FAMILY BUSINESS LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION

by

Elissa A. Rogers

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Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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Liberty University, School of Business

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Abstract

Family businesses frequently experience business failure following succession from the first generation. Family businesses that lack effective succession plans have low sustainability beyond the second or third generations of family leadership. The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore how to reduce family business failure following generational succession. Three theoretical models were included in the conceptual framework: (a) Lewin's three-step change model, (b) Bass' full range of leadership model, and (c) Rumelt's strategic kernel. Data were collected from semi-structured interviews and internal documents relevant to the succession process. Six themes emerged: (a) reason for succession, (b) necessary leadership characteristics, (c) the succession process, (d) resistance to succession, and (e) the value of external help. Key recommendations are that family businesses should start the succession planning process early, identify growth areas for potential successors, and solicit help from a variety of external sources.

Keywords: family business, succession planning, leadership

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family. I am blessed to be married to the love of my life. John, you have ignited the burning desire to continue learning. You have supported and encouraged me through every hurdle of this journey. Thank you.

Mom, you have shaped me into the scholar I am today. Your hard work helping me overcome dyslexia and learning to read and write have given me the drive to tackle this terminal degree. I am still learning so much from you at our family's business; you truly are an inspiration. Thank you.

Dad, your hard work, integrity, and drive for continuing the family business are prime examples of the family business leader I hope to become. Thank you for instilling a drive for excellence within me. Thank you.

Jessica, Joey, Sunny, LJ, Luke, Eden, Selah, Miriam, Haven, WOW ladies, and Tony Chestnut girls, you all are the fuel that pushes me to succeed in this journey. When I felt like giving up, you encouraged and prayed with me. Thank you.

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Dr. Erickson, I have learned much under your guidance. I appreciate your insight and dedication to helping me complete my dissertation. I would not have been able to put forth this level of work without your input. Thank you.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The researcher's focus for this study was the field of leadership. The researcher focused on family business succession practices because many family businesses fail after succession has occurred (De Massis et al., 2008; Dyer, 1986; Fleming, 2000; Hubler, 2018; Paisner, 1999; Sreih et al., 2019; Visser & van Scheers, 2018). Succession in family business involves transferring both ownership and management from one generation of family leadership to the next (Birley, 1986; Yuan, 2019).

The purpose of this study was the examination of family business succession practices to understand them more fully. The researcher utilized a qualitative multi-case study methodology to explore this phenomenon within family businesses located in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. This researcher utilized scholarly and peer-reviewed literature to identify common themes within succession practices and developed conceptual frames composed of the following models: three-step change model, full range of leadership, and the strategic kernel. The study's assumptions, limitations, and delimitations formed the boundaries to guide the research process. The researcher's goal with this study was to reduce the current gap within family business literature regarding succession practices. A Christian worldview governed the entire research process.

Background of the Problem

Family business research began in the early 1990s, even though family businesses have existed for thousands of years (Bird et al., 2002). Chrisman et al. (2005) shared that family businesses' continued popularity in the marketplace showed a need for increased research on the details regarding the family business, specifically strategic designs related to succession planning. Chrisman et al. also argued very little academic research focused on the process of

family businesses' strategy usage. Debicki et al. (2009) called for additional research on family business strategy and succession practices.

Family business researchers are still developing literature regarding family business (Bird et al., 2002). Xi et al. (2015) acknowledged that there was a significant lack of research on family business-specific controls. Bird et al. (2002) shared a need for more practical research linking the researcher to the practitioner and invited increased utilization of case study-related research designs to support this. Fleming (2000) posited the need for increased research on the succession rates of family businesses. Ward (2011) called for continued research on family businesses to determine helpful interventions for succession planning within family businesses.

This study addressed the call for increased qualitative research from Leppaaho et al. (2016) and Ward (2011), relating to the need for additional research on family business sustainability. It did not attempt to contradict or confirm the current body of research, but it proposed to increase understanding regarding leadership's succession practices within family business literature. The critical realist foundation focused on increasing understanding of how those studied perceive their current reality (Leppaaho et al., 2016). So, this researcher followed the critical realist worldview within this study.

Problem Statement

The general problem addressed was the high rate of family business failures beyond the second or third generation of operation. Between 80% and 95% of businesses within the United States are family-owned. However, only one-third of these businesses can continue from the first generation of family ownership into the second generation. Half of these businesses continue into the third generation, and only three percent of all family businesses continue into the fourth generation of family ownership (De Massis et al., 2008; Dyer, 1986; Fleming, 2000; Hubler,

2018; Paisner, 1999; Sreih et al., 2019; Visser & van Scheers, 2018).The average life span of a family business is 24 years, which can encompass one to possibly two generations of family ownership (Dyer, 1986; Visser & van Scheers, 2018). This high level of family business closures may cause more leaders to consider the value of succession planning to remain viable (Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Sreih et al., 2019; Ward, 2011). The specific problem to be addressed was that some family business leaders lack adequate succession planning to support the sustainability of family businesses beyond the first or second generation of family ownership in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry (Bork, 1993; Dyer, 1986; Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Miller et al., 2003; Sharma, 2004).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case study was to increase the body of current literature regarding how leadership's strategic focus on succession planning can impact family businesses to promote their sustainability for future generations. The researcher explored the problem via an in-depth analysis of leaders' strategic development of succession plans within the family businesses located in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The specific focus may enrich the understanding of how leadership can develop and implement successive generations of family members to sustain the family business. The overarching goal of this research was to expand the existing literature surrounding family business leadership and to include specific succession-related planning practices that leaders within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry can utilize to allow for the sustainability of their respective family businesses.

Research Questions

Research questions form the foundation for a proposed research project; they help shape the direction of the proposed study (Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2013). The questions presented in this study focused on sensing the nuances of family business succession planning from a leadership perspective to better understand the constructs that allow family businesses to flourish beyond the first or second generation of family leadership.

- RQ1. What conditions or factors motivate family business leaders to develop succession plans?

- RQ2. Which leadership competencies are effective in developing strategic succession-related plans?

- RQ3. How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans?

Nature of the Study

The three research approaches available for researchers to select from include quantitative method, qualitative method, and mixed methods (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2014). Creswell (2014) described qualitative research as a means of better understanding a given phenomenon from the participants' point of view. The qualitative researcher often studies the complex nature of human behaviors and interactions; Fletcher et al. (2016) denoted that the dynamics encountered within the family business environment are complex. The purpose of qualitative research is to understand more fully the phenomenon studied contextually from the participants' perspective (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Fletcher et al., 2016; Stake, 2010). The researcher chose a qualitative approach because this

study examined leadership succession within a family business from the perspective of those involved in the process.

Creswell (2014) and Stake (2010) denoted that the quantitative researcher focuses on examining relationships between variables. A researcher utilizes the quantitative approach to test their hypotheses or to gather numerical data for statistical analysis (Creswell, 2016). Whereas the researcher undertaking a mixed methods research approach invokes aspects from both qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Stake, 2010). The quantitative and mixed research approaches were not suitable for addressing the proposed research questions because the questions were focused on understanding a complex phenomenon, not numerical data or testing a hypothesis.

The researcher considered multiple qualitative designs for this study, including narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. In narrative designs, researchers examine a single individual's perception of a given experience, and the researcher presents the data in a story format (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). This researcher focused on a group's experience of succession, not the individual. The researcher gathered data in a more complex manner, so the narrative design was not a good fit for this study. The phenomenological researcher studies a group's perceptions of a given static event, attempting to discern the core aspects or shared meaning of the experience (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study's objective was not creating a shared meaning of the succession process; instead, the researcher observed and reported on a variety of perspectives to fully understand the succession process. Consequently, the phenomenological approach was not appropriate for this study. The grounded theory researcher seeks to develop or advance theories explaining a specific experience (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake,

2010). This researcher was not advancing or developing theory, so the grounded theory design was unsuitable for this study. The ethnographer examines specific cultural groups to develop a holistic view of how people live their daily lives (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). This researcher was not focused on the culture of the family group, so ethnography was not a good design for the study. Consequently, none of these designs aligned well with the intent of the research questions.

Discussion of Research Paradigms

According to Creswell (2016), Creswell and Poth (2018), and Maxwell (2013), research paradigms or worldviews impact the way a researcher conducts their study. Researchers following positivism or post-positivism do not believe in absolute truth, tend to test and abandon theories, focus on developing explanations, utilize scientific language, and pride themselves on being objective (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Researchers who follow pragmatism believe truth is situational, research is context-based, and the world is both separate from and part of the individual (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Researchers who follow a constructivism paradigm determine truth based on personal perception of a situation, question explanations of causation, and hold no absolute truth (Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Easton, 2010; Maxwell, 2013; Rudestam & Newton, 2015; Stake, 2010). Critical realists seek to understand how aspects work together behind-the-scenes and take a stance between positivism and interpretivism to produce empirically broad scopes and analytically deep findings. They believe that one can only have an imperfect understanding of reality and use conceptual abstraction to better understand reality (Easton, 2010; Leppaaho et al., 2016; Reed, 2009). This researcher has a critical realist view of reality.

Discussion of Design

Mumford et al. (2009) cautioned researchers on the single case study's limitation of generalizability. Yin (2014) shared that using multiple case (multi-case) studies can produce more robust and compelling results. Therefore, the researcher chose a multi-case study methodology to achieve data saturation and improve the generalizability and validity of the findings. Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009) denoted that the researcher conducting a multi-case study could examine the differences and similarities between cases within a specific context. Bryman and Buchanan (2009) shared that the multi-case study researcher can explore the prevalence of a given finding. Understanding the individual firm's specific context allows a better comprehension of the succession-related strategic planning these firms may or may not have undertaken. Consequently, this researcher selected the multi-case study design as the most appropriate design to address the research question for this study.

Discussion of Method

The specific design for this proposed project is a multi-case study. Creswell (2014), Creswell and Poth (2018), and Yin (2014) advised that the case study research design is the most suitable for researchers to explore a given process within a specific context or bounded situation. A case study researcher's goal is to obtain descriptive content to help better understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lapan et al., 2011). Creswell (2016) suggested the case study design to explore a specific issue, and Leppaaho et al. (2016) recommended case study research to understand the context of family business situations. Therefore, this study examined the family business succession process via the case study approach to qualitative research.

Discussion of Triangulation

Multiple scholars suggest triangulation of data sources can enhance the quality of findings because triangulation converges and confirms the findings (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2016; Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009; Rudestam & Newton, 2015; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2012). Botella-Carrubi and Gonzalez-Cruz (2019) denoted triangulation of data from a variety of sources provides a "counterbalance to the bias of individuals' perceptions and valuations" (p. 6). Several scholars found triangulation of data can enhance the validity of one's findings (Holloway & Brown, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). According to Yin (2014), data triangulation can "strengthen the construct validity of your case study" (p. 121). Consequently, this researcher utilized data triangulation to improve the validity of her findings.

Merriam (2009), Patton (2002), and Wolcott (2009) posited data triangulation involves the use of multiple data sources, such as interviews, observations, and archival document reviews, to better understand the big picture of the data gathered. Creswell (2016) and Creswell and Poth (2018) denoted researchers coding data to document themes exhibit a form of data triangulation. Therefore, this researcher's coding process was a means of triangulating data from various sources to better understand the process and practices related to family business succession for those in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The researcher utilized data from multiple sources, namely various interviewees, within multiple forms, specifically interview and archival document formats, to triangulate various themes. This researcher collected data from several sources, such as multiple individuals and archival documents, to triangulate the various themes. Consequently, the final analysis reflected more in-depth and valid findings.

Summary of the Nature of the Study

Several research paradigms were available to the researcher, including positivism, post-positivism, pragmatism, and constructivism. The researcher found that she did not fit well within any of these paradigms, which indicated that a mixture of the paradigms was more suitable. The researcher's paradigm was based more on the critical reality paradigm. The researcher considered many research methods and designs for this study. Based on the consideration of each method available (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), the researcher chose to utilize the qualitative approach. The researcher determined the subject matter could best be examined through a qualitative multiple case study research design.

Conceptual Framework

A qualitative researcher utilizes conceptual frameworks to guide the entire research process (Maxwell, 2013). Green (2014) shared that the conceptual framework can be used as a map to guide the research and data analysis processes. One can use a conceptual framework to direct research question design, determine how to conduct research, and assist in interpreting meaning from the data collected (Imenda, 2014). The researcher selected three theories for the conceptual framework. The researcher selected the following theories: Lewin's (1947) three-step change model, Bass' (1985) full range of leadership model, and Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel.

Discussion of Concept One

Kurt Lewin's (1947) three-step change model involved the constructs of unfreezing, moving, and refreezing (Huse & Cummings, 1985; Hussain et al., 2018). Rosenbaum et al. (2018) described the stages as "unfreezing the present, moving to the new level and freezing group life on the new level" (p. 288). Kanter et al. (1992) compared this model to the process of

melting, changing something, and refreezing an ice cube. Figure 1 displays a depiction of Lewin's three-step change process.
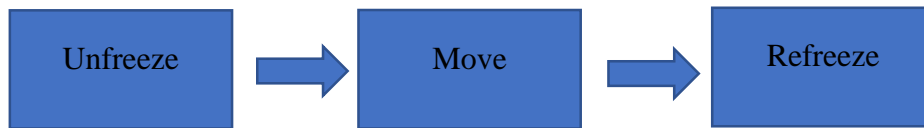
Figure 1. Lewin's (1947) Model of Change, adapted from Burnes's (2017) Text.

Unfreeze. The unfreezing stage often includes sharing information regarding discrepancies between the current behavior and the desired behavior; those sharing this new information are attempting to show a need or reasoning for the proposed change (Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Huse & Cummings, 1985). Lewin (1947) shared that unfreezing often involves "break[ing] open the shell of complacency and self-righteousness it is sometimes necessary to bring about deliberately an emotional stir-up" (p. 35). Burnes (2017) denoted that the unfreezing stage was necessary to provide the impetus to adopt the proposed change. The unfreezing step involves realizing that the current status quo is insufficient, which indicates a need for the next stage or changing phase.

Move or Change. Huse and Cummings (1985) shared that the moving stage involved the development of new attitudes, values, and actions. Herriau and Touchais (2015) denoted the importance of communicating the proposed change process with those affected before the actual change. Burnes (2017) shared that the moving stage of Lewin's model involved an iterative learning and changing process.

Burnes (2004) shared that Lewin's field theory, theory of group dynamics, and action research can each help examine some of the resistances encountered when one undertakes change. Specifically, effective change contains the following aspects: a group-level focus, participative in nature, and collaborative efforts (Burnes, 2004; Hussain et al., 2018). Hussain et

al. (2018) shared that part of the collaboration and participation efforts include open communication with those involved in the process.

Refreeze. Lewin (1947) initially referred to this stage of the process as freezing. Burnes (2017) noted that after Lewin's death, other scholars changed the terminology to refreezing, which was universally adopted to replace the old terminology. The refreezing portion of the change process denotes the restoration of stability to the changed system in effort to make the change a part of the daily practices (Berquist & Mura, 2011; Herriau & Touchais, 2015). This stage often includes mechanisms, such as increased pay; new policies, procedures, or training; and ongoing support efforts, to orient actions towards the new, desired behavior (Burnes, 2004; Huse & Cummings, 1985). The purpose of the refreezing stage is to avoid regression back to old behaviors (Burnes, 2017).

Limitations with Model. Researchers have assessed Lewin's three-step change model as one-dimensional, limited in application, linear, and static (Burnes, 2004; Herriau & Tochais, 2015; Kanter et al., 1992; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). Herriau and Tochais (2015) reported that despite the noted limitations of Lewin's model, the model "remains widely used and is regarded as completely up to date" (p. 39).

Discussion of Concept Two

The full range of leadership model consists of three constructs, namely transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership typologies (Bass, 1985; Northouse, 2013; Peus et al., 2013). One can visualize these three constructs on a continuum, beginning with laissez-faire leadership, progressing to transactional leadership, and concluding with transformational leadership (Northouse, 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Northouse (2013) denoted several factors borrowed from the individual leadership theories that can help distinguish one's leadership

typology. These factors include the following: charisma, ability to motivate via inspiration, intellectual stimulation, consideration of the individual, idealized influence, constructive transactions with contingent rewards, management-by-exception, and non-transactional behavior (Northouse, 2013; Peus et al., 2013).

Transformational Leadership. The transformational leader has idealized influence (also known as charisma), motivates via inspiration, stimulates followers intellectually, and gives each follower individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Northouse, 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). This leader uses charisma, inspiration, and individualized consideration to motivate followers' actions (Bass, 1985; Hussain et al., 2018; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders garner additional effort from their followers by elevating their confidence and raising the value of the outcome (Bass, 1985). Burnes (2015) and Hussain et al. (2018) linked transformational leadership with the responsibility of leading change.

Transactional Leadership. Bass (1990), Northouse (2013), Peus et al. (2013), and Seltzer and Bass (1990) shared that the transactional leader utilizes contingent rewards to motivate action and tends towards management-by-exception, either actively or passively. Transactional leaders use rewards and punishments to facilitate behavioral changes within an organization (Bass, 1985, 1990; Hussain et al., 2018). The transactional leadership-follower relationship focuses on an exchange (Bass, 1985, 1990; Peus et al., 2013). The leader achieves this relationship by clarifying the objectives and delineating how the follower's needs are satisfied when the leader's objectives are achieved (Bass, 1985).

Laissez-Faire Leadership. Those leaders denoted to be laissez-faire are neither transformational nor transactional in their practices (Northouse, 2013). The laissez-faire leader tends to be highly passive (Peus et al., 2013). One can visualize this as an absent leader or a

leader who chooses not to be involved in the daily operations of their business (Northouse, 2013). The laissez-faire leader can be effective in highly skilled and motivated groups (Peus et al., 2013).

Discussion of Concept Three

Gamble et al. (2019) defined strategy as actions taken to compete within the marketplace in a profitably. Rumelt (2011) found that researchers can use the strategic kernel, which includes a three-part construct, to promote the design and implementation of effective strategic development. Rumelt posited the three constructs, namely diagnosis, guiding policy, and coherent course of action, should be utilized together. He also emphasized that the overarching strategic plan is less effective if one of the constructs is inadequately developed or missing. Figure 2 contains a depiction of the strategic kernel.

Figure 2. Strategic kernel conceptual model.

Diagnosis. The kernel's diagnosis portion entails simplifying the complexities in each situation to support the researcher's understanding of the context (Rumelt, 2011). Researchers can interview management to obtain relevant data regarding the internal organizational environment, competition, and customers (Ward, 1988). Gamble et al. (2019), Kanter et al. (1992), and Rosenbaum et al. (2018) found that understanding the company's internal and external environments is key to strategic planning.

Guiding Policy. A strong guiding policy should directly correlate to the issues discovered during the diagnosis process (Rumelt, 2011). Without the correlation between the diagnosis and the guiding policy, Rumelt (2011) noted that the resulting action plan might not be

feasible. The author shared practitioners should utilize the guiding policy to set the tone for dealing with the issues presented in the diagnosis stage. Rumelt concluded that a practitioner of the strategic kernel could use the guiding policy to define the direction that future action should take.

Coherent Course of Action. Rumelt (2011) found that a coherent action plan flows directly from the guiding policy and ensures each proposed action aligns with the organization's proposed strategy. The author stated that setting a coherent course of action requires choosing which aspects to focus on with the team. Additionally, Rumelt noted that coherent action plans are necessary to align multiple courses of action to achieve the overarching strategic goal.

Relationships Between Concepts

Lewin's (1947) Three-Step Change Model. Lewin's change model aligns with the first research question (RQ1), what conditions or factors motivate family business leaders to develop succession plans? The conditions or factors of motivation aligned with the unfreezing aspect of Lewin's model for change. Specifically, the communication of the change process and desired outcomes can aid in the change process (Hussain et al., 2018). These factors become the necessary impetus for the change in leadership.

Lewin's (1947) model of change was also used to explore the third research question (RQ3): How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans? Specifically, the model's move or change stage can align the development and implementation of succession plans. Also, the refreeze stage could align with the determination of the effectiveness of a given succession plan.

Lewin's (1947) three-step model of change, specifically unfreeze-move-and-refreeze, is the first theory utilized within this study. The distinctive steps of Lewin's model provide a means

for examining the motivational factors of succession planning. This model indicates that change is an iterative process involving learning (Burnes, 2017).

       Bass's (1985) Full Range of Leadership Model. The second research question (RQ2) queried, which leadership competencies are effective is developing strategic succession-related plans can be examined via the full range of leadership model. Specifically, the competencies of charisma and strong communication skills (listening to others and sharing information) have been found to impact the overall outcomes for a given organization (Appelbaum et al., 2015; Bass, 1985; Northouse, 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Hussain et al. (2018) shared that leadership style can factor into the change process.

       Rumelt's (2011) Strategic Kernel. The concept of the strategic kernel aligns with RQ3: How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans? Barach et al. (1988) shared that "strategic changes facilitate succession…[and] can also create a place for the next generation" (p. 52). The succession process should be considered strategically (Ward, 1988). Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel can aid in the creation of strong succession plans.

       In summary, Daspit et al. (2016) denoted there are phases to the succession process: "ground rules and first steps…nurturing/development of successor…[and] handoff/transition/installation" (p. 50). These phases align with and support Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel as each phase matches the kernel's corresponding aspect. Specifically, the first steps aligned with the diagnosis, the development phase with the guiding policy, and the transition phase with the coherent course of action.

       Summary of the Conceptual Framework.

       The researcher chose three theories, specifically Lewin's (1947) three-step change process, Bass's (1985) full range of leadership model, and Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel, to

utilize as conceptual frameworks. This researcher linked each theory with at least one espoused research question. Green (2014) and Maxwell (2013) denoted conceptual frameworks provide a guide for the entirety of the research.

Definition of Terms

Coherent Course of Action

The coherent course of action is the final stage of Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel. This stage involves deciding what will receive attention and what will not receive attention, to introduce a cohesive action sequence into the organization (Rumelt, 2011).

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is the first stage of Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel. This stage involves analyzing the firm's internal and external environments to better understand the given situation (Gamble et al., 2019; Rosenbaum et al., 2018; Rumelt, 2011).

Family Business

The family business includes any businesses with two or more relatives working together who plan to continue leadership of the business utilizing successive generations of family members (Calabro et al., 2018; Chrisman et al., 2005; Le Breton-Miller & Miller, 2015). Both the familial relationship and intention to continue family leadership are necessary to define the family business (Bockhaus, 2004).

Guiding Policy

The guiding policy is the second stage of Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel. This stage involves utilizing the information from the diagnosis stage to formulate plans to guide future action (Rumelt, 2011).

Laissez-Faire Leadership

The absence of transformational or transactional leadership characteristics denotes the laissez-faire leader (Peus et al., 2013).

Move/Change

The second stage of Lewin's (1947) three-step change model is entitled move or change. This stage involves an openness to learning and the ability to overcome resistance associated with the proposed change (Burnes, 2004, 2017; Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Hussain et al., 2018).

Refreeze

The final stage of Lewin's (1947) three-step change model is refreeze. The action during this stage focuses on setting the change as the new status quo (Burnes, 2004; Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Rosenbaum et al., 2018).

Succession

Succession is the change of leadership personnel, voluntary or involuntary; it involves both the aspects of the current leader stepping down from the role and the new leader assuming the position (Benavides-Velasco et al., 2013; Birley, 1986; Daspit et al., 2016; Farah et al., 2019; Yuan, 2019).

Transactional Leadership

The transactional leader's distinguishing characteristics include the following: transaction-like relationship with followers, management by exception, and rewards given contingent on follower's behavior (Bass, 1985, 1990; Peus et al., 2013).

Transformational Leadership

The transformational leader's distinguishing characteristics include the following: charisma, intellectually motivating their followers, and individualized attention of followers (Bass, 1985, 1990; Peus et al., 2013; Pugh, 2016).

Unfreeze

Unfreezing is the first step in Lewin's (1947) three-step change model. It involves the introduction of dissatisfaction with the status quo to precipitate the desire for change (Burnes, 2004; Herriau & Touchais, 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations all influence the outcomes related to one's research. If not accounted for, the assumptions can lead to poor conclusions and faulty generalizations (Hagger & Chatzisarantis, 2009). Limitations influence one's ability to generalize findings to a broader population (Roberts, 2010). Delimitations refer to a researcher's guidelines to direct focus within their study (Price & Murnan, 2004).

Assumptions

Maxwell (2013) asserted human truth is a conglomeration of perceptions regarding the physical world, and one cannot fully understand absolute truth. This assertion aligned with Isaiah 55:8-9: "'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). The critical realist acknowledges that reality exists, and that they cannot truly understand that reality fully (Easton, 2010; Leppaaho et al., 2016).

A further assumption focused on those interviewed. The interviewees should understand the questions asked, provide objective responses to the questions, and recognize that they represent their businesses.

Respondents' honesty is an additional assumption (Price & Murnan, 2004). Those answering research-related questions have many reasons for not answering a given question truthfully, such as fear of providing socially unacceptable responses, inability to fully understand questions, or an honest mistake in the answer provided (Price & Murnan, 2004). Thus, a given individual may share the truth as they perceive it, but this may differ from what others experienced.

