

Hi, this is Wayne Rivers at the Family Business Institute. As always, thanks for tuning in, and we'd like to have your comments and thoughts below. What other topics about family businesses might we bring up that would interest you?

This week, I want to talk about a coaching program that I was in years ago called The Strategic Coach. It's the brainchild of a brilliant man named Dan Sullivan, and in particular, I want to talk about this book, 'Learning How to Avoid the Gap'. We just refer to it as The Gap. It's only 30 pages long, and I'm sure you can find it on Amazon, it is well worth your time and investment. I have no idea what it costs. If it was 100 bucks, it'd be worth it, but I'm sure it's far less than that.

This is an amazing insight that Dan had about us as entrepreneurs, business people, and how we think. In this diagram, which you can see there, Dan talks about how our minds work, and as entrepreneurs, we're never really satisfied, right? We get to the end of the year, we put up nice results and we say, "But you know what? We could have done more, and this year we're going to do better." We're never quite satisfied with the results, and that's not a bad thing. I've railed in so many blogs before about complacency. Complacency is one of the absolute business killers for family businesses as they age and mature. At no time ever do I want you to become complacent. On the other hand, I do want you to be happy, and being happy is a choice.

Now, why are so many entrepreneurs unhappy? Dan says it's because we set goals, we start at a place, actually number one, okay? Actual one. We start at a place. We set goals. We hit the goals, or we don't, but no matter what, we end up at actual two. You end up at some point at the end of the year or the end of the decade, which is improvement over where you started at actual one, okay?

Dan says we've got this built-in problem in our entrepreneurial brains, and that's the gap. The gap is not actual two, it's not reality. The gap is ideal, this horizon, this never ever reachable goal, that woulda shoulda coulda, what-if, maybe we could have done that. Dan's point is this; you can choose to be happy and positive about your accomplishments, or you can make yourself miserable by always focusing on what might have been.

One of the exercises that Dan teaches and that we do every week here at the Family Business Institute is, we spend a few minutes each week talking about the positive focus. What happened last week and last quarter and last year that are terrific, that are game changers for us? Positive steps in the right direction, helping us achieve our goals. We don't spend too much time focusing on what didn't happen, what fell through the cracks, what customer was dissatisfied with us. Don't waste your time with negative stuff. Learn from it and move on, but don't dwell on it. Keep in mind the positive stuff. You can choose to be positive and therefore happy, or you can choose to focus on the gap, the ever-elusive horizon, and you can make yourself miserable over time.

Get the book, it's called Learning How to Avoid the Gap, Dan Sullivan, and his program is called The Strategic Coach. Thanks so much. Spend more time focusing on your positives and not living in the gap.

This is Wayne Rivers at the Family Business Institute. Thank you.