I realized I didn't care what happened to any of the characters on the show. I mean, the acting was great, so maybe that's why—they were TOO good at playing horrible people. But I just couldn't stick it out.

As a regular watcher of the shows HBO offers, I've seen the previews for the other seasons of "Succession," so I know that Logan's second son Kendall is the most horrible of all four horrible children. I also know Logan ends up blackmailing Kendall after a series of bad choices, drug addiction and harassment accusations.

I don't want to spoil it for you if you haven't seen it and it's on your list, but apparently, the situation goes even more downhill from there. The Roy family sure puts the fun in dysfunctional. (You also gotta ask yourself—Logan raised these horrible children, so maybe he's got no one to blame but himself ...?)

Even though I didn't personally like the show, I think there's a moral to the story for owners who are looking to pass down the business to their children: don't be like Logan Roy. Don't pit your children against each other. Don't hold their past mistakes over their heads. And, especially, don't put off making a succession plan, which would be helpful in avoiding any bad feelings and contentious situations.

The Swanekamps who own Kube-Pak in Allentown, Pennsylvania, are the complete opposite of the Roys. Well, besides being actual, likeable people, Bill, Rob, Sr. and John Swanekamp have made transitioning their family business to the third generation as smooth and stress-free as possible. They had the foresight to plan for the future—theirs and their kids. And they didn't assume their kids would want to be a part of the business, either. They nurtured their children's interactions with the business by paying them for their hard work and always letting them

know that it was here for them, if they wanted it.

Because of that experience, transitioning Kube-Pak to Rob, Jr. and Sean was a relatively pleasant experience. How many families can say that?

If you're looking to be entertained, watch "Succession." If you're looking for a good example of how to transition a business, read my article about the Swanekamp succession.

Also this month, we have the results from our 27th annual Wage & Benefit Survey that not only shows wages continue to be up, but also that employees want more than just compensation to make them stay. A flexible work schedule (that seems to stem from COVID), better benefits and an overall respectful environment seem to be the ingredients to a mix of long-tenured employees.

We've also got other information centered around business and personnel, including applying for foreign workers, B2B email marketing, managing your greenhouse staff, hiring interns, and planning for tax savings.

Maybe one day I'll go back and try to finish "Succession," but I've been content with watching the treachery of the Targaryens in "House of the Dragon" and the shenanigans at "The White Lotus." **GT**