Limitations

Roberts (2010) shared limitations are aspects of a given study that are known to negatively affect the researcher's ability to generalize the study's findings to a larger population, but the limitations do not fully negate one's ability to generalize findings. Price and Murnan (2004) and Roberts denoted that limitations involve systematic bias, and the researcher typically has little or no control over the limitations. Barzun and Graff (1985) defined bias as "an uncontrolled form of interest" (p. 199).

The limiting factor of perceived truth indicates that this study's findings can be contextually based. Vancil (1987) found that the facts surrounding a given experience, such as succession, are limited by the perceptions of those involved. The so-called facts are merely individuals' perceptions of the process, and those interviewed are limited by their personal experience, knowledge, and context. Patton (2002) shared the contextual limit is due to the researcher's inability to observe all facets of a given process. This researcher utilized data saturation via gathering data from multiple sources to try to mitigate this limitation.

A researcher's personal thought process can affect their data gathering, examining, and sense-making processes within a study (Kaptchuk, 2003; Liu et al., 2015). Recognition of one's bias is the first step in mitigating it (McRaney, 2011). Some insidious forms of bias include the following: confirmation bias, rescue bias, and orientation bias (Kaptchuk, 2003; McRaney, 2011). Therefore, this researcher utilized member-checking to ensure that the researcher's thought processes aligned with the reality experienced by those within each case.

Qualitative research associates with the following limitations: subjective nature, can raise more questions than answers, and much time is needed to understand the process of the given phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 2010). The constraints associated with case study methodology are limiting factors, and researchers should acknowledge them in their studies (Brutus et al., 2013; Roberts, 2010). Therefore, this researcher acknowledged the constraints mentioned above for this study. The case study methodology focuses on situations, not generalizations (Brutus et al., 2013; Stake, 1995). The case study methodology is limited to the context of the given case; generalization to additional contexts can be difficult (Yin, 2012). Each type of data collected has potential limitations, including the following: observations can skew the actions and thought processes of those observed, those interviewed bring their own biases into the conversation, and documents may be incomplete or inaccurate in their presentation of information (Patton, 2002; Stake 1995).

Additional limitations acknowledged in this study are related to the timeframe established for the dissertation project. A limited amount of time was available to collect data, and this timeframe affected the amount of data collected and subsequently analyzed. The truncated timeframe also affected the number of interviews completed and the amount of secondary data analyzed. Therefore, this researcher focused the data collection on salient points of this study.

Delimitations

A delimiting factor of research is the timeframe allotted to gather and analyze the study's data (Roberts, 2010). A study's timeframe limits the amount of triangulation between research methods and materials; this temporal setting constrains the cases to a specific study period (Patton, 2002). Practically, the temporality of the study curbed the full range of information the researcher could examine.

Another delimitation of case studies involves the cases chosen (Price & Murnan, 2004). The researcher designed the study to examine specific cases, and the design necessarily excluded other cases. The targeted population—family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry—excluded potential data from outside the chosen population. The geographical location selected of eastern Pennsylvania excluded information from those located in other parts of the world.

Significance of the Study

A study's value to current business practices and business-related literature is its significance (Creswell, 2014, 2016). Chrisman et al. (2009) found the succession process within family businesses needs to be carefully managed. The succession process contains facets that indicate changes for many people, and family business owners must choose the succession process's progression

Reduction of Gaps in the Literature

Several researchers have denoted significant gaps within the literature regarding family business succession (Bird et al., 2002, Bockhaus, 2004, Chrisman et al., 2005; Fleming, 2000). This researcher posited that this study could narrow some of these gaps within the literature. The

researcher examined specific cases of family business succession within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry to learn about their experiences.

Fleming (2000) shared that family businesses' failure rates are high, and potential solutions to this problem could stem from increased research on the family business succession process. This study contained an examination of the specific processes that individual families within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry utilized to support an effective succession process. The results of this study could provide insight for other leaders within family businesses undergoing succession-related changes.

Bird et al. (2002) found that family business literature lacks copious amounts of research, like in other business domains. They shared about the lack of cooperation between researchers and practitioners within the realm of family business literature. Bockhaus (2004) called for additional comparative studies to introduce more information into the current knowledge base of family business literature. This multi-case study indicated only examining and reporting on successful family business processes, so it provided a means of better understanding specific succession practices, which could help leaders make improved succession-related decisions.

Chrisman et al. (2005) requested the application of current business theories to the practices of family businesses to determine the similarities and differences between the family and non-family-owned businesses. This study was based on existing theories, such as the three-step change model, full range of leadership, and the strategic kernel, utilized within family business succession processes. This researcher utilized these current business theories to support family business succession practices to enable smoother succession processes within other family businesses.

Debicki et al. (2009) shared that family business-related research lacks focus on strategic intentions and planning. Ward (2011) raised the question regarding potential interventions to improve the succession process. This study's focus contained the strategic planning process that family businesses undertake regarding succession, which potentially can improve the succession-related strategic planning processes within family businesses.

Implications for Biblical Integration

There are ample examples of succession practices throughout the Bible. The biblical genealogies denote succession within individual families, propelling humanity towards the birth of Christ (Petersen, 2005). "At the heart of the entire salvation story is a succession: from David to the Son of David, the Messiah" (Pugh, 2016, p. 119).

Genesis delineates some of the oldest stories of biblical succession (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). Genesis 12:3 recorded God's blessing of Abraham and promising that his family would be a great nation, and this family would bless other nations (Petersen, 2005). Genesis 13 depicts Abraham's conflict between his herdsmen and his nephew Lot's herdsmen, resulting in a breach between Abraham and Lot with each going their way (Petersen, 2005). If Abraham and Lot had plans for their herds, some of these issues might have been avoided, and the family could have remained a single unit. The lack of planning within the modern family business can also have devastating effects, such as division or dissolution of the business (Shefsky, 2014; Ward, 1988, 2011).

One can see another example of Abraham's utilization of succession planning with his faith in God's ultimate succession plan. Genesis 22 delineates the story of Abraham's faith in God's plan tested with the request to sacrifice his son Isaac (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). Abraham did not question God's request and told his son, "God himself will provide

the lamb for the burnt offering, my son" (Genesis 22:8). This response denotes that Abraham had faith in God's plan, even when he could not see a way for the plan to come to fruition with the given request. This researcher found a link between this biblical account and the concept that even the best plans are subject to God's will. The Christian businessperson should integrate prayer into every aspect of their lives, even family business succession-related planning. Jeremiah 33:3 stated, "call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."

The Bible also contains examples of poor succession practices, such as the narrative surrounding Eli's sons. Eli was the high priest of Israel and had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, 1 Samuel 2:34). These men did not continue their family's positioning within the temple's service because they lacked godly qualities (1 Samuel 2). First Samuel 2:36 denoted Eli did not hold his sons accountable for their actions, resulting in his sons' roles changed to that of beggars. This biblical lesson denotes that leaders in the spiritual or business realm should hold their successors accountable for their actions or inactions. This accountability can take the form of training, performance review, and increased responsibility (Daspit et al., 2016; Dyer, 1986; Lipman, 2010; Paisner, 1999).

The most comprehensive story of biblical succession is Christ's succession to His followers, which continues with Christians today. Christ provided numerous examples for His disciples to continue with after His death and resurrection (Atkinson, 2016). Jesus utilized a team-building approach to develop His followers (Atkinson, 2016). Mark 6:7 highlights how Jesus divided His followers into teams to spread the Gospel message, and Matthew 24 shared of Jesus working closely with a group of 12 disciples to help develop them into the successors that they needed to be for the development of Christ's church (New International Version,

1978/2000). Jesus's example of teaching and equipping His disciples aligns with the incumbent's role of developing their successor within the family business.

One can find the concept of planning throughout the Bible. The book of Proverbs shared that wise leaders utilize their plans as a means for success (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, Proverbs 6:6-8; 21:5; 24:27). Luke 14:28 shared, "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it." These verses delineate that the strategic planning process enables the best utilization of one's giftings or possessions, which can extend to include a business's abilities or strengths. The succession planning process covers the choice of the successor, when succession should occur, and the future role of the incumbent (Daspit et al., 2016; Gedajlovic et al., 2012; Ward, 2011).

One can make numerous connections between this study regarding family business succession and the Bible. Abraham and Lot exemplified the need for planning to mitigate relational problems. The story of Abraham and Isaac denoted that Christians should trust in God's plan because humanity is unable to comprehend God's knowledge. Eli's sons showed that an incumbent leader should hold his successors accountable for their choices and actions. Lastly, the Gospels demonstrated how Jesus developed His successors, exemplifying the need for incumbents to be actively involved in the development of their successors.

Benefit to Business Practice and Relationship to Cognate

This study's leadership models and theories can enrich family business succession literature (Maxwell, 2013). The researcher chose specific conceptual models to focus the entire study on specific aspects of the succession planning process. The focus areas included Lewin's three-step change model, Bass's full range of leadership models, and Rumelt's strategic kernel.

Lewin's (1947) three-step change model supports the overall process of change. The family business's lifecycle goes through numerous changes related to a given succession process; family businesses often fail during or right after the succession process because the new changes are not well-integrated into the existing business environment (Paisner, 1999; Ward, 2011). Lewin's three-step model of change could improve the outcomes of succession-related changes. Fleming (2000) denoted that a graduated succession process allows time for planning the transition, instituting the change, and adjusting after the change. A gradual succession process provides time for planning, which could be related to the unfreezing stage of Lewin's three-step model. The planning or unfreezing phase flows directly into action taken, the moving phase, which results in a change that must be stabilized or refrozen for long-term progress. The leader's characteristics can also impact the outcome of the succession-related changes (Daspit et al., 2016; Dumas, 1990; Fleming, 2000).

Bass's (1985) full range of leadership model is a tool to measure the leadership characteristics of the chosen leader. Dumas (1990), Fleming (2000), and Daspit et al. (2016) shared that the leader's characteristics can impact the viability of the family business. Bass (1985) delineated transformational and transactional leaders possess distinctive characteristics. Dumas (1990) and Daspit et al. (2016) found the realization of a succession plan often ties into the characteristics of the incumbent and successor. Leadership can also utilize a planned approach for the succession process to determine the best choice of future leadership (Dumas, 1990).

Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel is a tool that family business leaders can also utilize to facilitate the succession planning process. It encourages a strategic planning process that includes a diagnosis of the current situation, crafting of policies to guide future decisions, and a

cohesive set of actions to move those policies forward. Dumas (1990) suggested that the succession planning process allows consideration of all potential successors, including daughters and other non-traditional familial candidates. Ward (1988) shared that family members, both within and outside of the business, can and should be drawn into the strategic planning process regarding business leadership succession. Dyer (1986) denoted family business leaders can choose the best timing to implement a succession plan, so the business has the best chance of transferring successfully to new leadership.

Ellis and Levy (2008) found researchers should link conceptual models to the research problem to provide new insights on the issue. The researcher chose these three leadership theories for this study—the three-step change model, the full range of leadership model, and the strategic kernel. These theories can be utilized as a means of better understanding the family business leadership succession process. Specifically, each model chosen corresponded to a given aspect of the succession process. The three-step change model indicated how change occurs. The full range of leadership model showed how the individual leader can impact the process. The strategic kernel covered the strategic planning aspects of the succession process.

Summary of the Significance of the Study

There has been a proliferation of requests for increased research on the leadership succession process within the family business realm (Bird et al., 2002, Bockhaus, 2004, Chrisman et al., 2005; Fleming, 2000). This study contained information that could cover the identified gaps in the current literature. The Christian worldview impacts how one perceives everything in the world, including research (Goetsch, 2019). For this reason, the researcher delineated succession planning as a process to fulfill God's call for His people to be good stewards over their family's business (Keller & Alsdorf, 2012; van Duzer, 2010).

Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case study was to extend the current body of literature regarding the impact of leadership's strategic focus on succession planning within family businesses. Specifically, the researcher examined how leadership's strategic focus on succession planning can affect the businesses' continuation into future generations of family management. Scholarly, peer-reviewed literature formulated the basis for this review.

The researcher proposed to analyze the family business succession process using three models from the conceptual framework. The models chosen include the following: the three-step model of change, the full range of leadership model, and the strategic kernel. Scholarly literature formed the foundation for the researcher's exploration of the leadership succession practices within family business, so this literature review provided a starting point for undertaking this research process.

Green (2014), Imenda (2014), and Maxwell (2013) found that conceptual models form the foundation or framework for research endeavors. The three major sections of this literature review contained descriptions of each theory or model, including identifying their constructs. The descriptions and considerations of each model's constructs were necessary for the analysis of data gathered within this study.

The first model examined was Lewin's (1947) three-step change model, which included the following constructs: unfreeze, move, and refreeze. Next, the researcher examined Bass's (1985) full range of leadership model, which included the following leadership constructs: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. The final model examined was Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel, which included the following constructs: diagnosis, guiding policy, and coherent action. The researcher broke down each conceptual model into constructs and examined both

complementary and contradictory models. The examination of complementary and contradictory

models extended into the analysis phase of this study. Within each section, the researcher

included current business applications regarding the succession process to expand understanding

of the conceptual models. Some of the aspects of family business succession include factors

related to successful succession, the roles of the incumbent and successor in the succession

process, and some potential problem areas.

The researcher extensively reviewed current scholarly literature regarding family

business succession, the three-step change model, the full range of leadership model, and the

strategic kernel. The peer-reviewed literature sources examined included scholarly journal

articles and numerous books. Table 1 contains a breakdown of the literature source types (e.g.,

scholarly article or book) and the year of the sources.

Table 1

Literature Review Sources by Year of Publication

Literature type	Older	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total %*	Total #
Peer-reviewed articles	19	7	11	9	24	33	4	88%	107
Books	10	0	0	2	1	1	0	12%	14
Total	29	7	11	11	25	34	4	100%	121
Total %*	24%	6%	10%	10%	21%	28%	1%	100%	100%

Note: Percentages all rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

The researcher utilized the following search terms for the literature review: "Lewin's

change model," "unfreeze," "move/change," and "refreeze;" "full range of leadership model,"

"transformational leadership," "transactional leadership," and "laissez-faire leadership;" and

"strategic kernel," "diagnosis," "guiding policy," and "coherent action." The researcher also set up Google alerts to gather newer literature regarding the chosen terms.

Before delving into the chosen conceptual models, some background information was necessary to better understand family business succession. This section began with a definition of a family business; it then progressed into discussions on change within the business realm, specifically the family business succession process. The section examined overcoming resistance to change, leadership's role in that process, with subsections focused on the family business.

Business Practices

A myriad of definitions exists regarding family businesses, and they range from simple to complex in their formulation (Chrisman et al., 1998; Motwani et al., 2006; Sreih et al., 2019; Tien et al., 2019; Villegas et al., 2019; Visser & van Scheers, 2018). The themes of family control and sustained familial ownership were common across the range of definitions (Calabro et al., 2018; Kiwia et al., 2019; Kohli & Gill, 2019; Liu, 2018; Marques & Couto, 2020; Pimentel et al., 2018; Rodrigues & Marques, 2019). The term familiness describes the interaction between the family and the business (Campopiano et al., 2017). The ties that bind the family together "can be loving and nurturing as an umbilical cord or as treacherous as a noose" (Fowler & Edquist, 2017, p. 7). One of the primary challenges faced by family businesses is the succession process (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014).

The Problem

"Change has become an indispensable part of every organization, and managing change has become necessary in maintaining the integrity and promoting the growth and development of an organization" (Rehman & Farooq, 2019, p. 103). An organization must be able to navigate the change process to remain competitive (Damawan & Azizah, 2019; Saleem & Athambawa, 2019;

Tsai & Harrison, 2019). Awadari and Kanwal (2019) denoted that change "means the shifting of an organization from one state to another" (p. 25). Common reasons for change included governmental policy revisions, technological advancement, economic issues, and socio-environmental issues (Saleem & Athambawa, 2019).

Kachian et al. (2018) found change is a significant challenge faced by many organizations. Saleem and Athambawa (2019) denoted numerous change processes fail to achieve the desired results. Two-thirds of all change initiatives fail; researchers often link these failures to flaws in the change implementation process or absence of employee commitment to the proposed change (Awadari & Kanwal, 2019; Bakari et al., 2017; Burnes, 2015; Damawan & Azizah, 2019; El-Dirani et al., 2020; King et al., 2018; Motwani et al., 2006; Odor, 2018; Rehman & Farooq, 2019; Wentworth et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2019).

Concepts

One of the most significant changes that a family business can undergo is succession of leadership from one generation to the next (Daspit et al., 2016; Kiwia et al., 2019). The succession process is a "process of significant change" (Hauck & Prugl, 2015, p. 106). Motwani et al. (2006) posited succession planning is "the single most lasting gift that one generation can bestow upon the next" (p. 471). The family leaders transfer both their leadership and their knowledge through the succession process (Daspit et al., 2016).

Hillen and Lavarda (2019) indicated "succession is fundamental to continuity from one generation to the next" (p. 2), and Hytti et al. (2017) found "successful succession is reported to be critical to securing the family business across generations" (p. 666). Succession involves transferring leadership and ownership from one generation to the next (Ahrens et al., 2015; Farah et al., 2019; Liu, 2018; Williams & Mullane, 2017). Marques and Couto (2020) stated, "the

succession process…constitutes an evolving journey" (p. 52). According to Villegas et al. (2019) and Cater et al. (2016), how the succession process unfolds can determine the impending success or failure of the family business. The family business succession process often engenders a change in leadership style with the change in leadership personnel (Darmawan, 2020).

The family business succession process can be lengthy, ranging from five to ten years, for a complete change of leadership, and it involves "multiple stakeholders with multiple roles" (Hytti et al., 2017, p. 667; Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Hauck & Prugl, 2015). Factors of the process's length include family values, freedom of action, previous work-related experience, and number of family members involved (Farah et al., 2019).

Cadieux et al. (2002) defined succession as "a dynamic process during which the roles and duties of the two main groups of individuals involved…evolve interdependently and overlap, with the ultimate goal being to transfer both management and ownership of the business to the next generation" (p. 18). The succession process includes the incumbent increasingly letting go of control of the business while the successor gradually gains greater levels of control (Farah et al., 2019; Hillen & Lavarda, 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014).

In family business succession practices, the chosen successor is typically part of the family (Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Kiwia et al., 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020; Schell et al., 2018). Liu (2018) and Mussolino et al. (2019) found most family businesses plan to name a son as successor, 25% plan to name their daughters as successors, and a small percentage plan to call a succession cooperative, which contains multiple members of the succeeding generation. Chrisman et al. (2009) found that 84% of family-owned businesses have intentions of passing the leadership of the family business onto the next generation of family members. The choice of a related successor can lead to nepotism or primogeniture; both can negatively impact the future of

the family business (Ahrens et al., 2015; Calabro et al., 2018; Campopiano et al., 2017; Firfiray et al., 2018; Hytti et al., 2017; Mussolino et al., 2019; Nelson & Contantinidis, 2017; Williams & Mullane, 2017).

According to Visser and van Scheer (2018), the average lifespan of a family business is 24 years. The closing of the business often occurs because "in America, only 30% of these firms outlive their founders" (Ahrens et al., 2015, p. 86). The family business succession process is a change initiative that often fails (Daspit et al., 2016; Hubler, 2018; Sreih et al., 2019; Ward, 2011). Only 30% of first-generation family businesses succeed into the second generation of family leadership, 13% of family businesses make it into the third generation, and a mere 3% make it beyond the third generation of family leadership (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014; Visser & van Scheers, 2018; Ward, 2011; Williams & Mullane, 2017). Hytti et al. (2017) denoted the succession process as "critical to securing the family business across generations" (p. 666).

According to Darmawan (2020), Daspit et al. (2016), and Kiwia et al. (2019), the family business's succession process can be one of the most challenging processes for the family business. Hechanova et al. (2018) denoted the change process can be difficult to introduce and implement because it involves stakeholders' buy-in and commitment to the change. The leadership succession process can either be planned or unplanned, and an incumbent leader's untimely illness or death is the principal reason for unplanned succession (Cater et al., 2016; Farah et al., 2019). Consequently, a change management process could help institutionalize the succession change process (Bockhaus, 2004).

Resistance to Change. People often resist change because they fear changing a satisfactory status quo, also known as loss aversion. They may also fear losing something valuable, lack understanding regarding the full implications of the change, or believe that the

proposed change will not work (Damawan & Azizah, 2019; Evans & Evans, 2018; Wentworth et al., 2018). Burnes (2015) defined resistance to change as "active or passive responses on the part of a person or group that militate against a particular change, a program of changes, or change in general" (p. 93). Thus, resistance to change can be directly linked with the term stress. The definition of stress is a "response of the body to any demand for change" (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016, p. 20). This stress increases when one encounters a situation in which their current methods of behavior do not work (Hubler, 2018).

Leaders often encounter resistance to the proposed change during the move or change stage because this is when the actual change occurs (Galli, 2018; Marques & Couto, 2020). Resistance to change affects how one responds to change, a behavioral dimension. It also affects how one considers change, a cognitive dimension, and the feelings one associate with change, an affective dimension (Burnes, 2015; Kachian et al., 2018). Commonly noted forms of resistance can include the following: "boycotting, reduced interest, blocking, opposing views, strikes… [and] negative perceptions and attitudes" (Damawan & Azizah, 2019, p. 49). Kachian et al. (2018) found a correlation between resistance to change, the increased time needed to implement change, and the increased costs of the change process.

"People prefer stability and comfort over change in both their personal and professional lives" (El-Dirani et al., 2020, p. 160). Both followers and leaders are affected by the forces of change resistance (Burnes, 2015). Botella-Carrubi and Gonzalez-Cruz (2019), Bruce and Picard (2006), and El-Dirani et al. (2020) found most areas of resistance within the succession process connect to the following aspects: personal attitudes, technical barriers, overall failure to plan the process, the timing of the succession process, failure to find suitable successor, and failure to manage the succession process efficiently.

Overcoming Resistance to Change Within the Family Business. Ahuja and Sarin

(2016) found that succession planning is the top stress-producing change for family businesses

because the succession process involves money, relationships, and emotions. Family business

leadership is responsible for mitigating risks and resistance associated with the succession

process (Visser & van Scheers, 2018). This resistance can emanate from various stakeholders

(Mussolino & Calabro, 2014; Motwani et al., 2006).

Cater et al. (2016), De Massis et al. (2016), Kiwia et al. (2019), and Marques and Couto

(2020) found the incumbent may present resistance to the succession process as they abdicate

responsibility for their business to someone else. Dyer (2018) and Marques and Couto (2020)

denoted incumbents often avoid succession planning because they fear facing their mortality.

The incumbent leader remaining active within the firm can have both good and bad effects; the

generational shadow is a negative form of continued involvement, and mentoring can be a

positive form of continued involvement (Marques & Couto, 2020). Bockhaus (2004) and Hess

(2006) proposed several means of overcoming the incumbent's resistance to the succession

process, including increasing the incumbent's level of self-awareness or encouraging the

incumbent to get involved in other non-family business-related activities.

The successor may also have areas of resistance regarding the succession process.

Carlock and Ward (2001) and Hess (2006) found successors may compare themselves to those

they are following, which can cause anxiety regarding the whole process. The successor is often

chosen based on their competence and business-related knowledge (Daspit et al., 2016).

Another area of resistance can be the family itself. When the family does not approve or

support the specific family member's integration into the top leadership role, the succession

process can be impeded (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). They delineated family's participation in

the change process can help overcome resistance to change, conflict regarding the change, and dissatisfaction with the decision made.

Leadership's Role in the Change Process. "Leadership is crucial to overcome resistance to change" (Appelbaum et al., 2015, p. 136). The leader takes on the role of change agent (Hechanova et al. 2018; Hussain et al., 2018; King et al., 2018). Bakari et al. (2017) shared leadership is responsible for the success or failure of a given change initiative. Hence, creating an environment for the change process is paramount to the change initiative's success. Leadership also has the critical role of diagnosing where the group currently is, determining where the group needs to go, discerning how to motivate the group to move in the desired direction, communicating the chosen changes, and removing obstacles hindering the desired performance (Hechanova et al., 2018; Hussain et al., 2018).

When leadership does not adequately or appropriately deal with resistance to change, the change process can be negatively impacted (El-Dirani et al., 2020). Leaders can best mitigate resistance to change via clear communication with all parties involved in the change (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015; Burnes, 2015; Hussain et al., 2018; Tsai & Harrison, 2019). Tsai and Harrison (2019) shared that a leader's justification of the change can help mitigate employee resistance regarding the change. Communication regarding a given change can increase the elements or forces promoting the change (Cummings et al., 2016; Galli, 2018).

The best way to communicate the change-related information is to codify the information in a personalized format for the individual employee; this requires both active listening and direct communication (Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Hussain et al., 2018). A leader can utilize many forms of communication to overcome resistance to change, such as the following: "initiate conversations to introduce a change, understanding conversations to engage organizational

members in the change, performance conversations to support commitment to the change and closure conversations to complete the change" (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015, p. 166). Odor (2018) denoted leadership can utilize communication to demonstrate need for change, increase employee buy-in regarding the change, and facilitate the actual change process.

Awadari and Kanwal (2019), Burnes (2015), Damawan and Azizah (2019), El-Dirani et al. (2020), Kachian et al. (2018), Hussain et al. (2018), Mussolino and Calabro (2014), Tsai and Harrison (2019), and Wong et al. (2019) denoted leadership's inclusion of employees potentially affected by the proposed change, within the decision process, can increase those employees' acceptance of the proposed change. Leaders can also include employees in decisions regarding change implementation processes (Awadari & Kanwal, 2019; Burnes, 2015). Leadership should be transparent during this inclusion process (Hussain et al., 2018). Those included in the change process have reported more positive emotions and increased knowledge regarding the overall change (Burnes et al., 2018).

Leadership's Role in the Family Business Succession Process. "Leadership and organizational change are inextricably intertwined" (Burnes et al., 2018, p. 144). Family business leaders have specific roles that can reduce resistance to change and encourage a successful succession process (Hauck & Prugl, 2015). According to Appelbaum et al. (2015), management has a responsibility to communicate trustworthy change-related information to their followers. Both the incumbent and the successor have specific roles within the succession process (Cater et al., 2016; Daspit et al., 2016).

The incumbent also plays an important role in the succession process (Campopiano et al., 2017; Chrisman et al., 2009; Daspit et al., 2016). If the incumbent is not committed to the succession process, the succession is unlikely to succeed (Cater et al., 2016; Chrisman et al.,

2009; Daspit et al., 2016). The incumbent moves through several stages in the succession

process, which encompass planning the process, mentoring the potential successor, transferring

control of the organization to successor, and supporting the new leader after the succession has

taken place (Carlock & Ward, 2001; Daspit et al., 2016). They can begin by introducing the

family business to their young children (Carlock & Ward, 2001; Le Breton-Miller & Miller,

2015). An incumbent must relinquish control of the business to their successor for true

succession (Cater et al., 2016). Incumbents should ask themselves and other family members

about the potential successor to ensure optimal fit (Lipman, 2010). The incumbent's relationship

with their successor can increase the level of preparedness of the successor for the succession

process (Cater et al., 2016; Daspit et al., 2016; Tien et al., 2019).

The successor also has an important role in the succession process. Chrisman et al. (1998)

denoted the successor should have the family's trust before beginning the succession process;

consequently, Mussolino et al. (2019) found credibility to be critical to successful succession.

The successor will benefit from having respect for both the succession process and the

incumbent (Daspit et al., 2016). The best choice for a successor is an individual interested in the

business and capable of running the business (Cater et al., 2016). The successor is often chosen

based on their competence, which can be difficult to measure Therefore, competence is usually

measured by education, knowledge, business-related experience, skills, or problem-solving

abilities (Cater et al., 2016; Chrisman et al., 1998).

There are numerous desired characteristics or traits for a potential successor. Chrisman et

al. (1998) shared the following attributes: creative, self-confident, intelligent, and risk-taking

initiative. They should also have credibility with employees and customers for a smooth

succession process (Mussolino et al., 2019). According to Farah et al. (2019), the successor's

previous work-related and familial experience can shape their ability to lead the family business. Williams and Mullane (2017) denoted that the successor's tacit idiosyncratic knowledge regarding the family business—including stakeholders' knowledge, unofficial rules, and overall company environment—can be important to the succession process.

Lewin's Three-Step Model of Change

Lewin (1947) based his three-step model of change on a few foundational premises. Galli (2018) denoted the first premise is the need for a change motivator to begin the change process. Lewin's three-step model of change included this premise in the unfreeze step of the change process. Additionally, one can plan organizational change, which begins with the unfreezing of the current system of action (Hussain et al., 2018; Odor, 2018). Hussain et al. (2018), Odor (2018), and Saleem and Athambawa (2019) found the change process involves a moving from the known, current condition to the unknown, future desired state; and people are reluctant to support change unless they have been convinced of a reasoning to go against the current status quo.

Kurt Lewin's (1947) three-step model of change has been linked to his other theories, specifically field theory, theory of group dynamics, and action research (Burnes et al., 2018; Cummings et al., 2016). Per Lewin's field theory, human behavior has a basis on a quasi-stationary equilibrium, including various complex forces attempting to maintain that equilibrium (Burnes, 2004; Burnes & Cooke, 2013). Another premise, based on Lewin's group dynamics theory, is that the unit of analysis for the change process must be a group, not an individual (Cummings et al., 2016; Galli, 2018; Lewin, 1947).

Lewin's model of change included the following steps or stages: unfreeze, move or change, and refreeze (Awadari & Kanwal, 2019; El-Dirani et al., 2020; Evans & Evans, 2018;

Galli, 2018). "Researchers used this model to focus on the particular sequence of steps that should be undertaken to accomplish change" (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015, p. 176). Each step or stage comes in a successive order to promote the overarching change process (Galli, 2018).

Unfreeze. Bakari et al. (2017), El-Dirani et al. (2020), Odor (2018), and Saleem and Athambawa (2019) shared the first step of Lewin's three-step change model involved unfreezing the organization's current status quo, which includes the acknowledgment of a need for change. Unfreezing breaks the quasi-stationary equilibrium to allow for change (Burnes, 2004; Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Hussain et al., 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). The unfreezing process often involves an awakening to the need for the proposed change (Burnes, 2017; Kanter et al., 1992). Lewin (1947) shared unfreezing necessitates "break[ing] open the shell of complacency and self-righteousness…to bring about deliberately an emotional stir-up" (p. 35).

The unfreezing process involves destabilization of the equilibrium to assist in the adoption of new behavior as one changes the undesired behavior (Burnes, 2004). This step involves overcoming forces that maintain the current status quo (Bakari et al., 2017; Odor, 2018). Hussain et al. (2018) shared the forces striving for the desired change must increase, and the forces stabilizing the existing processes must decrease.

Burnes (2015), Herriau and Touchais (2015), and Saleem and Athambawa (2019) denoted unfreezing begins with a realization of the need for change, which often involves the sharing of knowledge via some form of communication. Three processes are paramount to the unfreezing step: discomfort with current condition, anxiety regarding future, and a need for psychological safety. Appropriate communication between leadership, employees, and other stakeholders affected by the potential change process enhances the impact of each process (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015; Burnes, 2004, 2017; Evans & Evans, 2018).

At this step in the change process, leadership's role is to ensure that employees are ready for the proposed change (Bakari et al., 2017). The leadership characteristics of trustworthiness and credibility can aid the leader in preparing their team for the specified change (Bakari et al., 2017). Leadership should also be acutely aware of the various forces involved in a change process (Appelbaum et al., 2015).

Unfreezing the Family Business. Lipman (2010), Botella-Carrubi and Gonzalez-Cruz (2019) found succession to be a lengthy process involving multiple stakeholders. The family has an intrinsic role in the planning and executing of the succession process, including communication between all parties involved or affected by the succession process (Daspit et al., 2016).

The unfreezing stage directly correlates with the preparation necessary for the succession process in a family business (Hillen & Lavarda, 2019). Preparation for the successor can begin long before their formal introduction to the family business (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Le Breton-Miller & Miller, 2015). The early childhood preparation for future business leadership roles can be informal and fun to increase the potential successor's interest in the business (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Le Breton-Miller & Miller, 2015; Miller & Le Breton-Miller, 2005). Fowler and Edquist (2017) and Kiwia et al. (2019) shared the value of having a business plan, job descriptions, and role clarification to help determine the future educational needs of the successor. The successor prepares for future leadership positions by working in other businesses, which can add experience to their formal education (Cabrera-Suarez, 2005; Carlock & Ward, 2001; Chrisman et al., 2009; Hillen & Lavarda, 2019; Muyodi et al., 2019).

Move or Change. The second step of the change process contains both a physical and an attitudinal change to reach the desired new level of equilibrium (Burnes & Bargal, 2017; El-

Dirani et al., 2020; Hechanova et al., 2018; Hussain et al., 2018; Odor, 2018; Rosenbaum et al.,

2018). As one's attitude towards the change transforms, the individual is more likely to

undertake the actions required for the change (Kanter et al., 1992). Both the physical and

attitudinal changes are necessary for the change process to continue into the refreezing step

(Burnes & Bargal, 2017; Hussain et al., 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018).

The move or change step encourages learning about the situation so leadership can

determine the best change initiative to undertake (Burnes, 2004, 2017; Herriau & Touchais,

2015; Odor, 2018). The learning process should include consideration of all the forces affecting

the change process (Burnes, 2004). This consideration can lead to identifying many potential

solutions; leadership should test some of these potential solutions to determine suitability to

current change needs (Burnes, 2004).

Moving or Changing the Family Business*.* Within the family business succession

process, the move or change step corresponds to the actual passing of leadership from one

generation to the next. Literature often denotes the succession process as a relay race with the

actual succession as the baton pass (Chrisman et al., 2009, Farah et al., 2019; Vancil, 1987). This

visualization of the succession process connotes the importance of time; if the process is too

early or too late, the baton gets dropped, runners collide, and the operation fails (Cadieux et al.,

2002; Chrisman et al., 2009; Vancil, 1987).

Refreeze*.* Lewin (1947) initially coined this phase as freeze (Bartunek & Woodman,

2015; Burnes, 2017). After Lewin's death, researchers changed the term to refreeze (Bartunek &

Woodman, 2015; Burnes, 2017; Burnes & Bargal, 2017; Herriau & Touchais, 2015). The slight

change in presentation of this term allows for easier conceptualization of the three-step process

of change, which relates to the change process of an ice cube, which changes from a frozen state

to liquid state then transforms to the frozen new state (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015; Burnes, 2017).

The refreezing step allows for a return to the quasi-stationary equilibrium experienced prior to the unfreezing (Burnes, 2004; El-Dirani et al., 2020; Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Odor, 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). At this point in the process, the change transfers into daily practice and habit (Burnes & Bargal, 2017; Herriau & Touchais, 2015). Refreezing denotes integrating the new routine into the existing habitual framework (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015; Galli, 2018). This step is critical to reducing the chance of regression from new behaviors back to the previous status quo (Burnes, 2004, 2017; Galli, 2018).

Leadership's role at this stage involves integrating the new process into daily practice, determining and initializing measurement processes, and formalizing the change to align with the organization's vision and values (Herriau & Touchais, 2015). Hechanova et al. (2018) denoted leadership's involvement at this stage includes providing additional support to prolong change and reinforcing the desired behaviors. Leadership's role at this stage is a continuous reaffirmation of the newly integrated behavior (Hechanova et al., 2018). Odor (2018) shared leadership should give employees adequate time to process the change to better adopt the new norms.

Refreezing in the Family Business. The family business successors can benefit from refreezing the new status quo to ensure the success of the succession process. Kanter et al. (1992) denoted that continuing business-related changes can be difficult. Therefore, stabilizing the family business after the change is necessary (Cabrera-Suarez, 2005). The incumbent can aid the successor in refreezing the family business's status quo after the physical succession process

takes place. Specifically, the incumbent can help the successor grow and retain social capital by facilitating introductions with affected stakeholders (Schell et al., 2018).

Mentoring has dual purposes with training upcoming leaders and helping them grow into their leadership positions (Carlock & Ward, 2001; Daspit et al., 2016; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014; Muyodi et al., 2019). The mentor helps guide the successor in preparing for the challenges they may encounter in the leadership position. The mentor can guide the newly promoted successor in decisions regarding the business's future direction (Cabrera-Suarez, 2005; Lipman, 2010; Muyodi et al., 2019). According to Mussolino and Calabro (2014), mentoring can have a greater impact on leadership than formal education. Muyodi et al. (2019) denoted mentoring can help preserve a company's knowledge by passing it from one generation of leadership to the next.

Strengths of Model. The three-step change model is supportive of leadership's role in the change process, including the management of followers' perceptions regarding the entire change process (Bakari et al., 2017). Kanter et al. (1992) denoted one of the positive features of Lewin's three-step change model is "it offers managers a very straightforward way of planning their action, by simplifying an extraordinarily complex process into a child's formula" (p. 10). Galli (2018) found Lewin's model of change to be "simple and effective" (p. 128). An additional strength of Lewin's three-step change model is it engenders sustainment of the change (Burnes & Cooke, 2013).

By linking the three-step change model to his other models, Lewin encouraged a focus on the relationships amongst those affected by the change, which enabled concentration on the specific situation within which the change takes place (Burnes & Bargal, 2017). This model includes situational context and clarity regarding desired end status (Rosenbaum et al., 2018).

Bartunek and Woodman (2015) found Lewin's model to be sequential in nature, which aids in its implementation.

Since Lewin's death, many scholars have used his three-step change model to explain the change process within change literature (Bakari et al., 2017; Burnes & Cooke, 2013; Cummings et al., 2016; Hechanova et al., 2018; Hussain et al., 2018). The three-step model of change provides foundational material for numerous models of change (Bakari et al., 2017; El-Dirani et al., 2020). For example, the three-step model involves readiness, adoption, and institutionalization, which can link to Lewin's stages of unfreezing, moving or changing, and refreezing, respectively (Bakari et al., 2017). This revision of Lewin's model allowed for integrating the theory of planned behavior to link the change process to one's intentions for change (Bakari et al., 2017).

Weaknesses of Model. An overarching weakness associated with this model is the brevity of insight regarding it within Lewin's writings (Bakari et al., 2017). Lewin's (1947) composition included a mere three paragraphs regarding this model. The model only grew after Lewin's death when other scholars provided additional insight into it (Bakari et al., 2017).

Many researchers found the three-step change model to be overly simplistic, too linear in nature, too abstract, and static (Bakari et al., 2017; Bartunek & Woodman, 2015; Cummings et al., 2016; Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Odor, 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). Bartunek and Woodman (2015) found Lewin's three-step model change model missing some of the temporal dimensions related to the real-life change process, such as "timing, pacing, rhythm, and most important polyphony" (p. 168). Bakari et al. (2017) and Odor (2018) denoted that Lewin's model worked well in stable conditions with minor changes, but it tended to ignore organizational

conflict and political forces. Galli (2018) shared that Lewin's model tended to ignore the human aspect of change.

Another difficultly related to the three-step model of change based on Lewin's (1947) work was visualizing an organization unfreezing or refreezing like an ice cube (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015; Burnes et al., 2018; Cummings et al., 2016; Odor, 2018). The fact that the stages of the three-step change model are often intertwined, and one may have difficulty discerning one stage from another, also impedes the visualization (Bartunek & Woodman, 2015). This links directly to the finding that the model is overly simplistic (Bakari et al., 2017; Bartunek & Woodman, 2015).

Linkage to Lewin's Other Theories. The three-step model of change corresponds to some of Lewin's other theories, such as action research, field theory, and group dynamics (Burnes & Cooke, 2013; Burnes et al., 2018; Cummings et al., 2016; Hussain et al., 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). The linkage of Lewin's four pillars—namely field theory, group dynamics, action research, and the three-step model of change—allows for a more robust understanding of the situation and individuals involved in the change process (Burnes et al., 2018). Rosenbaum et al. (2018) and Burnes and Cooke (2013) shared that the one-dimensionality of Lewin's three-step model of change can be refuted by integrating the three-step model of change to Lewin's other work on action research, force field analysis, and group dynamics.

Action Research. Bakari et al. (2017) and Burnes and Cooke (2013) shared action research's predication on the process of changing behaviors to align better with the organization's requirements. Burnes and Bargal (2017) found "the democratic principles of cooperation among the research, practitioners, and clients" form the foundation of action

research (p. 95). Transparency between all parties is a foundational concept addressed within action research (Burnes & Bargal, 2017).

    Field Theory. Lewin's field theory encapsulates the concept that a force field affects all behavior (Burnes & Bargal, 2017; Burnes & Cooke, 2013). Field theory also relates to the formation, motivation, and long-lasting relationships found within groups (Bakari et al., 2017; Burnes & Cooke, 2013). Lewin found that behavioral changes only occur after a change in the field—either an increase in driving forces or a decrease in restraining forces (Burnes, 2015).

    Field theory examines how life space, the "totality of facts that determine behavior," influences both the individuals involved in the change and the environment surrounding the change (Burnes & Bargal, 2017, p. 93). The life space contains elements that either promote change or the status quo (Burnes & Bargal, 2017; Burnes & Cooke, 2013; Cummings et al., 2016). Burnes and Cooke (2013) found that all aspects of life space are interdependent, and a change in one aspect often results in changes to other elements.

    Burnes et al. (2018) reiterated that resistance has a foundation within Lewin's field theory in that the context of the situation is paramount to the change process. One can understand resistance as a force preventing the desired change from reaching fruition (Burnes et al., 2018). Thus, according to Burnes et al., change occurs only when the forces in the field of change are altered, and participative decision-making becomes a key to this alteration process.

    Group Dynamics. Group dynamics engender the forces at work in group life, including group formation, motivation, interdependence, and nurturing of long-term relationships (Bakari et al., 2017; Burnes & Cooke, 2013). Group encounters can be an effective means of introducing change (Burnes & Bargal, 2017). Lewin (1947) found change was easier when it integrated on

the group level as opposed to the individual level; if the group's norms remain unchanged, the individual would be less likely to change.

Complementary Models. Kotter's Eight-Step Model of Change and the Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement (ADKAR) model complement Lewin's three-step model of change and are discussed below (Galli, 2018; Kachian et al., 2018). Das (2019) found both Kotter's Eight-Step Model of Change and the ADKAR model of change correspond well with Lewin's three-step model of change.

Kotter's Eight-Step Model of Change. Kotter presented an eight-stage model of change in the mid-1990s (Appelbaum et al., 2015; El-Dirani et al., Evans & Evans, 2018; 2020; Galli, 2018; Seijts & Gandz, 2018). Odor (2018) shared the insight behind Kotter's model "is that when there is a vision for the change process, there will be a reduction in the rate of errors; this will lead altogether to an increase in the rate of success" (p. 60). Das (2019) asserted Kotter's model of change focused on people's behavioral changes, and Wentworth et al. (2018) shared Kotter's change model is purposed for change related to groups.

Kotter's eight-step model of change includes the following stages: "increase urgency, build the guiding team, get the vision right, communicate for buy-in, empower action, create short-term wins, do not let up and make change stick" (Hechanova et al. 2018, p. 916). Each stage in Kotter's model builds upon the stage before it (Galli, 2018; King et al., 2018). For example, the first stage of the model involves creating urgency for the perceived change, and the second stage builds a coalition based on the urgency created in the first stage (Galli, 2018; King et al., 2018; Seijts & Gandz, 2018). The third stage denotes the need for a strategic vision to direct the overarching progression of the change (Galli, 2018; King et al., 2018; Seijts & Gandz, 2018; Wentworth et al., 2018). Odor (2018) shared the initial steps to creating an environment

conducive to change. After creating the vision, the coalition shares the idea with others, the fourth stage. Once shared, leadership should empower its members to integrate the change into their everyday practices while removing obstacles from the job, the fifth stage (Galli, 2018; King et al., 2018; Seijts & Gandz, 2018; Wentworth et al., 2018). Stages four through six are focused on getting all members involved in the change process on board with the plan (Odor, 2018). These stages naturally lead into the sixth and seventh stages, generate short-term wins and consolidate efforts to produce longer-term success (Galli, 2018; King et al., 2018; Seijts & Gandz, 2018). The final stage involves making the change a habit (Galli, 2018; King et al., 2018; Seijts & Gandz, 2018; Wentworth et al., 2018).

There have been some negative findings regarding Kotter's model of change. Galli (2018) and Odor (2018) found the top-down approach to change management can hinder employee involvement in change-related decisions. Additionally, Kotter's model of change denotes a sequential format of the stages; variance to the denoted sequence can result in unnecessary delays or regression (Burnes et al., 2018; Das, 2019; El-Dirani et al., 2020; Galli, 2018; Odor, 2018). Wentworth et al. (2018) shared Kotter's model appears to lack direction regarding implementation. Das (2019) noted several pitfalls associated with Kotter's model of change, including risk paralysis, failure to create new norms or shared values, and short-term successes left to chance.

Kotter's model complements Lewin's model of change. Galli (2018) and Hechanova et al. (2018) shared that Kotter's eight-stage model of change extends Lewin's three-step model of change. Specifically, Kotter's stages generate "a sense of urgency, setting up the guiding coalition, establishing a vision and strategy, and effectively communicating the change vision" (Das, 2019, p. 263). This stage aligned with Lewin's unfreezing stage. Whereas Kotter's

empowerment and generation of short-term wins align with Lewin's moving stage. Mahmood (2018) and Odor (2018) denoted Kotter's model focuses on the environment within which the change occurs while Lewin's model begins with the readiness for change. Galli (2018) found Kotter's model helpful in determining when and how to include the people involved in the change process. Odor (2018) denoted stages four through six of Kotter's model ensure the solicitation of all members within the change process for their buy-in.

  ADKAR Model of Change. The five constructs of this model are composed of milestones that measure readiness for change; and these include the following: awareness of the necessity for change, desire or motivation to participate in or support the change process, knowledge of the change process, ability to refer to the skills necessary to implement and sustain the change, and reinforcement to continue the adopted change (Das, 2019; Galli, 2018; Kachian et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2019). Leadership can measure these five constructs to ascertain one's readiness for the proposed change process, which denotes a positive attitude towards the change (Kachian et al., 2018). The ADKAR model focuses on the individual's readiness for change, but it can also extend to groups (Das, 2019; Kachian et al., 2018).

  Wong et al. (2019) and Das (2019) found positive and negative results of the ADKAR model's usage. Wong et al. associated the following benefits with the ADKAR model of change: creating common language regarding the change process and scalability across organizations with diverse sizing. Some potential negative findings related to ADKAR include the following: inability to distinguish progressive change processes, inarticulation of roles for managers and leaders, and ignoring of the emotional dimensions pertaining to the change (Das, 2019).

  The ADKAR model complements Lewin's model of change. According to Das (2019), the awareness and desire constructs align with Lewin's unfreezing stage, the knowledge and

ability constructs align with Lewin's moving stage, and the reinforcement links to Lewin's refreezing stage. The ADKAR model of change focuses on how the people involved experience the change (Galli, 2018).

Contradictory Model. The researcher found McKinsey's model regarding change contradictory to Lewin's three-step model of change. McKinsey included the following elements within his change model: strategy, structure, systems, skills, staff, style, and shared goals (7S) (Galli, 2018). This model's foundation is a holistic view of an organization where the organization is "a complete, coherent unit functioning properly only when all of its elements are operating in complete synchronization" (Kirschenboim, 2018, p. 308).

Founded in the 1980s, McKinsey's 7S model of change integrated seven internal aspects of a firm necessary to promote sustained change (Cox et al., 2018; Putra et al., 2019). A breakdown of the seven aspects is as follows: strategy denotes the plan to move from the current state to the desired state, structure delineates the formal roles and relationships amongst staff, systems are the formal methods utilized to accomplish processes, skills include the employees' abilities, the staff is the individuals employed by the organization, style connotes the hiring and retention processes of the organization along with the overall management style utilized, and shared goals denote the organization's norms and beliefs (Galli, 2018; Kirschenboim, 2018; Putra et al., 2019). When these seven aspects are aligned, a firm is more likely to experience successful change and achieve potential competitive advantage (Njeru & Kariuki, 2019; Putra et al., 2019).

Galli (2018) denoted some negative aspects of this model as overly tedious and, consequently, time-consuming. Due to the interconnectivity between resources, a change in one aspect of the model often mandates a change in other elements (Cox et al., 2018). For example, a

change in staffing could denote a change in skills because the organization may no longer employ those with specific skills.

McKinsey's model contradicts Lewin's model of change. McKinsey's 7S model provides a resource-based view of the change process, and it can help organize the necessary resources to allow for sustained change (Cox et al., 2018). This model can help align management's effort with the resources available to achieve successful change (Njeru & Kariuki, 2019). Whereas, Lewin's three-step model of change focuses on the group involved in the change process, not necessarily the resources needed to sustain the proposed change.

Conclusion of Conceptual Model One: Lewin's Three-Step Change Model. Herriau and Tochais (2015) described Lewin's three-step change model succinctly as follows: the unfreezing phase denotes the realized need for change, the moving phase integrates both communication regarding change and implementation of the change, and the refreezing phase involves making the change a daily habit. The researcher utilized Lewin's change model to explore the first and third research questions, which asked what conditions or factors motivate family business leaders to develop succession plans and how do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans. The first research question examined factors impacting the change process. Communication regarding the change process and desired outcomes can positively affect change implementation and overcome resistance (Hussain et al., 2018). The third research question could potentially relate to Lewin's change model's move or change construct.

Bass's Full Range of Leadership Model

Passakonjaras and Hartijasti (2019) posited that the full range of leadership model encapsulates all leadership forms. The full range of leadership model contains the three

constructs of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership, which can be visualized as a continuum (Seltzer & Bass, 1990). The continuum begins with laissez-faire leadership, moves to transactional leadership, and ends with transformational leadership. These constructs divide into eight dimensions of leadership behavior (Peus et al., 2013). The eight dimensions are as follows: intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, idealized influence, contingent reward, management by exception active, management by exception passive, and withdrawal from responsibility (Peus et al., 2013).

Transformational Leadership. Burnes et al. (2018) found transformational leadership to be "the single most studied and debated idea within leadership studies over the last three decades" (p 143). Bass (1985) and Afriyie et al. (2019) shared that the transformational leader becomes a role model for their subordinates. The transformational leader induces their subordinates to work long hours and complete more work than those followers ever anticipated themselves capable of accomplishing (Afriyie et al., 2019; Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1985; Faupel & Sub, 2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019).

Bass (1985) characterized the transformational leader as having high levels of personal integrity and fairness while setting transparent and high-performance standards for their followers. The transformational leader recognizes others, shares advice, is open to conversation, and is willing to help or support the work effort (Bass, 1985; Jiang et al., 2019). Passakonjaras and Hartijasti (2019) noted that a transformational leader focuses on empowering others by raising their followers' level of needs based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. According to Mittal and Bienstock (2019), "transformational leadership refers to leaders who engage in personal, emotional, and inspirational processes to build a unique relationship with their followers" (p. 461).

According to Appelbaum et al. (2015), the characteristics of the transformational leader can all link with the idea of a learning-oriented organization. Bass (1985) shared "the transformational leader may be less willing to accept the status quo and more likely to seek new ways of doing things while taking maximum advantage of opportunities" (p. 38). Faupel and Sub (2019) delineated transformational leadership positively correlates with readiness for change, commitment to change, and followers' positive attitudes. The transformational leader is often responsible for integrating change into the organization (Burnes, 2015; Evans & Evans, 2018). Transformational leadership is an important factor in change management (Hechanova et al., 2018; Hussain et al., 2018).

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The transformational leader heightens their followers' confidence to encourage increased persistence towards a selected goal, and the leader can develop closer relationships with their followers (Afriyie et al., 2019; Appelbaum et al., 2015; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Iqbal et al., 2019). The transformational leader utilizes the competency of communication to inspire their followers to intellectually embrace the change process and be creative in designing new

approaches to problems (Appelbaum et al., 2015; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). This leader also utilizes

good listening skills to learn what motivates individual employees (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990).

Additionally, the transformational leader has strong charisma that can engender their followers to

work persistently towards preselected goals (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Faupel & Sub, 2019). The

specific characteristics associated with transformational leadership are the following: charismatic

leadership or inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and

idealized influence (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Faupel & Sub, 2019; Fuertes et al., 2020; Iqbal et al.,

2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013).

   Charismatic Leadership and Inspirational Motivation. This attribute is an ability to

move a group towards a shared vision, and it involves articulating how to achieve a desired

future state (Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Faupel & Sub, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2019;

Mittal & Bienstock, 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013). A charismatic

leader tends to have a strong influence and referent power; their followers want to identify

closely with and emulate these leaders (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990). This

dimension includes one's ability to visualize and share a sense of their mission with their

followers; it can also encourage followers to achieve a challenging goal (Afriyie et al., 2019;

Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019; Pugh, 2016; Seltzer & Bass, 1990).

Inspirational motivation often results in workers increasing their efforts to achieve the desired

goal (Afriyie et al., 2019; Avolio & Bass, 1995).

   Individualized Consideration. This leadership dimension involves showing genuine

concern for the individual follower's well-being (Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1990; Iqbal et al.,

2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019). The transformational leader has an individualized focus on

each subordinate with the desire to help each grow fully into their specific role, which is often

described as a mentoring relationship (Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Faupel &

Sub, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). This dimension also includes

assigning specific tasks and personalized motivation towards completing those tasks (Bass,

1985). To facilitate individualized attention, the leader must have consistent, ongoing

communication with their subordinates (Bass, 1985). Individualized attention is offered via the

constructs of mentoring, coaching, and two-way communication (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass,

1990; Iqbal et al., 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019).

Intellectually Stimulating. An intellectually stimulating leader inspires and encourages

critical reflection of a given situation along with the development of creative solutions to existing

or emerging problems (Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Faupel & Sub, 2019; Iqbal et

al., 2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). This leader enhances

subordinates' abilities to recognize and solve various problems encountered in the workplace

(Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Iqbal et al., 2019; Seltzer & Bass, 1990).

Idealized Influence. Bass's (1985) model does not include this dimension of the

transformational leadership construct, but Iqbal et al. (2019) and Passakonjaras and Hartijasti

(2019) denoted inclusion of this dimension. Mittal and Bienstock (2019) divided idealized

influence into two sub-categories: attributed and behavioral.

Idealized influence includes alignment between one's values and behaviors (Peus et al.,

2013). More specifically, idealized influence results in leadership becoming role models

purporting examples of the desired behavior (Afriyie et al., 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti,

2019). Iqbal et al. (2019) denoted that this aspect can include the leader serving as a role model.

Comparison Between Historical Variations of Transformational Leadership. In 1978,

Burns composed a book entitled *Leadership*, denoting the differences between transformational

and transactional leadership, which became the foundation for Bass's (1985) full range of leadership model (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Burnes et al., 2018; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). Burns's original conception of transformational leadership stressed the leader's morality to increase others' morality and motivation (Burnes et al., 2018; Faupel & Sub, 2019).

In contrast, Bass's (1985) full range of leadership model does not place the focus of morality on the transformational leader (Burnes et al., 2018). Bass (1985) denoted that the transformational leader must encompass the following roles: "consultant, coach, teacher, and mother figure" (p. 27). Seltzer and Bass (1990) shared that the transformational leader incites "change, innovation, and entrepreneurship" (p. 694).

Kouzes and Posner (2012) presented a slightly different perspective of the transformational leader, which included the following aspects: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the current process, enabling others' action, and encouraging the followers' hearts. Kouzes and Posner's characteristics of transformational leadership align well with Bass and Avolio's (1995) model, differing mainly in Kouzes and Posner's inclusion of enabling others' action and encouraging the followers' hearts. Bass and Avolio put more emphasis on the aspect of individualized consideration (Iqbal et al., 2019).

Transformational Leadership Practices Can Be Developed Over Time. The various dimensions that separate the transformational leader from other leaders can be developed through training and mentoring (Bass, 1990). Bass (1985) denoted that one obtains transformational leadership by increasing one's attention regarding the importance of outcomes and methods of achieving those outcomes, going beyond one's interests, and increasing one's level of needs based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Transformational Leadership and Change. According to Appelbaum et al. (2015), transformational leadership is "the naturally adequate approach for change" (p. 139). A transformational leader promotes readiness for change within employees, increasing their commitment to the change and motivating their support of the change (Faupel & Sub, 2019). The transformational leader leverages their charisma to influence positive attitudes toward the change (Faupel & Sub, 2019 According to Afriyie et al. (2019), the transformational leader can adjust their leadership-related behavior to align with the group's current needs.

Transformational Leadership in the Family Business. Bass (1985) identified the transformational leader as "a benevolent father who remained friendly and treated the respondent as equal despite the leader's great knowledge and experience" (p. 32). The transformational leader can focus on the future while maintaining flexibility to foresee and capture environmental changes as they occur (Bass, 1990). Afriyie et al. (2019) denoted that transformational leadership has been positively correlated with entrepreneurship and can improve individual and group performances.

The transformational leader focuses on individuals instead of the entire group (Afriyie et al., 2019). One sees this individualized attention in the incumbent-successor relationship. The relationship between incumbent and successor can affect the succession process; a strong interpersonal relationship between these individuals can enable the smooth development of the successor (Chrisman et al., 1998; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014).

Transactional Leadership. According to Appelbaum et al. (2015), transactional leadership is key to maintaining a stable work environment. The transactional leader increases employees' self-confidence by clarifying the expectations of the work and the rewards and punishments that will be experienced based on meeting or failing to meet those denoted

expectations (Bass, 1985; Jiang et al., 2019). Often, the transactional leader focuses on identifying and mitigating the hurdles that their team may encounter in pursuit of task completion. These leaders learn what motivates their team by sharing how the members benefit from completing a task (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990). A transactional leader bases their authority on personal power or position (Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). Transactional leadership has limitations linked to mediocrity (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990).

The transactional form of leadership often involves an exchange-type relationship between leaders and followers (Faupel & Sub, 2019; Hussain et al., 2018). The transactional leader clarifies expectations to encourage progression towards a goal (Bass, 1985; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). The transactional leader tends to focus on what can work in a situation by paying attention to the situation's constraints (Bass, 1985). The overarching goal of the transactional leader is to align subordinates with the completion of various job requirements via the distribution of rewards or punishments (Bass, 1985). The specific characteristics associated with transformational leadership are contingent behavior and management by exception passive and active (Bass, 1985; Hussain et al., 2018; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990).

Contingent Behavior. The transactional leader often utilizes contingent behavior; both rewards and punishments are contingent on the follower's performance (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1985; Jiang et al., 2019; Hussain et al., 2018; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). The transactional leader can reward good behavior with physical incentives, such as bonuses or raises, or utilize verbal rewards, including praise and commendations (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1985). The contingent punishments also take multiple forms, including giving attention to the deviant behavior, fines, docked pay, or even

termination of employment (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990). One should be careful not to overuse the contingent punishments, or the punishments will be less likely to produce the desired behavior (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990).

Management by Exception. Transactional leaders also practice management by exception (Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013). The active management by exception includes a leader continuously monitoring the followers' behaviors and correcting mistakes as they occur (Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013). Passive management by exception only includes leadership intervention when serious problems occur (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013). "The rationale of those who use this practice is 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'" (Bass, 1985, p. 34).

The transactional leader also utilizes the communication competency, but they focus on the exchange involved in the change process, such as role and task clarifications (Appelbaum et al., 2015; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). A transactional leader develops strong listening skills to help detect problem areas in each process and determine which of the followers' needs provide the best bargaining power for increased performance (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990). This type of leader can possess a high level of job-related knowledge (Bass, 1985).

Transactional Leadership in the Family Business. Jiang et al. (2019) found transactional leaders tend to focus on project planning and structuring to ensure goal completion. As denoted above, the transactional leader may get to know their employees to leverage the desired outcomes (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990).

Laissez-faire Leadership. Literature provides contradictory findings regarding the outcomes of the laissez-faire leadership style (Burnes & Cooke, 2013; Pahi et al., 2018). Laissez-faire leadership is less effective than other leadership typologies in certain situations (Burnes &

Cooke, 2013). Per Passakonjaras and Hartijasti (2019), the laissez-faire leadership typology is a form of non-productive leadership. Pahi et al. (2018) described this leadership style as permissive.

Characteristics of Laissez-Faire Leadership. The most common definition of laissez-faire leadership behavior is the absence of transformational or transactional leadership behavior (Faupel & Sub, 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). Per Villegas et al. (2018), the laissez-faire leader has limited participation with their followers. Laissez-faire leaders tend to withdraw from decision-making and responsibility for the followers' actions (Pahi et al., 2018; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019; Peus et al., 2013). The laissez-faire leader also delegates responsibility and authority to their followers (Peus et al., 2013). This means the laissez-faire leader supports their followers to motivate employee autonomy within the workplace (Pahi et al., 2018). For this reason, laissez-faire leadership is often considered a passive form of leadership (Peus et al., 2013).

The laissez-faire leader tends to encourage employees' decisions as a means of increasing the employees' work-related confidence (Pahi et al., 2018). Consequently, laissez-faire leadership works well with highly talented or highly motivated teams (Pahi et al., 2018; Peus et al., 2013). Laissez-faire leadership is common within the service sector (Pahi et al., 2018).

Laissez-Faire Leadership in Family Business. Laissez-faire leadership can be highly productive within industries with highly specialized workers, like the construction industry (Pahi et al., 2018). The laissez-faire leader tends to allow workers freedom in decision-making regarding task delegation and completion (Fahlevi et al., 2019).

A negative form of laissez-faire leadership within family businesses is the failure to acknowledge the necessity of planning for the future (Barnes & Hershon, 1976). This failure to

plan coordinates with an inability to acknowledge the finite lifespan of the current leader (Barnes & Hershon, 1976). Subsequently, the failure to engage in succession-related planning can result in unplanned successions, which have a greater chance of failing (Cater et al., 2016; Farah et al., 2019).

Strengths of Full Range of Leadership Model. The full range of leadership model includes both active and passive leadership behaviors, giving it a robust scale (Peus et al., 2013). The various leadership forms, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership, range from effective and highly active, effective and moderately active, and ineffective and passive, respectively (Peus et al., 2013). A leader's chosen leadership style affects their interaction methods with their employees (Fahlevi et al., 2019).

Weaknesses of Full Range of Leadership Model. Some researchers find the full range of leadership models useful while other researchers do not appreciate it (Peus et al., 2013). Many researchers have denoted difficulty separating leadership's activity and the resulting effectiveness (Peus et al., 2013).

Complementary Model: Sorenson's Leadership Classification. Sorenson classified leadership into five constructs, which are as follows: autocratic, participatory, referential, expert, and laissez-faire (Villegas et al., 2019). An autocratic leader does not consider anyone else's opinion when making decisions (Villegas et al., 2019). The participatory leader includes the opinions of those affected by the decision (Villegas et al., 2019). Expert and referential leaders gain increased followership based on their skills and experience (Villegas et al., 2019). Laissez-faire leaders allow others' input in the decision-making process, permitting employees to work without leadership's presence (Villegas et al., 2019).

Sorenson's leadership classification complements Bass's full range of leadership model in that Sorenson's constructs fit into Bass's model. The first four constructs of Sorenson's model, autocratic, participatory, referential, and expert, can align with either transformational or transactional leaders; and the laissez-faire leader constructs from both models sync up with each other (Bass, 1985; Villegas et al., 2019). Whereas Sorenson's model focuses on where leadership sources its power, Bass's (1985) model focuses more on the leader's specific leadership-related characteristics.

Contradictory Model: Servant Leadership. Robert Greenleaf coined the term servant leadership in 1977, but the concept has foundations back in biblical times (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Chughtai, 2019; Latif & Marimon, 2019; Mareus et al., 2019). According to Eva et al. (2019), people often describe servant leadership as a form of stewardship. The servant leader focuses more on the needs of others than the needs of the business (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Chughtai, 2019; Latif & Marimon, 2019; Mareus et al., 2019; Sendjaya et al., 2019).

There are many different listings of characteristics assigned to servant leaders, which have resulted in a fragmented view of the concept (Eva et al., 2019; Latif & Marimon, 2019). In 1995, Spears denoted these ten aspects, "(a) listening, (b) empathy, (c) healing, (d) awareness, (e) persuasion, (f) conceptualization, (g) foresight, (h) stewardship, (i) commitment to growth of people, and (j) community building" (Mareus et al., 2019, p. 55). In 1999, Laub synthesized the following list: "(a) developing people, (b) sharing leadership, (c) displaying authenticity, (d) valuing people, (e) providing leadership, and (f) building community" (Mareus et al., 2019, p. 57). Patterson also created a model of servant leadership in 2003, which included the following virtuous constructs: "(a) agapao love, (b) humility, (c) altruism, (d) vision, (e) trust, (f) empowerment, and (g) service" (Mareus et al., 2019, p. 58). Chiniara and Bentein (2016)

denoted the following attributes characterize servant leadership: inspirational, acting as a role model, providing direction, and challenging employees. Chiniara and Bentein and Chughtai (2019) shared Liden et al.'s model of servant leadership from 2008, which contained the following dimensions: caring about followers, helping community, acquiring necessary knowledge and skills, allowing followers' freedom, aiding followers' growth, acting openly, and being fair with all followers. Eva et al. (2019) put forth their definition of servant leadership to encapsulate the following: "(1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self toward concern for others within the organization and that larger community" (p. 114).

Servant leadership equates with transformational leadership, but the constructs have significant differences (Chughtai, 2019). The main area of difference is the focus of the various leadership forms; transformational leadership focuses on the organization's well-being, and servant leadership focuses on growing their followers (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Chughtai, 2019; Eva et al., 2019). Often, transformational leaders focus on their followers' needs to achieve organizational goals while servant leaders focus on the result of followers' development (Eva et al., 2019; Latif & Marimon, 2019). Servant leadership indirectly links to organizational outcomes (Eva et al., 2019). Sendjaya et al. (2019) denoted servant leadership can explain outcomes beyond those experienced by transformational leaders, such as increased employee commitment, satisfaction, and performance.

Conclusion of Main Element Two: Bass's Full Range of Leadership Model. A leadership team plays a key role in the organizational change process (Hussain et al., 2018). The transactional leader inspires some subordinate involvement and performance, but a

transformational leader can often inspire greater levels of subordinate performance and dedication (Bass, 1985; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). A transformational leader can positively influence the change process via behavioral support (Bakari et al., 2017; Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders tend to have greater organizational contributions than transactional or laissez-faire leaders, which attribute to the transformational leader's ability to motivate employees to exert extra effort towards completing the goal (Bass, 1990; Hussain et al., 2018).

The incumbent leader's characteristics can impede or facilitate the successor's change processes (Gordon & Rosen, 1981). A single leader can leverage each of the full range of leadership model's constructs within specific circumstances. For example, transactional leadership can work well in one's daily work routine, and one utilizes transformational leadership to exceed preset goals (Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). Transformational leadership tends to be associated with improved project performance (Iqbal et al., 2019). Avolio and Bass (1995) and Jiang et al. (2019) found a common differentiator between transformational and transactional leadership; it lies within internal and external contingencies. The transactional leader focuses more on external factors, such as rules; the transformational leader focuses more on their internal vision.

The researcher utilized Bass's full range of leadership models to examine the second research question (RQ2): What leadership competencies effectively develop strategic-related succession plans. This research question allows for examining leadership competencies, such as charisma and strong communication skills, and how they impact factors relating to overall outcomes (Appelbaum et al., 2015; Bass, 1985; Northouse, 2013; Seltzer & Bass, 1990).

Rumelt's Strategic Kernel

Historically, the term strategy originated on the battlefield and involved the positioning of troops to achieve victory. Today, strategy is used in the business world, with troops representing the company's resources, and the enemy is the competition or business-related challenges (Fuertes et al., 2020; Gcaza & von Solms, 2017; Tsokota et al., 2017). Rumelt (2011) defined strategy as "a coherent set of analyses, concepts, policies, arguments, and actions that respond to a high-stakes challenge" (p. 6). Strategy can be utilized as "a guide or roadmap for some objective" (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017, p. 3). Bismark et al. (2018), Fuertes et al., (2020), and Liedthke (2019) denoted strategy as a necessary building block for business processes. Strategy "ensure[s] that basic objectives are achieved" (Tsokota et al., 2017, p. 2). The components of Rumelt's (2011) strategy are three-fold, namely diagnosis, guiding policy, and coherent action plan (Ambrosini & Altintas, 2019; Gcaza & von Solms, 2017; Stuehmer et al., 2016; Tsokota et al., 2017).

Succession planning involves selecting and preparing a successor before the incumbent departs from the business (Kiwia et al., 2019). As shared by Schell et al. (2018), the family succession process includes five major phrases: "setting ground rules, development-and-nurturing phase, selection, transition, and satisfaction" (p. 313). Marques and Couto (2020) found "a deliberate and systematic" succession process can ensure the family business's sustainability and continuity (p. 43). Per Muyodi et al. (2019), succession planning is paramount for planning for the company's future needs. A planned succession process can be smooth and can potentially positively impact the firm's future performance (Farah et al., 2019). Failure to plan the succession process links to poor financial status (Daspit et al., 2016; Farah et al., 2019; Kiwia et al., 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020).

Diagnosis. Diagnosis simplifies the situation to increase understanding of context (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017; Rumelt, 2011; Tsokota et al., 2017). Specifically, one requires knowledge regarding the specific task, the organization, and the individuals involved in the situation (Cabrera-Suarez, 2005; Gcaza & von Solms, 2017). One should also understand external and internal contexts related to the proposed change (Botella-Carrubi & Gonzalez-Cruz, 2019; El-Dirani et al., 2020; Saleem & Athambawa, 2019). This required knowledge can increase a firm's competitiveness by encouraging the deployment of available resources (Muyodi et al., 2019).

Diagnosis includes internal and external business analysis (Gamble et al., 2019; Rosenbaum et al., 2018; Tsokota et al., 2017). There are numerous methods of performing environmental analysis, including the following: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis; competitive forces analysis; value chain analysis; internal factors evaluations; external factors evaluations; competitive profile analysis; or a resource view model (Fuertes et al., 2020; Tsokota et al., 2017).

Diagnosis in Family Business Succession Planning. Family members, both inside and outside the family business, often have a direct impact on the family business's strategic behavior (Mussolino et al., 2019). The succession planning process begins with questioning the direction business is going and who could lead the family to this goal (Chrisman et al., 2009; Daspit et al., 2016). Attention to both the internal and external business environment can be key in understanding various stakeholders' resistance to change (Cadieux et al., 2002). One should consider both the personal characteristics and external factors related to their specific situation (Botella-Carrubi & Gonzalez-Cruz, 2019; Tien et al., 2019). The planning utilized within the succession process correlates well with the diagnosis phase of Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel. Planning enables rules to guide the succession process (Hillen & Lavarda, 2019).

Internally, the family business can utilize succession planning to determine and nurture familial leadership's strengths and weaknesses (Muyodi et al., 2019). According to Cater et al. (2016), internal factors of the family business succession process include personal experiences and interaction with others within the business itself. This stage of the succession planning process can consist of initiating family members into the family business and selecting potential successors (Kiwia et al., 2019). Succession planning allows one to choose when a succession should occur (Chrisman et al., 2009; Fleming, 2000).

According to Muyodi et al. (2019), determining how to manage the external factors related to the succession process can be difficult. Liu (2018) denoted family businesses should consider the company's business environment when making succession-related decisions. Past experiences also shape the current reality as one "can only truly understand the present by understanding the past" (Dyer, 2018, p. 240).

Guiding Policy. Guiding policy directly addresses the issues discovered during the diagnosis stage (Rumelt, 2011; Tsokota et al., 2017). The guiding policy links the diagnosis to the planned actions (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017; Rumelt, 2011). It directs action towards a specific direction (Rumelt, 2011; Tsokota et al., 2017).

Guiding Policy in Family Business Succession Planning. The planning or diagnosis phase allows for creating rules to guide the succession process (Hillen & Lavarda, 2019). The family business's guiding policy can include employment guidelines denoting aspects regarding family involvement. These plans should consist of the definition of criteria regarding full-time employment, an outline of performance measurement processes, a specific list of what happens if the person does not meet the pre-established goals, and elaboration of familial compensation plans (Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Hubler, 2018). The planning process often results in a formal

succession plan which includes the following aspects: identification of chosen successor, determination of successor training necessary prior to the actual succession, and delineation of areas that the incumbent can mentor the successor in (Farah et al., 2019). These guidelines direct the choice and development of a potential successor (Daspit et al., 2016). Failure to have detailed guidelines regarding family members' involvement within the business can result in a faulty succession process (Carlock & Ward, 2001; Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Kiwia et al., 2019).

Coherent Action. The coherent course of action is a culmination of the previous two stages, diagnosis and guiding policy (Rumelt, 2011; Tsokota et al., 2017). The coherent action plan contains "coordinated steps of action aimed at addressing a guiding policy" (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017, p. 4). One must consciously decide what they give attention to (Rumelt, 2011). The business model guides desired actions and curbs undesired actions (Teece, 2018).

Coherent Action in the Family Business Succession Process. After the guiding policies have been adopted, the family business members can begin training and development of the chosen successor (Kiwia et al., 2019). The succession process culminates with the actual changing of leadership from the incumbent to the successor (Daspit et al., 2016; Kiwia et al., 2019).

Strengths of the Strategic Kernel. The strategic kernel is purposed to align one's actions with the organization's culture (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017). Tsokota et al. (2017) denoted the strategic kernel "provides the logical structure, which acts as a guide in reasoning and ensuring that a quality strategy is developed" (p. 3). Cox et al. (2018) found that the development and implementation of strategy are key areas of leadership. The strategic kernel can aid organizations in the setting of good strategies, which are "a coherent set of analysis,

concepts, policies, arguments, and actions that give responses to a high-risk challenge" (Fuertes et al., 2020, p. 6).

There is a value associated with the succession planning process (Fowler & Edquist, 2017). Strategic planning can facilitate the succession process and give the business time to consider the next generation's involvement in the business. Consequently, it can also help firms avoid conflict stemming from an unplanned succession due to founder's unexpected illness or premature death (Barach et al., 1988; Chrisman et al., 2009; Farah et al., 2019; Lipman, 2010; Marques & Couto, 2020).

The use of graduated succession processes allows both parties, incumbent and successor, to adjust to the new roles (Vancil, 1987). According to Kiwia et al. (2019), succession planning has two roles: reducing power struggles between potential successors and preparation time for the chosen successor. According to Liu (2018), good succession planning can aid the succession process throughout many generations of leadership.

Weaknesses of the Strategic Kernel. Strategic plans that do not contain all three of Rumelt's (2011) components for the strategic kernel have been deemed inadequate or incomplete (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017). Without proper planning, including the diagnosis, guiding policy, and coherent action plan, the family business's future survival can be threatened (Williams & Mullane, 2017).

Many recognize the importance of succession planning, but "few firms actually have succession plans in place" (Botella-Carrubi & Gonzalez-Cruz, 2019, para. 1). A high number of succession-related failures correlate to insufficient business knowledge (Kiwia et al., 2019). Williams and Mullane (2017) found "only 16% of family firms were found to engage in substantial succession planning and when preparing for succession…owners were found to

devote most of their time to tax and estate-planning and not to preparing their successors" (p. 32). According to Teece et al. (2016), planning becomes a primary function when encountering uncertainty.

Complementary Models. The dynamic capability framework and the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle appear to be complementary models to Rumelt's strategic kernel. The dynamic capability framework focuses on the firm's internal and external competencies (Ambrosini & Altintas, 2019). The PDCA cycle includes four concrete steps or stages to aid strategic planning processes (Liedthke, 2019).

Dynamic Capability Framework. The dynamic capability framework has a foundation within the resource-based point of view, and it includes aspects of the firm's internal and external competencies (Ambrosini & Altintas, 2019). Specifically, dynamic capabilities involve the ability to enlarge the company's current resource base using creation, modification, or extension of existing resources (Ambrosini & Altintas, 2019).

The individual constructs of this the dynamic capability framework include the following: sensing, seizing or sizing, and transforming (Day & Schoemaker, 2016; Stuehmer et al., 2016). The first construct of this concept is sensing, which includes both peripheral vision and active learning processes (Day & Schoemaker, 2016; Stuehmer et al., 2016). The second construct of the dynamic capability framework is seizing opportunities, which can include trial-and-error learning and utilization of real options to complete tasks (Day & Schoemaker, 2016; Teece et al., 2016). Stuehmer et al. (2016) called this second construct sizing. The final construct is internal and external transformation, including reshaping the current organization and realignment of resources (Day & Schoemaker, 2016; Stuehmer et al., 2016).

Ambrosini and Altintas (2019) found that the three components of the strategic kernel interact with the following dynamic capabilities: sensing and seizing of opportunities and transformation of resources. The dynamic capability framework can help leaders formulate the best questions to ask (Day & Schoemaker, 2016). Rumelt's (2011) guiding policy correlates with the seizing and transformation aspects of the dynamic capability framework (Stuehmer et al., 2016).

The PDCA Cycle. The PDCA cycle introduced by Deming in the early 1980s aids strategic planning (Liedthke, 2019). The individual steps of this cycle include the following aspects: "develop the plan (plan), implement the plan (do), review progress (check), and take appropriate actions (act)" (Liedthke, 2019, p. 6). In the early 1990s, Ishikawa extended the PDCA cycle to include the following six steps: (1) determine the objective, (2) determine means of achieving step one, (3) complete necessary trainings, (4) complete work, (5) examine results, and (6) implement corrective action if necessary (Liedthke, 2019). The individual steps of the PDCA cycle align well with Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel in that one diagnoses the situation during the planning stage, one also should be crafting guiding policies during the planning stage, and the coherent action plan encapsulates the do, check, and act stages of the PDCA cycle.

Conclusion of Main Element Three: Rumelt's Strategic Kernel. The succession process affects all business areas; therefore, a strategic plan is necessary (Brockhaus, 2004; Chrisman et al., 2009). Strategic planning aligns the business's capabilities with external opportunities (Carlock & Ward, 2001). The succession planning process must be dynamic (Hess, 2006; Lipman, 2010). Strategic planning can take many forms; there is no single best way to complete it (Liedthke, 2019). The distinctive elements of one's chosen strategy should align with other aspects and be coherent (Teece, 2018).

The basis for the common-sense theory of succession is the idea that a succession plan's goal can improve the firm's performance in the future (Kiwia et al., 2019; Muyodi et al., 2019). Thus, the leader chosen as successor should have the characteristics necessary for the position or receive training and development to shape them to fill the necessary role (Kiwia et al., 2019; Muyodi et al., 2019). The ideal succession process includes the following three stages: development of chosen successor, involvement of successor, and eventually the complete transfer of leadership power (Williams & Mullane, 2017). Daspit et al. (2016) denoted a slightly different succession process with the following steps: setting succession rules, development of the successor, and finally the actual succession of leadership. One achieves a smooth succession process when the chosen successor's development occurs before the incumbent departs from the family business (Kiwia et al., 2019).

The researcher will utilize Rumelt's strategic kernel to examine the third research question (R3): How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans. The third research question explores how leadership utilizes strategic planning within the succession process. Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel breaks down the strategic planning process to allow exploration of each component thereof.

Summary of the Literature Review

According to Darmawan (2020), there is a myth regarding family businesses: the first generation builds the business, the second-generation benefits from the business, and the third generation destroys the family business. This research study aimed to explore family businesses' succession process to better understand the factors that lead to successful succession. Before examining the individual conceptual models chosen for this study, the researcher examined some background information regarding the concept of family businesses. Furthermore, the researcher

investigated the problem related to change, specifically succession-related change and how family businesses incorporate this change into real-life practice. These aspects of family business were necessary to understand the succession planning process more fully. The individual conceptual models selected were Lewin's three-step change model, Bass's full range of leadership model, and Rumelt's strategic kernel. These models aided the researcher in completing this study. Specifically, the models enabled exploration in the following manner:

1. Lewin's three-step change model examined the factors impacting the change process, the development of succession plans, and implementation of the succession-related plans.

2. Bass's full range of leadership model examined leadership traits during the change process; both beneficial and detrimental traits are examined.

3. Rumelt's strategic kernel examined the planning process for strategic change.

All three aspects of the strategic kernel can help facilitate a smooth succession process. Lewin's three-step change model, Bass's full range of leadership model, and Rumelt's strategic kernel each contributed to the researcher's understanding of the family business succession process.

Transition and Summary of Section One

Section One presented the foundational material for this study, including background information, problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, conceptual framework, models, and a thorough literature review. Historically, family businesses have struggled to continue successfully after the leadership transfers from one generation to the next, aptly termed succession. The problem addressed within this study is the high number of family businesses that fail to thrive after leadership succession occurs. Each successive generation of family leadership

is more likely to fail. The purpose of this study was an exploration of current succession practices to facilitate an increased understanding of those practices to mitigate the problems related to family business failures. The questions delineated for this study focused on various aspects of leadership succession. The researcher chose a qualitative multi-case study methodology to explore this problem. The assumptions, limitations, and delimitation shape this study's boundaries; and the Christian worldview forms the basis for all research. The researcher utilized the conceptual frameworks to better understand the family business's succession practices. The literature review allowed for a better understanding of historical family business succession practices with a focus on how the conceptual framework aligns with the chosen topic.

Section Two focused on the research project. It began with a reiteration of the study's purpose statement. After the purpose statement, the researcher focused on the following areas: the role of the researcher, the chosen methodology, the selection of participants, data collection, data analysis, and a summary of Section Two.

Section Two: The Project

Section Two contains a synopsis of how the researcher planned on completing the research process. First, the section began with a reiteration of the study's purpose statement. Second, the researcher delineated the roles of both the researcher and participants. Third, the researcher shared in-depth information regarding the chosen research method, a qualitative multiple case study. Fourth, the researcher elaborated on a description of the population and sampling methodology utilized. Fifth, researcher's data collection methods are explained with focus on the researcher's role in the process and the interview guide's design and usage. Sixth, the researcher's analysis process was mapped out, including information regarding the coding

process. Finally, the section concluded with a discussion on reliability and validity, data saturation, triangulation, member checking, and thick description.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multi-case study was to increase the body of current literature regarding how leadership's strategic focus on succession planning can impact family businesses to promote their sustainability for future generations. The researcher explored the problem via an in-depth analysis of leaders' strategic development of succession plans within the family businesses located in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The specific focus may enrich the understanding of how leadership can develop and implement successive generations of family members to sustain the family business. The overarching goal of this research was to expand the existing literature surrounding family business leadership and to include specific succession-related planning practices that leaders within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry can utilize to allow for the sustainability of their respective family businesses.

Role of Researcher

The researcher is the primary data collection instrument in qualitative research studies (Patton, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2014). This researcher sought to understand the daily realities of those studied within family businesses. The researcher utilized the literature review to formulate the research questions. Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009) and Yin (2014) shared a researcher collects data via structured interviews with the goal of receiving real-world accounts from the participants. This researcher's goal was to better understand the family business succession process from those who have gone through it within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry.

The researcher chose a qualitative multiple case study to address the specific questions posed for this study. Qualitative research is best suited for examining real-life processes with unclear boundaries (Creswell, 2014; Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009; Fletcher et al., 2016). De Massis and Kotlar (2014) found the case study methodology helps one generate "managerial relevant knowledge" (p. 15).

The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection in qualitative research (Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). The researcher could best explore various organizational events, such as familial business succession processes, with the qualitative methodology. The researcher collected data via in-depth interviews with focus on understanding the area of inquiry from the participants' perspectives (Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009; Yin, 2014).

Yin (2014) and Creswell (2016) denoted a case study protocol ensures that each case study is carried out in a similar manner and is necessary for all multi-case studies. The researcher utilized a case study protocol to ensure that all interviews addressed similar topics (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2012). The case study protocol contained instructions for the researcher to help ensure a consistent interview process, a listing of interview questions, and a space to take notes regarding participants' responses (Creswell, 2014; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Yin, 2014). Appendix A contains the case study protocol for this study

Maxwell (2013) and Rudestam and Newton (2015) advised utilizing purposeful sampling to select potential participants to add relevant information to the study. Cater et al. (2016) denoted the acceptability of using contacts to form the potential pool of participants. The researcher planned to utilize her connections with the Delaware Valley Family Business Center to generate listings of potential participants for this study. She also utilized contacts from her family's business to identify potential participants that fit within the chosen research frame. The

criteria for potential participants included family construction business owners who have experienced a successful succession, and a business at least within the second generation of family leadership located in eastern Pennsylvania.

The researcher has worked for her family business as a full-time executive assistant from 2004 to 2009. However, she has recently rejoined her family business full-time to begin learning the business. She has not interacted with any business-related decisions at the family business. Her relationship with this family business did not affect the collection or interpretation of the data obtained from these potential participants. The researcher's experience working within her family's business in the construction industry provided foundational knowledge of the family business and the construction industry. The researcher acknowledged that this foundational knowledge might introduce potential bias into the study; therefore, she included specific steps to mitigate potential bias. The case study protocol was implemented to establish data collection procedures and member checking to support objective data collection and analysis.

Before contacting any potential participants, the researcher obtained approval for the survey protocol, including the data collection process, from both the researcher's university and the various organizational gatekeepers. Creswell (2014) directed researchers to obtain approval from those in authority positions, also known as gatekeepers, from each potential business.

The researcher obtained approval for the use of participants from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board prior to contacting any gatekeepers. The researcher called each potential gatekeeper soliciting permission to conduct this study. The telephone call followed a script, which contained details about the study, estimated time needed for the interviews, a listing of potential impacts of participation, and information regarding receipt of the study's research findings. A sample telephone contact and screening script can be found in Appendix B.

Bockhaus (2004) and Marshall and Rossman (2006) advised including a potential list of topics within the informed consent form. Consequently, the researcher included details regarding several potential topics in the informed consent form. The researcher verbally reviewed the purpose of this study and the basic interview process with all participants before the participant signed the informed consent form. The researcher also verified the participant's autonomy regarding their choice to be involved in the study. The participants were informed how their information would be compiled into a final report. Lastly, the researcher asked each participant to sign an informed consent form. Creswell (2014) posited that each participant should voluntarily sign the informed consent form and be willing to participate in the interview process before starting data collection. Before individual interviews, the researcher emailed each participant a copy of the informed consent form, so the participants had time to review the information. Once the researcher began the interview process, she presented the participants with an additional copy of the informed consent form, either digitally for the online-based interviews or as a paper copy for the in-person interview. She asked if the participants had any questions regarding the forms before collecting the data. The participants could elect to sign the form to continue the interview or not sign the form and end the interview process. Appendix C contains a sample of the informed consent form.

A copy of the signed consent form was scanned to the researcher's password-protected laptop. All hard copies were shredded with a cross-cut shredder after they were scanned. The researcher will retain the signed forms digitally for a minimum of five years after completion of the study. The Advanced System Care's File Shredder tool will be used to destroy the digital copies. Also, the researcher protected the identity of the chosen participants by assigning each

business a pseudonym in the form of an alphabetic letter; the participants were assigned an alphanumeric code that could be linked to their associated business.

The researcher used data from corporate documents to supplement or extend the information gathered during the interview process (Cater et al., 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015; Yin, 2012). Company documents can extend, corroborate, or oppose the findings from the interviews. The researcher requested company documents from both the gatekeepers and the individual participants.

The researcher performed all data analysis for this study. Analysis of qualitative data for a multiple case study takes on an iterative format as the researcher codes data from each case and then compares data between the multiple cases (Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009; Maxwell, 2013; Rudestam & Newton, 2015; Stake, 1995). The researcher also provided interpretation of the findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Research Methodology

The researcher utilized the qualitative research methodology and multiple case study research design to investigate the research questions. The researcher used the study's research questions as the basis for choosing both the research method and design. The researcher sought to understand the behaviors utilized within family business leadership succession for family businesses within the construction industry in eastern Pennsylvania. The main research questions put forth for this study were as follows:

- RQ1: What conditions or factors motivate family business leaders to develop succession plans?

- RQ2: Which leadership competencies are effective in developing strategic succession-related plans?

- RQ3: How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans?

Discussion of Flexible Design

A qualitative researcher focuses on understanding a specific process from the perspective of those studied (Creswell, 2016; Fletcher et al., 2016; Parada & Dawson, 2017; Roberts, 2010; Stake, 2010; Tien et al., 2019). The researcher is the primary research instrument in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers often utilize interviews to gather textual data instead of numerical data found in quantitative studies (Patton, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2014). The goal of qualitative research is knowledge generation focused on the individual's experience within a specific context (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020; Creswell, 2016; Fletcher et al., 2016; Stake, 2010).

The qualitative researcher focuses on real-life situations and gathers data from the participants (Patton, 2002). Cater et al. (2016) denoted that the succession process is dynamic because it involves the dual changes of management and leadership. The researcher explored the intricate facets of the family business succession process throughout this study. Cadieux et al. (2002) found "a more qualitative research method was essential to understanding and tackling aspects that are intrinsic to the process of succession" (p. 20). Therefore, this researcher has chosen to utilize the qualitative methodology for this study.

Most family business research is based on qualitative research methods, utilizing various research designs, including ethnography, case study, interviews, photographs, and archival documents (Fletcher et al., 2016). Creswell (2016) denoted interviews can be helpful when the researcher cannot observe a given process as it unfolds. Family business research is multifaceted and includes diverse actors and contexts (Dawson & Hjorth, 2012). Consequently, since this

researcher could not observe all the steps involved in the family business succession process, qualitative research was suitable for examining "fine-grained processes and the complex and tacit processes that characterize family firms" (Fletcher et al., 2016, p. 8). Mumford et al. (2009) denoted qualitative research allows study of leadership in its context. "Qualitative inquiry has the potential to guide future family business research toward a deeper understanding of industry-specific determinants, processes and outcomes of family business behavior" (Fletcher et al., 2016, p. 23). Therefore, this researcher utilized the qualitative research methodology to better understand the family business succession process.

Discussion of Multiple Case Study

The case study research design is best suited to answer a researcher's how and why questions (Cater et al., 2016; Yin, 2012). Case study researchers can utilize multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and archival documents, to better understand the nature and context of the situation (De Massis & Kotlar, 2014; Rudestam & Newton, 2015; Tsokota et al., 2017). Most data for this study came from semi-structured interviews. The researcher also gathered data from the Internet and internal business documents regarding the succession process. The archival documents can serve as a form of triangulation for the interviews (Hillen & Lavarda, 2019).

Flyvbjerg (2005) defined case study as "an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment" (p. 305). A case study is useful for detailed investigations of specific issues within a given context (Awadari & Kanwal, 2019; Botella-Carrubi & Gonzalez-Cruz, 2019; Flyvbjerg, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Hillen & Lavarda, 2019; Mareus et al., 2019; Tsokota et al., 2017; Wentworth et al., 2018; Yin, 2014). The real-life context of each case provides a means to better understand the phenomenon

studied (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Gibbert et al. (2008) denoted cases studies are "ideally suited to creating managerially relevant knowledge" (p. 1465). The case study is a means to explore in-depth a situation with the goal of understanding the situation from the participant's point of view (APA, 2020; Leppaaho et al., 2016; Yin, 2012). Patton (2002) found the purpose of case studies is "to gather comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth information about each case of interest" (p. 447).

De Massis and Kotlar (2014) and Benavides-Velasco et al. (2013) found case study research to be one of the most utilized research designs within family business research. Liu (2018) and Cabrera-Suarez (2005) shared the family business succession process contains many dimensions and criteria, including the culture and function of both the family and business, which affects the decision-making process. The family business succession process is context-dependent, meaning that the context of the process affects the process itself (Botella-Carrubi & Gonzalez-Cruz, 2019). Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009) found case study research to be useful in exploring dynamic or uncontrolled aspects of an organization. Therefore, the researcher chose to utilize the case study design to better understand the family business succession processes within construction businesses in eastern Pennsylvania.

Specifically, the researcher chose a multi-case study research design for this study. A qualitative researcher utilizing a multi-case study research design can explore a phenomenon within its real-life context with the "pursuit of deeper insights in each case" (Schell et al., 2018, p. 314). Bryman and Buchanan (2009), Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009), and De Massis and Kotlar (2014) shared that multi-case study can help the researcher determine if findings from the individual cases were idiosyncratic to the given case or if they were replicated across multiple

cases. As a result, the researcher utilized the multi-case study design with this family business-related research.

Discussion of Methods for Triangulation

Triangulation of data sources enhances findings' quality because triangulation converges and confirms the findings (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2016; Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009; Rudestam & Newton, 2015; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2012). Botella-Carrubi and Gonzalez-Cruz (2019) denoted triangulation of data from a variety of sources provides a "counterbalance to the bias of individuals' perceptions and valuations" (p. 6). Several scholars found triangulation of data can enhance the validity of one's findings (Merriam, 2009; Maxwell, 2013; Holloway & Brown, 2012; Yin, 2014). According to Yin (2014), data triangulation can "strengthen the construct validity of your case study" (p. 121). Consequently, this researcher utilized data triangulation to improve the validity of her findings.

Merriam (2009), Patton (2002), and Wolcott (2009) posited data triangulation involves the use of multiple data sources, such as interviews, observations, and archival document reviews, to better understand the data gathered. Creswell (2016) and Creswell and Poth (2018) denoted researchers coding data to document themes to exhibit a form of data triangulation. Therefore, this researcher's coding process was a means of triangulating data from various sources to better understand the process and practices related to family business succession for those in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The researcher utilized data from multiple forms, specifically interviews and archival document formats, to triangulate various themes. This researcher collected data from several sources, including multiple individuals and archival documents, to triangulate the various themes. Consequently, the final analysis reflected more in-depth and valid findings.

Summary of Research Methodology

The research questions posed for this study were a starting point for deciding the study's method and design. The researcher utilized a qualitative research methodology to explore the questions posed. Specifically, the researcher determined the multi-case study research design would best work for this study to best explore the posed research questions. Therefore, this researcher determined a qualitative methodology using the multiple case study design best supported the study's research questions and objectives.

Participants

Creswell (2014) shared researchers should not have any form of vested interest in the businesses they study. Therefore, the researcher had no vested interest in the businesses chosen to participate in this study. This decision connoted that the researcher's family business was not included as a case within this multiple case study.

The Delaware Valley Family Business Center is a contact from the researcher's family business and was used to discover potential participants. Potential participants needed to meet the following qualifying characteristics: family construction business executives who have experienced a successful succession, business was at least in its second generation of family leadership, and the business must be located within eastern Pennsylvania. Individuals meeting the qualifications were identified as potential key participants (Patton, 2002).

Before contacting potential participants, Liberty University's Institutional Review Board approved the case study's protocol. The researcher presented each potential participant with an informed consent form that had to be signed to continue the interview process; the participants could have chosen not to sign, and the interview process would have ended. Before signing the informed consent form, participants had ample time to review it and ask questions regarding it.

Stake (2010) denoted that the interview process allows participants to share their knowledge regarding a situation or process. After the researcher transcribed the interview, the participants were given a chance to review the transcripts and add any additional information necessary to clarify any potential areas of question. The researcher utilized this extra step to better understand the information gathered.

The researcher built trust with participants by conversing with them regarding the study's purpose and allowing them time to ask any questions regarding the study. Also, the researcher's honesty was a means of garnering participants' trust. Honesty within the research process is key to avoiding any forms of deception or potential harm to the participant (Creswell, 2014). Consequently, the researcher was honest and transparent regarding the questions asked and how the participants' stories would be utilized in this study. The researcher elaborated on how the participants' identities and businesses would be safeguarded through assigning company and participant codes. Specifically, the researcher shared that all identifying information was deleted once the interviews were transcribed and reviewed. The businesses and participants were given code letters and alphanumeric codes respectively. The individual participant's alphanumeric code was linked to their business's code letter.

Anticipation of potentially harmful or overly personal information sharing was vital in protecting the participants (Creswell, 2014). The focus of this study, family business succession planning, could potentially aggravate participants because of the personal nature of family business and succession planning. Participants were reminded that they were able to refuse answering any questions they were uncomfortable with, and they could end the interview at any time for any reason.

The researcher protected the participants by removing the names of both the businesses and individual participants from the study. Stake (2010) denoted "privacy is always at risk" (p. 29). Therefore, each business studied was assigned a code letter, and the participants were assigned alphanumeric codes. The researcher linked the alphanumeric codes with the individual business's code letters to provide continuity for the research. The researcher also removed all potentially identifying information after transcribing and reviewing each interview.

Population and Sampling

There is no set number of participants needed for a qualitative research study, and the researcher should explain their reasoning for selecting individual participants (APA, 2020). This explanation should include both the reason for selecting individual participants as well as factors regarding the context of the study, such as data collection timeframe and location of data collection (APA, 2020). This researcher set forth her population and sampling guidelines within this section.

"Case study research is not sampling research. We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case" (Stake, 1995, p. 4). The researcher should carefully select cases for a multi-case study so each case can contribute uniquely to the study (Yin, 2012). This researcher outlined criteria for selecting cases for this study to add to the researcher's understanding of the family business succession process.

Discussion of Population

Since a researcher's time in the field is limited, they should choose cases from which they can quickly gather information (Stake, 1995). Patton (2002) denoted that qualitative research often contains a limited number of participants because the researcher focuses on an in-depth study of those participants. Creswell and Poth (2018) denoted multi-case studies often include

"about four to five cases" (p. 189). Therefore, this researcher proposed to utilize four to six cases for this study. The number of cases included within the research study provided a higher confidence in the findings from the study (Cater et al., 2016; Yin, 2012).

Discussion of Sampling

Sampling refers to the methods one uses to select who to include within their study (Maxwell, 2013; Roberts, 2010). Patton (2002) shared multiple sampling strategies can be used within a single qualitative study. So, this researcher utilized various sampling methods to gather the cases necessary for this study.

Purposive or purposeful sampling indicates the choosing of participants based on their ability to provide relevant information to the study (Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maxwell, 2013; Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Convenience sampling, choosing participants one can easily gather information from, is a form of purposive sampling (Maxwell, 2013). Criterion sampling, another form of purposive sampling, involves choosing participants who closely align with the study's criteria (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). This researcher utilized a mix of purposeful sampling methods to find her individual cases for this multi-case study.

Cadieux et al. (2002) only considered potential participants that aligned with their research criteria. Cabrera-Suarez (2005) and Schlepphorst and Moog (2014) shared the participants in their studies had to meet the following three criteria points for consideration in their studies; "(1) family ownership and control, (2) family influence on decision making, and (3) intent to transfer the firm to the next generation of the family" (p. 78). Hytti et al. (2017) utilized the following criteria for their study: "the cases selected are at least second-generation family businesses that had undergone a relatively recent succession process" (p. 668). Potential participants for this study needed to meet the following qualifying characteristics: family

construction business executives who have experienced a successful succession, at least second generation of family leadership, and were located within eastern Pennsylvania.

The sample size refers to the number of participants contacted regarding participation in the study, not the actual number of respondents (Roberts, 2010). The researcher determined the sample size based on the following criteria: "what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (Patton, 2002, p. 244). Therefore, this researcher was purposeful in selecting this study's participants to focus data collection on data related to the proposed research questions.

Summary of Population and Sampling

Patton (2002) advised researchers to sample to the point of redundancy. However, most qualitative researchers "specify minimum samples based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study and stakeholder interests" (p. 244). Consequently, this researcher utilized purposeful sampling to achieve redundancy within the data collected for this study.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) advised researchers to choose research sites with the following attributes: researcher can enter the site; the site contains "a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest;" the researcher has a propensity to build trust with the participants; the researcher can conduct and report the study ethically; and "data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured" (p. 62). Therefore, this researcher screened potential participants with the given criteria to provide valuable information suitable for this study.

Data Collection & Organization

This section delineates the researcher's data collection and organization process. The qualitative researcher is the primary data collection instrument (Merriam, 2009; Parada & Dawson, 2017). Consequently, this researcher was the primary means of collecting data for this study. This study aimed to understand the strategies utilized by family businesses that experienced a succession of leadership. The researcher formulated the research questions from the literature review. The two primary forms of data collected for this study were from interviews and archival documents. However, this researcher used interviews as a primary means of collecting data for this case study. The researcher utilized an interview guide to ensure each interview was consistent and objective. The data collected was stored electronically on the researcher's password-protected computer that only the researcher can access. As the researcher saved the data sources, she assigned each case an alphanumeric code to protect the participants and their businesses.

The researcher gathered data via interviews with participants who have leadership positions in family businesses in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The researcher chose interview questions based on information gathered during the literature review portion of this study. An interview guide supported the researcher's gathering of consistent information through a variety of interviews (Cassell, 2009; Stake, 1995).

Sharma (2004) advised researchers that asking the right questions is critical in the interview process. Maxwell (2013) explained interview questions are a means of gathering information to better understand the topic one chooses to study. Rudestam and Newton (2015) recommended researchers consider their questions as tools for getting the participant to elaborate on their experiences regarding the research topic. Stake (1995) denoted researchers linking each interview question to the research questions can help align the interview questions to the purpose

of the study. Therefore, this researcher based her interview questions on the research questions and the constructs from the conceptual framework. Appendix E contains a listing of the interview questions as they correlate to specific research questions.

Cater et al. (2016), Merriam (2009), Runfola et al. (2017), and Yin (2014) advised case study researchers to utilize *how* and *why* questions. Conversely, qualitative doctoral researchers should focus on *how* and *what* questions (Wertz et al., 2011). Therefore, this researcher chose to frame her interview questions with a combination of *how* and *what* questions.

Creswell (2014), Marshall and Rossman (2006), Mareus et al. (2019), and Merriam (2009) advised researchers to utilize open-ended questions for interviews to encourage more robust responses from interviewees. Based on this feedback, the researcher developed a series of open-ended interview questions, located in Appendix E.

Creswell and Poth (2018) and Yin (2014) advised researchers to avoid leading questions as a means of avoiding power imbalances within interviews. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), "the interviewer leads the subject toward certain themes, but not to specific opinions of those themes" (p. 31). Therefore, the researcher carefully phrased the questions to guide the interview process in a directed yet non-leading manner.

Researchers utilize probing questions to elicit further information on a specific topic from interviewees (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). This researcher used probing questions to further explore the interviewees' responses. Patton (2002) advised researchers to end interviews with a closing question asking if the interviewee has any further insight to share on the topics already discussed. Therefore, this researcher added a closing question to allow interviewees an opportunity to add additional insight.

Data Collection Plan

Creswell and Poth (2018) shared case study researchers utilize multiple forms and sources of data to build "an in-depth picture of the case" (p. 162). De Massis and Kotlar (2014), Fletcher et al. (2016), Patton (2002), and Yin (2014) denoted collecting data in multiple formats can enhance the credibility of the data and increase the researcher's understanding of the data. Schell et al. (2018), Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009), Marshall and Rossman (2006), and Yin (2012) shared collecting data in multiple forms and from various sources can aid the researcher in mitigating potential bias in individual sources of information. Stake (2010) found data collection methods should align with the research questions. This researcher has determined that a combination of interviews and archival records were the best sources of data for examining the succession process utilized within family businesses.

Interviews. Runfola et al. (2017) and Yin (2014) shared that case study researchers commonly collect data through interviews. De Massis and Kotlar (2014) denoted this is because interviews can be "targeted, insightful, and highly efficient means by which to collect rich, empirical data" (p. 19). According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), "interviews are particularly well suited for studying people's understanding of the meanings in their lived world" (p. 116). Therefore, this researcher decided to collect data for this study through interviews.

Creswell (2016), Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), and Stake (2010) shared researchers utilize interviews to understand the interviewee's perceptions. Therefore, this researcher was purposeful in developing the questions used within the interview process, and the questions were open-ended and objective.

Researchers often record interviews and have the audio recordings transcribed verbatim to ensure the data collected for analysis accurately reflects what the interviewee expressed (Fletcher et al., 2016; Rudestam & Newton, 2015). The recording of interviews frees the

researcher to focus more on what the interviewee shared during the interview (Patton, 2002). This researcher recorded the audio of each interview with a cell phone application and utilized a second cell phone as a secondary audio recording device. Cadieux et al. (2002) shared that transcribing interviews within a day or two builds familiarity with the information and prepares interviewers for future interviews. Therefore, this researcher scheduled the transcription within 24-hours of the interview. Once the transcription was completed, the researcher reviewed them to ensure no further clarification was needed from the interviewees.

The researcher can have the participants review the transcriptions to ensure the data collected reflects their true feelings and thoughts on the matter (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Fletcher et al., 2016; Rudestam & Newton, 2015). The researcher's use of transcription checking can ensure the data gathered aptly conveys what the interviewees shared (Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). Once the researcher transcribed the interviews, the researcher emailed a copy to the participants for their review. The participants had two business days to provide additional insight. After the transcript review period, the researcher removed all identifying information from the interviews. Moreover, the researcher replaced all identifying information with alphanumeric codes, linking participants to their business. The researcher's coding process entailed the following: each business was assigned a letter based on the order of case acceptance; each participant was assigned the letter "P" to denote participant and a number based on what number interview they constituted. For example, the researcher assigned the first interviewee the code AP1, the second interviewee AP2, etc.

Archival Records. Creswell (2016) shared researchers can collect data unobtrusively from archived records. Yin (2012) defined archival data as data stored "in existing channels such as electronic records, libraries, and old-fashioned (paper) files" (p. 12). Fitzgerald and Dopson

(2009), Hillen and Lavarda (2019), and Yin (2014) shared researchers can utilize archival data to verify or triangulate data from interviews. Researchers can utilize these documents in a supplementary manner (Cater et al., 2016; Jaskiewicz et al., 2015). Therefore, this researcher utilized archival records to triangulate the interviews' findings and introduce new data that could enrich the research process.

Cater et al. (2016) found researchers commonly request the following types of archival records from those they interview: company documents, newspaper and magazine articles, advertisements, and company catalogs. Marshall and Rossman (2006) advised that the following types of internal documents may be helpful to the researcher: "data on the background and historical context…. minutes of meetings, logs, announcements, formal policy statements, letters, and so on are all useful in developing an understanding of the setting or group studied" (p. 107). Therefore, this researcher has included a request for archival documents in the phone call script (Appendix B) and the interview protocol (Appendix D). The researcher scanned archival records and saved each in the format they were received or as a portable document format on the researcher's password-protected computer. The researcher also conducted an independent Internet search of each business to gather potential archival records.

Instruments

Cassell (2009) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) denoted the purpose of an interview guide or schedule is to support consistent data collection from various individuals. Stake (1995) shared researchers need a plan for going about their data collection. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated the researcher can utilize an interview protocol to "organize their thoughts on items such as headings, information about starting the interview, concluding ideas, information on ending the interview, and thanking the respondent" (pp. 169-170). This researcher utilized the interview

guide, which can be found in Appendix D, to ensure the researcher conducted each interview in a consistent manner.

Data Organization Plan

Fletcher et al. (2016) and Merriam (2009) found researchers often take notes during the interview. Researchers also record and transcribe interviews verbatim to ensure all data collected aligns with what the interviewee truly expressed in the interview. Consequently, this researcher recorded audio of each interview to focus on the interview process and accurately transcribe data from the participants. The researcher utilized the interview protocol to guide the interview process and retained notes on the interview data. These notes were scanned and typed into a password-protected file on the researcher's password-protected computer. Then the data was labeled with the corresponding alphanumeric code to protect the business and individual, and the physical copy was shredded.

Baxter and Jack (2008), Fletcher et al. (2016), and Yin (2014) denoted researchers can utilize computerized database systems to organize and manage data. The database stores all information, including interviews, archival documents, and researcher's notes, in a sortable format (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Therefore, this researcher utilized NVivo software to organize the data gathered in this study.

Journaling. Stake (1995) instructed researchers to utilize memoing or the journaling process to store important information regarding the cases. This form of documentation can include observational and interview notes, a calendar of data collection, and personal musings regarding the collected data. Maxwell (2013) shared researchers should utilize a memo or journal to denote the analytical thinking process about the data. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), memos are "short phrases, ideas, or key concepts that occur to the reader" (p. 188). This

researcher tracked data via memoing. Creswell and Poth (2018) shared that the memoing process should begin in the data collection stage and continue throughout the data analysis stage. Therefore, this researcher began memoing once the data collection process began and continued memoing throughout the entire data analysis stage.

Secure Data Storage. Creswell and Poth (2018) shared researchers utilize data storage systems to organize data for easy retrieval. According to Creswell and Poth, researchers use computer software programs to aid in data storage and organization. This researcher utilized the NVivo computer software program on a password-protected computer to organize and store all data for this study. Creswell (2014) advised researchers to store data for a minimum of five years on a password-protected computer within password-protected files. Consequently, this researcher planned to store data on a password-protected computer within password-protected files for a minimum of five years.

Summary of Data Collection & Organization

This researcher was the primary data collection instrument for this study. She utilized an interview protocol to ensure each interview resulted in data regarding specific aspects of the family business succession process. The researcher aligned the individual interview questions with the research questions set forth for this study. This researcher's primary means of data collection were one-on-one interviews with archival records to substantiate and extend these findings. The researcher organized and stored the data within the NVivo computer software on a password-protected computer.

Data Analysis

Merriam (2009) and Patton (2002) posited that qualitative researchers are the primary means for data analysis. Therefore, this researcher managed the data analysis for this study. This researcher used the NVivo computer software to aid with the data analysis process.

Emergent Ideas

Runfola et al. (2017) shared qualitative researchers almost always gather more data than what can be utilized within a given study. Creswell (2014) advised qualitative researchers to "winnow" their data to help focus one's attention on those aspects of the data important to the current study (p. 195). This researcher acknowledged that she would not utilize all the data collected for this study. There was a need to use the interview protocol to limit the amount of data collected to areas that were pertinent to this study.

Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009) shared data analysis should be multifactorial. According to Creswell and Poth (2018) and Merriam (2009), the researcher's goal during this phase of the study is to use the data collected to answer the research questions. Stake (2010) found qualitative data analysis involves "taking things apart" (p. 133), and synthesis is the process of "putting things together" (p. 133). Consequently, this researcher planned to use both data analysis and data synthesis to better understand the data collected.

Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009) denoted qualitative data analysis is an iterative process of "familiarization, reflection, conceptualizing, cataloging concepts, recoding, linking, and re-evaluation" (p. 480) to better understand the data collected. Baxter and Jack (2008) and Yin (2012) shared that qualitative researchers must utilize this iterative process to explore and understand the data collected. Therefore, this researcher used memoing and journaling through the end of the study in an iterative manner.

According to Creswell (2016), Maxwell (2013), Roberts (2010), and Rudestam and Newton (2015), one of the first steps a researcher should take when analyzing qualitative data is reviewing the transcripts and notes taken during interviews. This process will enable the researcher to identify potential patterns within the data. This process can also assist the researcher in becoming immersed in the data by reading it numerous times (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Shi et al., 2015). During this review, the researcher should take notes on the findings (Maxwell, 2013; Rudestam & Newton, 2015). This researcher utilized memoing and journaling to track the notations made during data analysis.

Coding Themes

Stake (2010) defined coding as "sorting all data sets according to topics, themes, and issues important to the study" (p. 151). Creswell (2016) found coding to be a means of making sense of the data gathered. Therefore, this researcher utilized a coding process to facilitate data analysis.

Per Maxwell (2013), a researcher introduces coding into the analysis process "to fracture the data and rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts" (p. 107). Creswell and Poth (2018) advised qualitative researchers' coding involves dividing the data into groupings focused on a common theme and assigning the titles of the themes to aid with data analysis. This researcher utilized the coding process to help organize the data gathered.

According to Cater et al. (2016) and Maxwell (2013), researchers who develop codes based on pertinent findings from their data utilize open coding. Jaskiewicz et al. (2015) and Merriam (2009) denoted open coding is a process of analyzing text for pertinent findings. Creswell and Poth (2018) and Patton (2002) shared in vivo coding, a form of open coding, uses

the participants' vernacular to define and label the codes assigned to the data. Therefore, this researcher utilized *in vivo* coding within the analysis process.

Creswell and Poth (2018), Schell et al. (2018), Merriam (2009), and Yin (2014) found qualitative software aided their data analysis. Cater et al. (2016) utilized NVivo software to code and analyze qualitative data. According to Creswell (2016), Merriam (2009), and Yin (2014), qualitative researchers utilizing software for data analysis need to manually identify and code the data within the software; the software does not do this automatically. Qualitative researchers use open coding to identify significant expressions or thoughts, categorize the identified codes into themes, then compare the themes across cases (Cater et al., 2016). Per Yin (2014), the qualitative researcher uses the software as a tool to help analyze and organize their data. Therefore, this researcher utilized NVivo software to organize, store, and analyze the data gathered.

Interpretations

Creswell and Poth (2018) and Jaskiewicz et al. (2015) denoted that the researcher's next step is to condense the multitude of codes generated into a few pertinent codes. This process allows the data to be examined within the given case framework and between the various cases. Creswell (2016) termed this concept as lean coding. This researcher took the codes initially generated during the analysis process and grouped the codes according to commonality to develop themes, which aided the data interpretation process. Marshall and Rossman (2006) defined interpretation as "attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order" (p. 162).

Analysis for Triangulation

Creswell (2016) and Creswell and Poth (2018) posited researchers triangulating material between data sources could boost the accuracy of their findings. Stake (2010) found the triangulation process often results in the discovery that "the situation is more complex than first realized" (p. 125). Creswell (2016) and Creswell and Poth (2018) shared researchers gather evidence to both confirm and disconfirm findings, which provides a more robust and realistic view of the situation. Creswell (2014) denoted triangulation allows researchers "to build a coherent justification of themes" (p 201). Yin (2014) defined data triangulation as gathering information from various sources focused on explaining a given situation. Therefore, this researcher performed data triangulation with the material gathered from multiple sources to provide a holistic account of the family business succession experience.

Summary of Data Analysis

Marshall and Rossman (2006) laid out the following steps for qualitative data analysis: "(a) organizing the data; (b) immersion in the data; (c) generating categories and themes; (d) coding the data; offering interpretations through analytic memos; (f) searching for alternative understandings; and (g) writing the report" (p. 156). This researcher followed the process laid out by Marshall and Rossman for her data analysis. Specifically, the researcher began by organizing the transcribed interviews and archival documents within the NVivo software. Then, the researcher immersed herself within the data by reading each piece of data multiple times. As analysis continues, the researcher memoed about the linkages observed within the data. Next, the researcher began to develop codes and themes from the data reviewed, utilizing *in vivo* codes as much as possible. Finally, the researcher examined data for potential alternate meanings or findings. Once this process was complete, the researcher began writing the research report.

Reliability and Validity

Researchers choose between several methods to ensure valid and reliable data collection and reporting of results (Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Richards and Morse (2013) and Shi et al. (2015) denoted data saturation involves repetition or consensus of data to help the researcher better understand the data gathered. According to Creswell (2016), Rudestam and Newtown (2015), Stake (2010), and Yin (2012), triangulation of data involves converging multiple data sources or types of data to enhance the overall quality of the researcher's findings. Baxter and Jack (2008), Fletcher et al. (2016), Jaskiewicz et al. (2015), and Rudestam and Newton (2015) shared having participants review transcriptions from the interview, a process called member checking, can help ensure the data is collected accurately and reflects participants' thoughts. Holloway and Brown (2012) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) opined thick description involves a detailing of the data to situate the data within a given context. Therefore, this researcher utilized the following methods to enhance the validity and reliability of her study: data saturation, member checking, and thick description.

Many scholars posited that supporting reliability and validity for qualitative researchers is distinct from quantitative researchers (Creswell, 2014; Richards & Morse, 2013; Holloway & Brown, 2012). According to Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative researchers focus on the accuracy of their findings, termed qualitative validity, and consistency in research approaches, entitled qualitative credibility. Creswell (2014) and Holloway and Brown (2012) noted that qualitative researchers focus on trustworthiness, authenticity, credibility, applicability, and consistency in the data handling processes. Consequently, this researcher focused on ensuring the findings are authentic to the data gathered, credible in reporting the truth, applicable to current business processes, and consistent between data and reported findings.

Reliability

According to Fitzgerald and Dopson (2009), Merriam (2009), Richards and Morse (2013), and Yin (2014), reliability shows that a researcher can repeat the study's data collection methods with similar results. Rudestam and Newton (2015) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) denoted quantitative reliability relates to the dependability of the findings and the ability to replicate the study. Per Yin (2014), "the goal of [qualitative] reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study" (p. 49). Merriam (2009) denoted a more critical question to ask regarding reliability is "whether the results are consistent with the data collected" (p. 221). For these reasons, this researcher's goal was to ensure the findings generated from the data genuinely aligned with the data gathered.

Validity

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) shared "validity refers in ordinary language to the truth, the correctness, and the strength of a statement" (p. 246). Qualitative validity denotes the credibility or accuracy of one's reporting of findings (Creswell, 2016; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Richards & Morse, 2013). Price and Murnan (2004) and Roberts (2010) found internal validity relates to the accuracy or credibility of results measuring what they intend to measure. According to Rudestam and Newton (2015), external validity relates to one's ability to generalize or transfer findings from the current study to similar circumstances. Researchers use thick description to aid with validity. Maxwell (2013) found validity is based on "the relationship of your conclusions to reality, and no method can completely assure that you have captured this" (p. 121). Richards and Morse (2013) found researchers can increase validity within their studies by correctly denoting each step taken in the data analysis process. Consequently, this researcher focused on providing a

detailed description of the research process, followed the pre-determined steps, and delivered a credible reporting of findings.

Creswell (2014) and Yin (2014) denoted that a researcher's use of interview protocols can help ensure similar formats are utilized in each interview. Richards and Morse (2013) advised researchers to incorporate measures to evaluate the consistency of coding as time passes. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggested researchers utilize a memoing process during coding to record both the "definitions of the codes used and notes about the researcher's thoughts about the code" (p. 202). Merriam (2009) posited researchers utilize audit trails to detail data collection and analysis processes. Therefore, this researcher utilized various methods to ensure the findings were reliable and valid.

Consequently, this researcher has chosen the following to ensure reliable and valid findings for this study: data saturation, member checking, and thick description. The researcher explored individual means of ensuring reliability and validity within the following sections.

Thick Description. According to Holloway and Brown (2012), thick description involves "detailed and rich description of the actions, behaviors, and words of people, including processes, intentions, and feelings" (p. 20). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) explained "thick description situates an event in a context" (p. 78). Merriam (2009) denoted the qualitative researcher should provide enough description for the reader to make sense of the researcher's conclusion. According to Creswell (2014), Maxwell (2013), Holloway and Brown (2012), and Rudestam and Newton (2015), the inclusion of rich or thick data can increase the validity of one's findings because the data can give context to the researcher's conclusions. Consequently, this researcher generated thick, rich descriptions of the cases to allow readers to better

understand the data's contexts. Utilizing thick descriptions will also increase the reader's ability to generalize this study's findings to other situations.

Data Saturation. Per Rudestam and Newton (2015), data saturation links to the concept of data adequacy, specifically regarding the data's ability to answer the posed questions. Shi et al. (2015) found data saturation can increase one's understanding of the relationships' effects on processes. Richards and Morse (2013) found data saturation "provides the researcher with certainty and confidence that the analysis is strong and the conclusions will be right" (p. 223). Therefore, this researcher achieved data saturation by gathering data from multiple sources and utilized the member checking process to ensure data collected aligned with the findings reported.

Member Checking. Member checking is the process of having interpretations of findings reviewed and commented on by participants; this can increase the validity of research findings and reduce researcher's bias and misunderstanding of the data (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Botella-Carrubi & Gonzalez-Cruz, 2019; Fletcher et al., 2016; Patton, 2002; Rudestam & Newton, 2015, Stake, 2010; Yin, 2014). Creswell (2014), Maxwell (2013), and Merriam (2009) denoted member checking as a means of ensuring the researcher truly understood what the participants shared. According to Creswell (2016), Creswell and Poth (2018), and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), member checking should not be confused with the participants' review of transcripts because member checking involves participant's review of an aggregation of data from multiple informants, not just a review of what the individual shared within their own interview. Holloway and Brown (2012) denoted the process of member checking can aid researchers in triangulating interpretations to ensure the true meaning of the data is appreciated, which further supports the study's reliability, validity, and overall data saturation. Therefore, this researcher utilized member checking of aggregated findings to substantiate the themes generated

from the data. Merriam (2009) found that researchers can complete member checking by taking "preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask[ing]whether your interpretation 'rings true'" (p. 217). Consequently, after the researcher aggregated the study's preliminary findings, the researcher took the findings back to the interviewees to see if the findings aligned with their personal experiences. This process differed from interviewees' earlier review of the transcripts from individual interviews because the findings were aggregated from multiple interviewees.

Summary of Reliability and Validity

This researcher utilized multiple methods to ensure the reliability and validity of this study. The main tools utilized included the following: thick description, data saturation, member checking, and triangulation. This researcher was diligent in properly utilizing the above-mentioned tools to ensure the validity and reliability of this study.

Summary of Section Two and Transition

The researcher utilized Section Two to explain the research study's format and methodology, including the proposed format, methodology, and design for this research project. Section Two began with a reiteration of the purpose statement. Everything listed within this section builds upon the purpose of the research study. The role of the researcher was addressed in this section as well. The qualitative researcher has a key role in gathering, analyzing, and reporting research data findings. The researcher discussed the research methodology, design, method, and triangulation. This researcher chose to utilize a qualitative or flexible research design because it best aligns with the researcher's type of data. The researcher chose the multiple case study research methodology to explore the problem presented. The study's participants, including population and sampling means, were also highlighted in this section. The researcher

utilized purposeful sampling to identify participants who had data pertinent to this study. The researcher outlined the following criteria for participation in this study: a second-generation or later family business leader, who is at least 18 years of age, in the construction industry in eastern Pennsylvania. This researcher planned to collect data via online or in-person interviews and archival documents. The final two sections explored the data analysis, reliability, and validity. The data was analyzed and stored by the researcher using NVivo software. The researcher increased the reliability and validity of the study by utilizing the following: thick description, data saturation, member checking, and triangulation.

Section Three focused on the application of the research study along with implications for change. This section included the following sub-sections: overview of the study, presentation of findings and themes, interpretation of the themes and findings, recommendations, and reflections.

Section Three: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Section Three included an overview of the study and its relevance to succession planning for family businesses within Pennsylvania's construction industry. The themes and their relevance to the problem statement were analyzed in this section. The researcher discussed the significance of the findings to the proposed research questions. The researcher elaborated on how family business leadership could utilize succession planning to potentially support the continuity of their businesses into the next generation of family leadership. Lastly, the researcher included recommendations for future research and a reflection on their personal experience of completing this research.

Overview of the Study

This researcher conducted this study to explore and analyze successful succession

planning processes of family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The general business problem the researcher addressed within this study was the high rate of family business failures beyond the second or third generation of operation. The researcher conducted interviews in a semi-structured manner as the primary means of data collection. The researcher interviewed participants on an individual basis, including seven participants who were interviewed via Zoom and one participant interviewed in-person; all interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The length of each interview was between 25 and 95 minutes long. Interviewees answered a series of open-ended questions, and the researcher utilized follow-up questions to clarify their initial responses. The researcher utilized an interview protocol to ensure each interviewee was asked the same questions. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix D. The researcher gathered additional data from the individual business's websites and social media postings that were publicly available.

The researcher included data within this study from four family businesses with seven interviews of individuals who had direct experience with the family business's succession process. Four participants were current family business leaders, two participants were former family business leaders, and one participant was an outside sales representative who provided an additional perspective to the process. The researcher conducted two additional interviews with family business leadership succession planning professionals; these were individuals who professionally supported family businesses with the succession planning process. Additional data was gathered from the family businesses' publicly available blogs, social media, and websites.

The researcher utilized member checking to validate the information collected from the interviewees. Current scholars denoted member checking as a means of ensuring the researcher truly understood what the participants shared (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009).

The researcher's member checking process was conducted in the following manner: after the interviews were transcribed verbatim, the researcher emailed a copy of the transcription to the interviewees to determine that the data gathered was what the participants intended. Each participant had several business days to review the transcription and respond, and the researcher received a response from each participant indicating the accuracy of intention for the data collected. The participants indicated there were no misalignments between the data gathered and their intentions. After each response was returned, the researcher assigned the interviews an alphanumeric code to protect participants' privacy. The researcher then uploaded the interview data into the NVivo software. The researcher manually coded each interview within the software.

Presentation of the Findings

The researcher followed Marshall and Rossman's (2006) steps for analyzing qualitative data: "(a) organizing the data; (b) immersion in the data; (c) generating categories and themes; (d) coding the data; (e) offering interpretations through analytic memos; (f) searching for alternative understandings; and (g) writing the report" (p. 156). Specifically, the researcher entered each source of data, either interview or Internet-based source, tagged with an alphanumeric code into NVivo to organize the data. Each family business was assigned a letter from A-D, the participants were tagged with a (P) participant or (I) Internet. Then the researcher gave a number to each participant associated with their interview order. An example of this was BP3; this would be family business B, participant number three. The researcher read each interview multiple times to immerse herself within the data. As the researcher read through each interview, she made some notations in the form of memos, also known as journaling, to track her initial thoughts on theme generation. These memos began the coding process within the NVivo

software.

The researcher coded the data from *in vivo* theme generation. *In vivo* coding is a form of opening coding that utilizes the participant's vernacular to label and define the codes assigned to the data (Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2002). For this study, the researcher examined and conducted initial coding from each interview's transcripts to set up the NVivo software to continue the coding process. After reading each interview multiple times, the researcher began coding the interviews. The researcher's coding process began with an in-depth analysis of the data collected, which included identifying common words then grouping them into themes. The researcher journaled her findings during analysis to track her decision-making processes. As the iterative analysis process continued, the researcher could group some of the themes together to form the main themes.

The researcher gathered data from the individual company's websites and online blogs as available. The websites and blogs were scanned for any information regarding succession planning, succession process, or changes in the company's leadership. The data were then copied into a Microsoft Word document and analyzed according to the same process as the interview data. The researcher also asked each participant if they had any internal documentation, such as personal memos, letters, or diaries mentioning the company's succession process or plan that they would be willing to share with the researcher. None of the interviewees had any documentation to share with the researcher regarding these aspects. A small number, only two of the four family business cases had information on their websites or social media regarding their business' succession processes or plans. The family business professionals both denoted they have specific formats for family business succession planning.

Themes Discovered

The researcher proposed this qualitative multiple case study to explore family business leadership succession processes utilized within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. This researcher utilized semi-structed interviews to explore the participants' personal succession-related experiences. Four different businesses were analyzed as individual cases, and seven individuals were interviewed in relation to those four businesses. Two more interviews were conducted with family succession planning professionals regarding succession planning and processes to ensure that the themes delineated within the study aligned with their experiences. Before each interview, the researcher emailed each participant a consent form to sign and return to the researcher via email. The researcher stored the consent forms electronically on a password-protected computer; no physical copies of the signed consent forms were retained. The consent forms included information about the study, permission to audio record and transcribe the interviews, and steps the participants can take if they choose to discontinue participation. The Informed Consent form utilized in this study can be found in Appendix C. The researcher's role during this study included the following aspects:

- Selecting applicable family businesses to study,

- Gathering Internet-based data regarding succession processes or planning,

- Selecting family business leaders and professionals to interview,

- Conducting interviews,

- Transcribing the participants' responses verbatim, and

- Sending a copy of the interview transcript to the participants as a form of transcription checking.

After participants had the allotted timeframe to review and comment on the transcriptions, the researcher removed all identifying information from the interviews. After the

review, the researcher protected both the family businesses and individual participants by assigning each participant an alphanumeric code. The researcher utilized these codes to link the individual interviews to specific family businesses. The researcher did not keep any data that linked participants to their interviews. The researcher then entered the interviews into NVivo. Scholars have utilized NVivo software for coding and analyzing qualitative data (Cater et al., 2016).

To support data integrity, this researcher utilized both transcription checking and member checking to validate that the interpretation of the data collected from participants was what the participants meant. The researcher forwarded a copy of the transcription along with some follow-up questions to each participant for transcription checking. Each participant was given up to a week to review the transcriptions. All participants denoted that the transcriptions were accurate and that no changes were necessary. The researcher utilized member checking by sending a preliminary draft of the thematic findings to each participant to ensure that the researcher's interpretation of the themes aligned with their personal experiences. The participants had up to a week to respond to the accuracy of the findings. Each participant denoted that the themes generated aligned with their experiences.

Interpretation of Themes

This researcher discovered numerous themes within the data. Most of the data collected were from interviews with family business leaders working within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry Four businesses' succession plans and practices were studied with six family business leaders. Also, one outside sales representative and two family succession planning professionals were interviewed. None of the family businesses contacted had documentation regarding their succession processes. The researcher gathered some data from the

individual businesses' websites and online searches. The two succession planning professionals indicated they suggested specific steps when working with family businesses during succession planning. The researcher compared the themes discovered in this study with the conceptual frameworks, specifically the three-step change model, the full range of leadership model, and the strategic kernel, to determine if the themes align with the various constructs presented. The researcher analyzed the themes compared to the constructs in the conceptual frameworks and the academic literature examined within the literature review. The researcher utilized the remainder of this section to elaborate on some of the themes discovered within the interviews and websites. The researcher discovered six emergent themes within the data collected. The emergent themes related to the researcher's primary questions included the following: reason for succession, intentional planning, necessary leadership attributes, learning the family business, succession process, resistance, and external support. The researcher utilized these themes to focus on the succession planning and execution processes found within family businesses in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The findings aligned on multiple data points with the conceptual frameworks, additional theories, and content presented in the literature review.

Emergent Theme One: Reason for Succession. Each participant delineated a specific reason for leadership succession from one generation to the next within their specific family business. Each family business leader denoted a personalized reason for their family business's succession planning and processes. The overarching themes for succession were that the former family business leader wanted to retire or had health issues affecting the business. Participant DP1 denoted "I think like most, it's health related and/or retirement based."

Retirement. Two of the six family business leaders interviewed denoted that the succession planning and implementation were instigated because the incumbent family business

leadership decided they were ready to retire. Farah et al.'s (2019) research noted a desire for retirement often precedes a planned succession process. AP1 denoted that his father always intended to pass the business on to him, they stated, "it was always the intention that I would be my father's successor." succession planning process began in 2008 when the incumbent leader decided he wanted to retire in 2015.

Three family business leaders from a particular family business agreed that a retirement date was chosen for two of the former family business leadership members. As a result, they were able to complete the successions by the designated date. BP1 denoted "I'd say the second succession…really started in 2000 when the oldest brother, who was my uncle, really…had been saying for a while said he wanted to retire." BP3 delineated "at one point, he decided he would want to retire, which I guess it's quite natural. And then about 1990, the presidency switched from him to me." This family business was unique because the researcher was able to interview three family business leaders; two participants were former leaders with successive principal leadership roles, and the third participant is the current family business leader. The incumbent leadership's desire to retire at a future date can be the impetus for succession planning as shown by interviewees AP1, BP1, and BP3's statements listed above.

Additionally, two of the other family businesses examined indicated that the incumbent's desire for a specific retirement date showed a planning process. These plans can be written or unwritten, and they are put in place to make a desire a reality. CP1 expressed, "but as part of the succession plan…I'm trying to figure out who could take that on. Because down the road here, you know, in 8 or 10 years, I'd like to be retired." DP1 said, "in our particular business, I think like most, it's health related and or retirement based." These plans often include increased time

spent training or preparing the successor because succession planning can be "the single most lasting gift that one generation can bestow upon the next" (Motwani et al., 2006, p. 471).

Untimely Illness or Death. Two of the six family business leaders interviewed denoted that the succession planning and implementation were because of the incumbent or spousal illness. Several scholarly sources agreed the predominant reasoning for unplanned succession is the incumbent leader's untimely illness or death (Cater et al., 2016; Farah et al., 2019). Interestingly, one of the family businesses studied included interviews from two generations of leadership, consisting of two brothers from the previous generation of leadership and the current leader. These leaders experienced both a desire to retire and health-related reasons for succession. This example was taken from one of the former members of the family business's leadership; he explained his experience of coming into his leadership position. BP2 elaborated that after his mother's cancer was discovered "my father came to me and said…. I think it's about time to come in the office and learn some things." Another of the family businesses studied also shared that familial illness was an impetus in speeding up the timeline for the succession process. AP1 denoted, "my mother became ill in 1997…and my father really needed to spend the time with her dealing with some urgent treatment options and things that required both of their attention."

Leadership's reasoning for succession can impact the amount and type of planning utilized because succession requires the incumbent leader to give up control of the business as the successor gains a greater level of control (Farah et al., 2019; Hillen & Lavarda, 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). As several scholars denoted, the leadership succession process is either planned or unplanned, and the incumbent leader's illness or death are the main factors contributing to unplanned succession (Cater et al., 2016; Farah et

al., 2019). An incumbent leader's untimely illness or death often negates the time necessary for a planned succession. Participant BP2 elaborated, "I went into the office in December of 1969, two years after graduating from college, and two months later, in February 1970, he [my father, the incumbent leader] passed away of a heart attack." This unexpected death accelerated his timeframe to acclimate to the business and new leadership role.

Relevance and Conclusion of Theme One. Each family business leader interviewed denoted that their rise to leadership was either due to the incumbent leader's desire to retire or a close family member's illness or untimely death. The incumbent leadership's desire to retire allowed time to plan and execute a succession process. Literature agreed that the incumbent's desire to retire often allows for increased succession-related planning (Farah et al., 2019). An untimely illness or the death of the incumbent leader accelerated the succession timeline and removed strategic planning from consideration. Several scholarly sources denoted the illness or death of the incumbent can preclude the time necessary for succession-related planning (Cater et al., 2016; Farah et al., 2019). One of the family businesses studied demonstrated Daspit et al.'s (2016) assertation that successive generations of family businesses are more likely to have some succession plans in place as each successful succession of leadership involves a greater amount of planning.

Emergent Theme Two: Intentional Planning. Every participant denoted some level of intentional succession planning. For example, DP1 denoted, "I think having a clear succession plan of what's important [and] makes a lot of sense." The level of intentionality within each family business's succession planning process appears to be tied to the reasoning for the succession planning, either the incumbent's health-related concerns or their desire to retire. As the first family business succession planning professional elaborated, "many family businesses

don't consider succession planning until they want to get out of business." Participant BP2 took over his leadership role at the age of 24 after his father's heart attack, which did not allow significant planning or training for the role. The current family business leader BP1 denoted "my goal was to take their job and not have them have to look back over their shoulder or re-enter the business to save it." CP1 shared the following about his search for a successor "part of the succession plan currently is trying to figure out who could take that on. Because down the road here…in 8 or 10 years, I'd like to be retired."

Intentional Planning. Intentional planning was mentioned within each interview in varying amounts. Historically, scholarly literature has shown a variety of planning intentions within various family-owned businesses (Carlock & Ward, 2001). Carlock and Ward (2001) denoted "planning supports successful management succession, ownership transition, effective governance, and profitable business strategies" (p. 8).

The researcher noted the absence of planning with BP2's interview regarding taking over his family business at the age of 24 because of his father's untimely death. The incumbent's death gave very little, if any, time for succession-related planning. BP1, the current family business leader denoted, "it just began a series of planning sessions….one unique aspect of our succession is they were very serious. And they timed out exactly the way they said they would." BI2 elaborated that "nothing was in writing" regarding their succession planning process. "It was always assumed, because of the role BP2 took on, in operating the office part of the company…that he would take over when I decided to retire." Participant BP3 said he went to his management team's meeting and said, "I am ready to retire, but you will tell me when I can do it." Consequently, "we developed the training program to go into all the different departments of the company to do different things. Get to know the people and get to know the company."

Interestingly, this specific family business exhibited multiple levels of intentionality in the planning process. Participant BP2 stepped into his leadership role after his father's untimely death, which gave BP2 little time to intentionally plan his new role as head of the family business. The subsequent successions within this business, both from BP2 to BP3 and BP3 to BP1, demonstrated increased levels of intentionality in the succession planning process.

The other family businesses studied also had examples of intentionality within their succession planning processes. DP1 shared, "there wasn't [a succession plan]. And I think this is true with a lot of small businesses." As AP1 elaborated, "at the time [that] we undertook these transitions, we were not aware that succession planning was a thing, and therefore we handled it more organically than clinically." CP1 stated he is working with a group of succession planners, "it's a whole team, and I got my lawyers involved." The succession planners came right in and said, "this isn't just us; this is got to be everybody, we're just going to guide you along the way." Both family business succession planning professionals encourage intentional planning in their individual methodologies. For example: succession planning professional two shared, "put your big picture goals in writing" as the first step to starting the planning process.

Relevance and Conclusion of Theme Two. The data demonstrated a linkage between the level of intentionally within the succession planning process and the incumbent leader's health-related concerns, including illness or death, or their desire to retire. Several scholarly sources agreed the level of intentionality within the succession planning process can contribute to the success or failure of the family business (Cater et al., 2016; Villegas et al., 2019). Consequently, the incumbent leader's desire to retire may indicate a propensity for an increased level of intentionality within the succession planning process.

Emergent Theme Three: Necessary Leadership Attributes. Each participant denoted specific leadership attributes expected, either from themselves in their own leadership roles or from their chosen successor. The literature indicated the following characteristics or attributes are needed within family business leadership: creativity, self-confidence, intelligence, and having a risk-taking initiative (Chrisman et al., 1998). The leadership attributes mentioned the most within the interviews included the following: individualized consideration, a desire to learn, self-confidence, strong work ethic, and humility.

Individualized Consideration. Each of the family business leaders interviewed mentioned some form of individualized consideration. Individualized consideration encompasses concern for each follower's wellbeing with a goal of helping these followers grow (Afriyie et al., 2019; Faupel & Sub, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). The family businesses varied in how they mentioned this leadership attribute; four of the six family business leaders interviewed mentioned it in conjunction with employees, and one of the six family business leaders mentioned it in the context of their own personal growth experience within their family businesses.

AP1 noted, "people need to be given autonomy…they need to be able to make decisions that in some cases are not necessarily the ones I would make." DP1 elaborated that "there's maybe four or five different ways to achieve the same goal. And you have to allow your employee…to do that job and not second guess or micromanage them…their way may work for their customers." BP3 denoted, "we're going to sit here; we're going to throw out all our arguments…that's when he listens to everyone. And sometimes… it changes his mind." CP1 extolled to hold onto employees, they need to feel like they are part of things. "They don't have to be the ones making the decision. But they need to feel that they have a say, and that they're

listened to." CP1's father, the former family business leader, made his people feel like they "were ready to go into battle with him."

 Desire to Learn. Each family business leader interviewed mentioned the leadership attribute or characteristic of having a desire to learn and grow within the family business. Literature shared that the successor's knowledge of the family business is vital to a successful succession (Williams & Mullane, 2017). This competency was demonstrated in the following quotations from the study's participants: AP1 denoted, "what I needed to be was very open to learning." BP2 elaborated that "he mentored under me for years. With the ultimate goal of taking over the company." BP3 delineated "the only way to learn is through experience, you can't take college course you can't read a book, you know, this is an experience-based industry." CP1 denoted "he brought me…into the office to learn how to estimate. Because the company [was] growing, and he couldn't do it all himself anymore….and then he basically told me, I'm going to teach you everything else." DP1 also stated:

 I think it's always helpful to work your way up through any company, so that you understand what everybody's job is especially if you're going to run it. You don't have to be an expert at it, but I think it helps to at least know what their duties are maybe see some of the things that they see on a daily basis.

 Self-Confidence. Each of the family business leaders interviewed exhibited some form of self-confidence. Literature found that successor's previous work and familial experience can shape their ability to lead the family business (Farah et al., 2019). A few examples of self-confidence are exhibited in the following quotations: AP1 stated, "I needed to develop my own confidence." CP1 elaborated, "I'm an Eagle Scout, I've always been kind of a leader [and I] take

over…when I see something wrong." DP1 denoted, "when you go to Boy Scouts you learn you are out on your own, [and] you are carrying your own pack…you learn leadership."

Strong Work Ethic. A high level of individualized work ethics was shared by each of the family business leaders studied. Scholarly literature also found that parents often instill strong work ethics within their children as a means of preparing them for future work within the family business (Paisner, 1999). A few examples of leadership having a strong work ethic are as follows: AP1 said, "I had owned my own business, sold my own business, and I came to work in the family business with the intention of being my father's successor." BP3 denoted:

> The expectation level of performance was set at a much higher level …. so, he's not…. a spoiled next generation owner, where they just assume things are going to happen, and they were, you know, they were spoon fed their whole life.

> BP3 also elaborated "there's that want to exceed, and that drives you." CP1 said, "I was just told; I wasn't allowed to quit…. I'm bringing you out of the field, you are going to be an estimator, and you are not allowed to quit." DP1 denoted, "I was the oldest of five. So, when you are the oldest child. You are expected to lead and do certain things for the family; you are held to a different standard."

Humility. Two of the four family businesses studied indicated that various aspects of humility are essential in their family business's succession practices. Scholars found that humility is an important aspect of servant leadership, and it can increase employees' desire to stay with a business during times of change (Mareus et al., 2019). A few examples of humility within the cases studied were as follows; Participant AP1 said

> Even though I've had prior business experience, to be open to the education, of observing a new industry, observing the internal workings of the company, and not assuming that I

knew certain things just because I had seen them elsewhere. I think you learn humility, in in those situations.

A follow up email from BP2 denoted "respect for others is a large responsibility, both your employees and your customers. Everyone makes mistakes, but how you handle them is most important."

Relevance and Conclusion of Theme Three. There appears to be a variety of leadership competencies valued by the family business leaders interviewed. Each participant denoted value in individualized consideration, a desire to learn, self-confidence, and a strong work ethic. Only two of the four cases elaborated on the importance of humility within leadership.

Individual family business leaders may utilize individualized consideration for an increased focus on their constituents (Afriyie et al., 2019; Faupel & Sub, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019; Passakonjaras & Hartijasti, 2019). This level of leadership concern for subordinates can increase the family business's ability to continue into successive generations of family leadership.

The leader's desire to continually learn may allow them to find additional areas of success for the future of the business. Increased knowledge about the family business can improve the successor's chances of successful succession (Williams & Mullane, 2017). Therefore, a successor's desire to learn about the inner workings of the family's business could prepare them for future success within the family business.

The leader's level of self-confidence could engender the leader with an increased ability to lead, even during turbulent times, such as during a leadership succession from one generation of family leadership to the next. The successor's experience can result in self-confidence, which impacts their abilities to lead the family business (Farah et al., 2019). Consequently, the leader's

desire to learn can result in self-confidence which can positively impact the future of the family business.

Family business leaders with strong work ethics may be well-positioned to ensure a successful succession. Incumbent leadership often teach their potential successors strong work ethics to prepare them for future leadership positions within the family business (Paisner, 1999). Therefore, leadership's work ethics can impact the future success of a family business.

A leader's humility could allow them to own up to mistakes made, which may better align their subordinates with themselves and the business. Leadership's humility can impact their employees' choices regarding continuation of employment (Mareus et al., 2019). For this reason, a successor's humility can help them retain employees, which can improve the likelihood of the business's continuation.

Emergent Theme Four: Succession Process. There was much dialogue regarding the process of succession within each of the family businesses examined. This conversation included both aspects regarding the steps taken within the process as well as the timing of the process. The sections below elaborate on two aspects of succession practice.

Actual Steps Taken in the Succession Process. Each of the four family businesses studied presented a slightly different set of steps in their succession processes. The general process of succession involves the incumbent leader giving up control of the business and the successor gaining increased levels of control (Farah et al., 2019; Hillen & Lavarda, 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). Some examples of the individual family business's succession processes were delineated here. AP1 denoted:

When I got here, having had the experience of managing a business and owning a business, we openly discussed that prospect…And he assigned me to different areas of

the business during that five-year period, to learn this industry, and to learn the business itself.

BP1 said:

It just began [with] a series of planning sessions…. that were twofold. One, [we] talked about succession and shareholder position within the business, and the other was really operational… who was going to take the responsibilities of the eldest brother who wanted to retire, and how are we going to do that over a period of time.

On another note, CP1 was not included in the negotiation process and found himself "just being handed papers." DP1 had very specific memories regarding his actual succession process:

I've been running things for a while, but it was a Thursday. In April, at 10:30, and he called me into his office, and he goes, "I'm done". I said, "done what," [he] goes on "done, done, done running the business, the headaches are all yours". I said "really," he goes "yeah" …. [I asked are you] "sure you don't want anything else to think about it." "Nope". He goes, I said "okay", he said "good, we're leaving at 12 to play golf", which he had never done it was, it was kind of fascinating….and he says we're going to play golf. I said "okay", so we went.

Both family business succession planning professionals also noted general frameworks for the succession processes. Family Planning Business Professional One denoted a process of "assess[ing] current talent, future potential, and what may be needed in the future;" and Family Planning Business Professional 2 advised starting the process with "putting your big picture goals in writing."

Timing of Succession. Each of the family businesses studied had a distinctive timeline in the succession process; some of the timelines were set in advance, and others were based more

on extenuating circumstances, such as incumbent leadership's illness or untimely death.

Literature denoted the succession process can take anywhere from five to ten years to complete

(Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Hauck & Prugl, 2015). The literature also listed the following factors

affecting the process's timeframe: family values, freedom of action, previous work-related

experience, and the number of family members involved (Farah et al., 2019). A few examples of

the timeframes utilized in the individual family businesses were as follows: AP1 denoted "when

I got here, having had the experience of managing a business and owning a business, we openly

discussed that prospect. And he said to me... it's going to take you at least five years to learn the

business." BP1 elaborated that his successors "timed out exactly the way they said they

would…in 1996 or 1997, when my uncle said, 'Hey, I'm going to retire in 2000.' He retired in

2000." CP1 said the leader he followed "brought me on and always told me that he planned on

me taking over. But things really didn't get written down or talked about until 2008. That's when

he had decided he wanted to retire by 2015." DP1 denoted "I've been running things for a while,

but it was a Thursday. In April, at 10:30, and he called me into his office, and he goes, 'I'm

done.'"

   Relevance and Conclusion of Theme Four. The actual processes utilized within the

individual family business's succession varied in both method and timing. Scholarly literature

agreed upon a general process for succession with an incumbent relinquishing control of the

family business as the successor gradually gains more control (Farah et al., 2019; Hillen &

Lavarda, 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). All the participants

within this study denoted some sort of planning session prior to the actual succession of

leadership. Consequently, the method of succession chosen by a family business can impact the

overall success or failure of the succession process.

The timing of the succession process also may impact the likelihood of successful succession. The succession process can take a significant amount of time, and numerous factors can affect the succession timeframe (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Hauck & Prugl, 2015; Farah et al., 2019). Therefore, each family business has a unique timeframe for its succession, with various factors impacting the length of time necessary for successful succession.

Emergent Theme Five: Resistance to Succession. This theme involves both the resistance the current or former leaders experienced regarding the succession planning and execution process along with how they overcame the resistance. Resistance to change often occurs when the actual change is taking place (Galli, 2018; Marques & Couto, 2020).

Resistance Experienced. Each family business leader interviewed was either able to partially or almost completely mitigate resistance related to their succession processes. Resistance is often experienced because people fear change, either the change of a satisfactory status quo or the fear of losing something they value (Damawan & Azizah, 2019; Evans & Evans, 2018; Wentworth et al., 2018). The resistance experienced within family businesses regarding the succession process can emanate from a variety of stakeholders, including the incumbent, the successor, employees, or even the family itself (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). Many scholars have linked resistance to change to stress (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Hubler, 2018). Some examples of resistance or stress experienced within the individual cases were as follows: AP1 denoted:

> When I came to work for the company, there were employees who resented me as a
> family member coming to the business, and there were people who saw it as the key to a
> future, so I wanted to make sure the second group was right…I think, if you want to be a

successor in a business, and you're a family member, then you need to have a stomach for dealing with that resistance.

BP1 elaborated "I think it provides a lot of trepidation and fear whenever there's a transition and unknown." Additionally, BP3 said "they did have some rough periods there during the transition…and it caused some turmoil within their employees because you almost had employees picking sides." BP3 also denoted:

I think when the leadership changed…we've been doing stuff together for so long, I don't think there was any fear that there would be any changes. So, I think there was very little resistance that I was going to do anything hugely different than what we'd already been doing. So, I don't think there was any resistance there.

CP1 said "my father kept saying we were in charge, but yet…there's a couple of times where he'd walk in and say, no, we're not doing that." DP1 denoted "I'm sure that some of the employees questioned it…no matter how hard you work; no matter what you show you can do. There's people that think that they could do it better and they deserve it."

Overcoming Resistance. Each family business leader interviewed elaborated that they had to overcome the resistance or stress regarding the succession. Literature elaborated that there were several ways to overcome resistance, including the following: planning non-family business-related activities for the incumbent to get involved, encouraging the incumbent to mentor the successor, reassuring the successor of their competence, and involving the family and employees in the change process (Bockhaus, 2004; Hess, 2006; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). Examples of overcoming resistance within the individual cases were as follows: AP1 denoted:

So, what I had to bring to that transition process was a level of seriousness of effort, you know you see a lot of members of family businesses who sort of think of it as their

birthright so they get to slack off and not necessarily work as hard as they might. But

people are perceptive, and they see that, so I had to be someone that worked harder than

anyone else…And it's your job to prove to that first group of people, that you're

competent to lead the company. It's not their job to blindly follow you.

BP1 elaborated:

You overcome it [resistance] by communicating…saying, "you know, this is what's going

on. This is what we're doing. Here's our plan." I think people are reassured when there is

a plan in place, I think people fear even more when there's no plan, or it's a secret of plan,

or it's a presumed plan.

BP2 said "our employees knew that…we kept our word, we treated them as well as we could.

And they respected us and our operations and the decisions we made." BP3 denoted "you need to

have somebody to be able to make the final choice. Everybody can have their say, everybody can

vote, [but] somebody needs to be able to sign the contract and move on and get it done." BP3

said "by taking the amount of time that we did…there was no resistance mentioned to me."

Interestingly, CP1 denoted:

The thing that helped there was my mother. She was with my dad in the company part

time…So, she was always kind of that driving buffer…she was always like, "don't upset

the bear. It's not worth it." And so, but there was sometimes during that transition where

she did step in and kind of get in a spat with my father.

DP1 said "I don't think it [resistance] ever really came up because I really didn't allow for it in

the fact that I worked as long or longer and harder [and] made more money than any of the other

salespeople."

Relevance and Conclusion of Theme Five. Each of the four family businesses studied indicated some form of resistance or stress experienced within their succession processes. Scholarly literature pointed out a linkage between resistance and fear of change (Damawan & Azizah, 2019; Evans & Evans, 2018; Wentworth et al., 2018). Some family businesses did not label the stress experienced as resistance, but stress appeared to be directly linked to low levels of resistance experienced. Resistance to family business succession planning can involve multiple stakeholders, including the incumbent, successor, family, and the business's employees (Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). Numerous methods can be helpful with overcoming resistance to succession-related planning (Bockhaus, 2004; Hess, 2006; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). Consequently, each family business dealt with overcoming this stress or resistance in their own ways with some focusing on not upsetting the incumbent leader and others actively involving the employees in business-related decisions.

Emergent Theme Six: External Support. The researcher did not anticipate this theme in the interviews, but every family business studied explicitly mentioned the need for outside support or guidance within the succession process. Succession-related external support can take on many roles, such as lawyers, accountants, and family succession planning professionals. Both family business professionals agreed that external support was imperative to the succession planning process.

External Support. Scholars found strategic planning can be facilitated or assisted by specialized professionals (Fowler & Edquist, 2017). Some examples of utilizing external help within the succession planning process were as follows: AP1 denoted:

> There are people who have been advisors to companies, lawyers, accountants, bankers, who have the benefit of objective observations. A company should solicit the help and

feedback of those people. And even consider the formation of a formal board of directors that may include some of those people to help guide the transition. Because otherwise it can become very incestuous, meaning you only know what you know, within the four walls that you have to witness and observe. Whereas having somebody from outside of that structure can be beneficial…. have non-competing peer companies in their industries that they've developed personal social relationships with…I would strongly encourage the use of those peers as sounding boards. Because I've never experienced a problem that one of my peers hasn't already experienced.

BP1 advised "have a facilitator and surround the business with good people. There are people that do this for a living, and they're very good at it…and they can help facilitate those hard discussions." BP3 denoted "they have a financial adviser slash lawyer that they talk with; sometimes, he just likes to have an outside opinion added to it." CP1 elaborated "we got a lot of advice from XXX. He's been our certified public accountant (CPA) since the early 1970s…I still call my father to ask how to handle something, or what he thought of something…You know, it's a whole team." DP1 also advised "you better have a good lawyer. You better have a good CPA and not just an accountant but a good CPA." Both family business planning professionals also strongly advocated for inclusion of outside assistance in the succession planning process. Between the two business planning professionals the following types of outside assistance were recommended: lawyers, certified public accountants, and family business succession planning professionals.

Relevance and Conclusion of Theme Six. Each of the participants within this study agreed that seeking external support in the succession planning process was paramount to succession success. The family businesses found help from a variety of professionals; these

professionals can facilitate difficult discussions and aid in working through the succession

planning process (Fowler & Edquist, 2017).

Relationship of the Findings to Concepts

The researcher's findings suggested themes related to reasoning for the succession,

intentionality of planning, necessary leadership attributes, time for learning the family business,

the actual process of the succession, overcoming resistance, and the value of external support.

Each of these themes could potentially impact the continuation of the family business into

successive generations of family leadership within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry.

Each participant expressed that these themes contributed to their family business's continuation

into future generations of family leadership. Additionally, each of the themes noted was also

found in the literature examined with linkage to family business leadership's succession planning

and process. The individual themes also can be linked to the conceptual frameworks proposed in

this study. Specifically, these themes may have linkages to Lewin's three-step change model,

Bass's full-range of leadership, and Rumelt's strategic kernel.

Lewin's Three-Step Change Model. The researcher utilized RQ1 to address the

conditions precipitating the succession and the specific steps taken once the need for succession

was acknowledged. The researcher found that the incumbent's health-related issue or desire to

retire affected family business succession. This study indicated a need for intentional planning

and overcoming resistance.

Reasoning for Succession. The first step of Lewin's model indicates a need to unfreeze

the status quo (Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Hussain et al., 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). The

researcher discovered within this study each incumbent family business leader needed an

impetus to begin the succession planning process. This impetus was either retirement-related,

denoted from BP1 and CP1, or based on personal incapacity to lead, denoted by BP2 and AP1.

Intentional Planning and Resistance. The second and third stages of Lewin's model, move and refreeze, indicate a need for planning and overcoming resistance. Literature has shown attitudinal and physical changes are necessary to overcome resistance to succession-related processes (Hussain et al., 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2018). When the incumbent and successor plan out the succession process, steps can be implemented to overcome most succession-related resistance. AP1 denoted "I had to be someone that worked harder than anyone else." DP1 said the following about his intentionality towards work to overcome resistance, "I worked as long or longer and harder [and] made more money than any of the other salespeople. So, how you going to argue with it." BP1 and CP1 focused on developing relationships and communicating transparently to overcome resistance. BP1 denoted "overcome it [resistance] by communicating and transparently saying, 'this is what's going on. This is what we're doing. Here's our plan.' I think people are reassured, you know, when there is a plan in place." CP1 said

> If you want to hold on to men, you got to make them….be part of things. Yes, they don't have to be the ones making the decision. But they need to feel that they have a say, and that they're listened to.

BP2 focused on treating his employees with respect and equitably. He said "our employees knew that…we kept our word, [and] we treated them as well as we could."

Bass's Full Range of Leadership Model. The researcher utilized RQ2 to explore competencies or leadership characteristics valued in the succession process, focusing on individualized consideration and overcoming resistance.

This researcher identified that many of the leadership attributes discovered within this study aligned with the transformational aspect of the full range leadership model. The following

list of leadership attributes or characteristics aligned with transformational leadership: individualized consideration and utilizing communication to overcome resistance to change (Appelbaum et al., 2015; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). The attribute of humility appears to better align with the servant leadership model then Bass's full range of leadership model.

Overcoming Resistance with Communication and Individualized Consideration. This researcher discovered that communication and individualized consideration could help family business leaders overcome resistance regarding the succession planning process. Many scholars have written about the value of communication when overcoming resistance to change (Burnes, 2015; Herriau & Touchais, 2015; Saleem & Athambawa, 2019). BP1 denoted the following: "you overcome it [resistance] by communicating and transparently saying, 'this is what's going on. This is what we're doing. Here's our plan.' I think people are reassured, you know, when there is a plan in place." DP1 denoted

> When I became the owner, I had to remind myself every salesperson is different, give
> them direction, don't micromanage them, get out of their way if they if it isn't working,
> then you can change it. But if they're achieving the results and works. Don't make them
> do it your way. Your way isn't always the right way.

Humility. This researcher found that the type of humility expressed by this study's participants did not align well with transformational leadership. The leadership characteristic of humility aligns better with the servant leadership model developed by Robert Greenleaf (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Chughtai, 2019; Latif & Marimon, 2019; Mareus et al., 2019). The servant leadership model has been linked with stewardship and focused on the well-being of others, which could contribute to the success of family business leaders in their succession

processes (Eva et al., 2019; Chiniara & Bentein, 2016; Chughtai, 2019; Latif & Marimon, 2019; Mareus et al., 2019; Sendjaya et al., 2019). AP1 exemplified humility with this quote:

> It was a willingness to learn, a willingness to do any job that I was assigned to. And even though I've had prior business experience, to be open to the education, of observing a new industry, observing the internal workings of the company, and not assuming that I knew certain things just because I had seen them elsewhere. I think you learn humility, in in those situations.

BP2 showed humility with this assertion "we respected our employees, we paid them well. There were times when the union wanted to unionize our fabrication shop. And…they were never successful…we treated our employees better than we thought that the union could."

Rumelt's Strategic Kernel. The researcher focused on RQ3 to learn more about the actual processes utilized by family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry, specifically the development and implementation of succession plans. This model included the planning process, timing, and overcoming resistance to the proposed plan.

Intentional Planning and Timing of Succession. Rumelt's (2011) strategic kernel involves diagnosing the current situation, creating guiding policies, and engaging in a coherent action plan. This researcher noted examples of this with the family businesses taking a longer timeframe, usually five to seven years, to determine the business's status. It also took longer for these businesses to develop guidelines to move in the correct direction and implement the plans. CP1 denoted:

> If you think you're going to do this in five years…it's not going to happen. I mean, it can; they can do something right away, but are you going to be successful? Are you going to be even comfortable for the rest of your life? Probably not.

Both family business professionals encouraged starting the succession planning process early. Family Business Professional 1 denoted the succession planning process should begin "when you start the business," and family businesses should "begin final plan 18-36 months from planned exit."

>>> *Intentional Planning and Overcoming Resistance.* This researcher ascertained that one method of mitigating potential resistance from subordinates was to communicate the company's plan, which can help ease some of the stress related to the change process. BP2 denoted

> You overcome it [resistance] by communicating…saying "this is what's going on? This is what we're doing. Here's our plan." I think people are reassured when there is a plan in place, I think people fear even more when there's no plan, or it's a secret of plan, or it's a presumed plan, you know. I think when you can come out and stated, and say, "Look, this is our plan, and this is what we're going to do." It doesn't mean it's going to work exactly right. [It] doesn't mean we're not going to make mistakes. But this is the plan, this is what we're going to do.

Additionally, BP3 shared that the succession plans were made with "the end mind," specifically introducing a "capable, well-versed, and accepted" next generation of family leadership.

Relationship of the Findings to Problem

The specific problem addressed by this researcher in this study was that some family business leaders lack adequate succession planning to support the sustainability of family businesses beyond the first or second generation of family ownership (Bork, 1993; Dyer, 1986; Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Miller et al., 2003; Sharma, 2004). The statistics surrounding family businesses' succession success are summed up with each successive generation having a lower probability of passing the family business on to the next generation of family leadership. (Dyer,

1986; Fowler & Edquist, 2017). The researcher discovered themes in this study focused on this problem. All six themes point back to slightly different aspects of the family business succession process. Each theme can indicate information about overcoming the problem of family business failure after a succession process.

Reason for Succession. The researcher's first identified theme, the reason for succession, was present in each family business studied. This researcher subdivided the theme into two categories: the desire to retire or the inability to continue leading the business because of illness or death. The family businesses that indicated the reason for succession was the incumbent leader's desire to retire shared a great propensity to engage in family business succession planning over those family businesses that dealt with an incumbent leader's illness or death.

Intentional Planning. The researcher's second identified theme, intentional planning, focused on the value of planning for the succession process. When the leadership planned and utilized their plans, the succession process tended to be smoother. The family business leader, BP2, who indicated he took on the leadership role after his father's untimely death, did not have time for intentional planning. Interestingly, this leader and the future leaders of this family business each indicated the value in intentional planning to ensure a successful family business succession and continuation into the future.

Necessary Leadership Attributes. The researcher's third identified theme, necessary leadership attributes, pinpointed some of the leadership characteristics valued by family business leadership within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. A leader's individualized consideration of their followers can aid in overcoming those followers' potential resistance to changes introduced within the succession process. The desire to learn indicates that leadership is open to changes and can maintain flexibility as the family business changes and grows. A

leader's self-confidence indicates a fortitude to remain focused during business-related changes, including successions. Leadership's strong work ethics prepare them for the hard work and long hours necessary to realize or continue success within the family business. The final attribute denoted was humility, which can help balance the leader's drive for success with the needs of their employees. These attributes or characteristics can all be learned. This list can also help leadership narrow down a list of potential successors for the family business or provide focus areas for those chosen for these leadership roles.

Actual Succession Process. The researcher's fourth identified theme, actual steps taken in the succession process, illuminated the strategies utilized and the timing necessary for successful succession. The family business professionals denoted specific steps. Planning Professional 1 advised starting the planning process by questioning "where is your business right now?" Planning Professional 2 instructed businesses to "put your big picture goals in writing." When one examines how others have implemented succession processes, they can better prepare themselves for their own succession process.

While each of the family businesses examined denoted various steps taken in the leadership succession process, one of the common areas was that the succession process takes time. The incumbent leader requires time to plan the steps of the succession, and the successors need time to learn the important nuances of their family's business.

Resistance. The researcher's fifth identified theme, resistance, examined how family business leaders mitigate resistance in the succession process. Resistance to succession can be overcome with a myriad of solutions, such as clear communication of the succession plan. BP1 overcame potential resistance to the succession process by being transparent, he noted, "you overcome it [resistance] by communicating and transparently saying, 'this is what's going on.

This is what we're doing. Here's our plan.' I think people are reassured, you know, when there is a plan in place." Another way to overcome potential resistance is to plan with "the end mind," specifically introducing a "capable, well-versed, and accepted" next generation of family leadership was noted by BP3. Overcoming resistance to succession-related plans can improve the likelihood that the plan will work, helping the business continue into another generation of family leadership.

    External Support. The researcher's sixth identified theme, external support, showed the value of utilizing external sources of information to guide the family business's succession process. External support can come from various individuals, such as lawyers, accountants, and succession planning professionals. AP1 suggested numerous types of external supports for the succession planning process; "there are people who have been advisors to companies, lawyers, accountants, bankers, who have the benefit of objective observations… And even consider the formation of a formal board of directors." Each family business planning professional was also adamant that outside assistance could aid the succession planning process. These outside sources of advice and guidance can help family business leaders avoid common hazards that other family businesses may have dealt with in the past.

    Summary of the Findings

    This researcher noted many prominent themes within this study on family leadership succession planning and practice. The key themes identified include the following: a reason for succession, intentional planning, necessary competencies, succession process, resistance, and external support. These themes were linked directly to the research questions, conceptual frameworks, and problem statement established for the study.

Reason for Succession. The first theme, the reason for succession, pointed to why family businesses considered succession. The incumbent leader's desire to retire or inability to lead became the impetus for succession-related planning. The family business leaders who step into their leadership roles after the illness or death of the incumbent often do not have the benefit of planning for this change of leadership. Incumbent family business leaders who express the desire to retire often begin the succession planning process well in advance of their expected retirement date. AP1's experience with his father demonstrates this point, "always [having] the intention that I would be my father's successor." BP1 expressed that his uncle decided he wanted to retire, so he planned to allow that retirement to take place. Many scholars focused on the value of the succession planning process because it denotes a time for consideration of future generations of the family's involvement within the family business. It can also help mitigate potential conflict within the family by setting the structure for the family business's future (Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Chrisman et al., 2009; Farah et al., 2019; Lipman, 2010; Marques & Couto, 2020).

Intentional Planning. The second theme, intentional planning, builds upon the first theme. Once the incumbent leader acknowledges the desire to retire or inability to lead, the planning process must begin. The first family business succession planning professional denoted "many family businesses don't consider succession planning until they want to get out of business."

Leaders who utilize intentional or strategic planning set specific goals in place along with concrete steps necessary to reach that goal (Gcaza & von Solms, 2017; Rumelt, 2011; Tsokota et al., 2017). A family business's succession planning process often involves the selection and preparation of the successor before the incumbent leader leaves their leadership position (Kiwia et al., 2019). DP1 agreed with the importance of intentional planning and said, "I think having a

clear succession plan of what's important [and] makes a lot of sense." One facet of intentional planning would be the consideration of who within the family would be a good fit for the next generation of family business leadership, which flows directly into the necessary leadership characteristics or attributes for family business leaders.

Necessary Leadership Attributes. The third theme, necessary leadership attributes, elaborated on the traits or characteristics valued by family business leaders within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The researcher discovered that the interviewees valued the following leadership attributes: individualized consideration, desire to learn, self-confidence, strong work ethics, and humility. These leadership attributes or characteristics link to both transformational and servant leadership; they can be good indicators for the quality of potential successors. These leadership characteristics and traits can be developed over time (Bass, 1990).

Individualized consideration entails demonstrating genuine concern for the individual follower's well-being along with a desire to help them grow personally and professionally (Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1990; Iqbal et al., 2019; Mittal & Bienstock, 2019). AP1 denoted "people need to be given autonomy." DP1 elaborated that "you have to allow your employee…to do that job and not second guess or micromanage them." BP3 denoted "we're going to sit here; we're going to throw out all our arguments…that's when he listens to everyone." CP1 extolled in order to hold onto employees, they need to feel like they are a part of things.

The successor's desire to learn the family business can involve personal change and growth over time. Thus, learning becomes an iterative process, and the changes being made within the individual or the business must align with the new material (Burnes, 2017). AP1 summed this up succinctly with "what I needed to be was very open to learning." The individual learning process took on many forms as BP2 denoted "he mentored under me for years." BP3

delineated "the only way to learn is through experience, you can't take college course you can't read a book, you know, this is an experience-based industry."

Leadership's self-confidence can be derived from previous experiences, whether personal, familial, or work-related (Farah et al., 2019). The participants denoted multiple methods of gaining self-confidence ranging from AP1's assertation of "I needed to develop my own confidence" to CP1 and DP1's confidence building from Boy Scouts participation from their formative years.

Leadership's strong work ethics are often formed during childhood experiences (Paisner, 1999). The family business leaders interviewed expressed the need for strong work ethics to continue their family businesses. The goal of strong work ethics is to combat what BP3 denoted as "a spoiled next generation owner, where they just assume things are going to happen, and they were, you know, they were spoon fed their whole life."

The leadership characteristic of humility can increase followers' intention to continue working with a family business, even during tumultuous times. It links closely with the concept of servant leadership (Mareus et al. 2019). The participants acknowledged the value of humility in various ways. Participant AP1 said, "not assuming that I knew certain things just because I had seen them elsewhere. I think you learn humility, in in those situations." BP2's "respect for others" comment also aligns with humility.

Succession Process. Each business studied presented their own unique method and timing to their succession processes. The basic premise of succession is the incumbent leader relinquishes control of the family business as the successor gains increasing levels of control (Farah et al., 2019; Hillen & Lavarda, 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). AP1 denoted how his father "assigned me to different areas of the business during that

five-year period, to learn this industry, and to learn the business itself." BP1's experience "began [with] a series of planning sessions…. that were twofold. One, [we] talked about succession and shareholder position within the business, and the other was really operational…who was going to take the responsibilities of the eldest brother." CP1 was not included in the succession planning process as he was "just being handed papers."

The individual family businesses' timing of the succession process varied based on the level of intentional planning set forth. The literature sources denote a timeframe for succession of anywhere from five to ten years (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Hauck & Prugl, 2015). The researcher noted within this study, this timeframe was exemplified. AP1 denoted "it's going to take you at least five years to learn the business." BP1 elaborated that his successors "timed out exactly the way they said they would." CP1 said "things really didn't get written down or talked about until 2008. That's when he had decided he wanted to retire by 2015." DP1 denoted a very specific date that the final abdication of the incumbent's authority was given. He stated "I've been running things for a while, but it was a Thursday. In April, at 10:30, and he called me into his office, and he goes, 'I'm done.'"

Resistance. Resistance often results from fear of change or fear of losing something that is valued; and it can emanate from a variety of individuals, including the incumbent leader, successor, employees, or even the family itself (Damawan & Azizah, 2019; Evans & Evans, 2018; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014; Wentworth et al., 2018). AP1 experienced resentment by some employees, BP1 noted "a lot of trepidation and fear whenever there's a transition and unknown." CP1 added "my father kept saying we were in charge, but yet…there's a couple of times where he'd walk in and say, no, we're not doing that."

Overcoming resistance related to the family business succession process can ensure the continuation of the family business from one generation of family leadership to the next. Scholars have shared many methods for potentially overcoming succession-related resistance; these methods focused on the individual resistor's concerns (Bockhaus, 2004; Hess, 2006; Mussolino & Calabro, 2014). AP1 denoted "I had to bring to that transition process was a level of seriousness of effort." BP1 said "you overcome it [resistance] by communicating." BP2 explained how the family made sure "we kept our word, we treated them as well as we could." CP1 said his mother was helpful in overcoming his father's resistance, and DP1 added "I worked as long or longer and harder [and] made more money than any of the other salespeople."

External Support. The researcher did not anticipate this theme, but each of the family business leaders interviewed mentioned the need and value of external support. Literature on family business succession planning does align with this theme as scholars have denoted value in obtaining input from lawyers, accountants, and family business succession planning professionals (Fowler & Edquist, 2017). AP1 extended this with the idea that without outsider input, "it can become very incestuous, meaning you only know what you know, within the four walls that you have to witness and observe. Whereas having somebody from outside of that structure can be beneficial." BP1 found that "There are people that do this for a living, and they're very good at it." As expected, both family business planning professionals strongly advocated for the inclusion of outside assistance in the succession planning process.

Application to Professional Practice

Once the researcher reviewed and analyzed the data, the researcher was challenged to apply what had been learned to general professional practice. The general business problem the researcher addressed within this study is the high rate of family business failures beyond the

second or third generation of operation. This section reviewed how the results of this study can potentially be applied to other family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry. The findings can assist succession planning practices of family businesses to help them succeed into future generations of family leadership. While the researcher focused this study on family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry, other types of family businesses within other industries may be able to apply this information to their own family business succession planning efforts.

Improving General Business Practice

The researcher utilized this section to elaborate on how to apply this study's findings to family business succession planning. Specifically, the researcher examined how the results of this study can be used to improve the general succession planning practices of family businesses. The researcher's data analysis supported the following themes: (a) the reason for succession, (b) intentionality of planning, (c) necessary leadership attributes, (d) the steps and timing of the actual succession process, (e) resistance to change and overcoming it, (f) and the value of external help. Consequently, these themes may provide a starting point for future family business discussions regarding succession-related planning processes.

Reason for Succession and Intentional Planning. Despite the high number of family businesses that fail to continue into the successive generations of family business leadership, many family businesses have utilized succession-related planning to ensure the continuity of their businesses into the future (Hubler, 2018). Incumbent leaders' main reasons for succession planning are often health-related issues or the desire to retire (Farah et al., 2019; Marques & Couto, 2020). This study concurred with these findings on the main reasons family business leaders consider succession planning. The study's participants denoted that when the incumbent

leader's reason for succession was related to their desire to retire, increased attention to succession-related planning ensued. Those incumbent leaders facing personal illness or death tended to have less time to focus on succession-related planning.

Necessary Leadership Attributes. Family business succession-related planning involves at least two leaders, the incumbent and the successor (Daspit et al., 2016). The incumbent leader should examine the potential successors to ensure they would be a good fit for the family business's leadership position (Lipman, 2010). The study's participants espoused a listing of five distinctive attributes as being valuable in their personal succession-related experiences. These attributes included the following: individualized consideration, personal desire to learn, self-confidence, strong work ethics, and humility. These leadership attributes could form the starting point for examining potential leaders within the next generation of family leadership.

Succession Process and Timing. Family business succession processes are "an evolving journey" (Marques & Couto, 2020, p. 52). This observation aligns with various succession experiences shared by the participants of this study. Each family business had a different process for both the succession-related planning and the actual succession process. A common theme throughout the study was that the succession process is time-consuming; it cannot be completed quickly. The method and timeframe utilized for the succession planning can impact the impending success or failure of the family business (Cater et al., 2016; Villegas et al. 2019). Consequently, incumbent family business leaders should begin succession-related planning well in advance of the proposed succession date to allow time for the successor to learn the family business.

Overcoming Resistance to Succession. Leadership's failure to acknowledge or mitigate resistance to the succession planning process can negatively affect the family business (El-Dirani

et al., 2020). Each of the participants within this study noted encountering resistance, in some form, to their succession process. The participants expressed that mitigating or overcoming succession-related resistance was key to their successful succession. Some of the methods for mitigating or overcoming resistance to the succession process were as follows: working hard in the business, communicating honestly with subordinates about the impending change, and leadership keeping their word about what they said would happen. These methods of mitigating resistance could be utilized in other family businesses to help ensure a successful succession process.

External Support. There are a variety of external support sources, including lawyers, accountants, and family business succession planning professionals, who can aid a family in their succession-related planning (Fowler & Edquist, 2017). The value of external support was not a theme that the researcher anticipated in the data. Still, each family business plus the family business succession planning professionals denoted the value of these external sources of information. These external support sources help facilitate difficult conversations, guide the selection and training processes, and engender a more robust succession planning and implementation process.

Potential Application Strategies

The researcher gathered much information in this study, which could lead to several possible family business succession planning applications for the eastern Pennsylvania construction industry. This researcher has identified three potential application strategies for this information. Family business leaders should review these potential areas of application to determine the appropriateness of each for their own family businesses. The results of this study can potentially impact family business succession-related planning practices.

Starting the Planning Process Early. The results conveyed that the family business succession process can be lengthy. Numerous scholars support the need and value of extended timeframes for the succession process (Ahuja & Sarin, 2016; Farah et al., 2019; Hauck & Prugl, 2015). The study's participants discussed their succession processes as being very time-consuming. Specifically, participants denoted they needed time to adequately learn the intricacies of the family business and to adjust to the increasing amount of leadership power. The participants shared that the time spent learning specific aspects of the family business helped prepare them with a better understanding of the tasks individual departments within the business undertake.

The participants indicated they needed several years to learn about specific departments and processes within their family businesses. The successor's abilities, knowledge, and desire to learn impacted the time needed to take over the business successfully. Participants in this study elaborated on having time to learn their family business and being mentored by the incumbent leader, prior to the incumbent leaving the family business. Family business leaders should begin their succession process planning early to allow time to choose the successor and provide time for the successor to learn about the family business. Consequently, family business leaders can begin the succession planning process well before the proposed leadership succession.

Areas of Growth for Successors. This study's results supported the value of several leadership attributes, such as individualized consideration, desire to learn, self-confidence, strong work ethics, and humility, which can benefit family business leadership The participants in this study acknowledged these leadership attributes as valuable both within their family businesses' succession planning and the continued running of their family businesses successfully. Scholars supported a variety of leadership attributes and shared that these attributes can be developed

within leadership over time (Afriyie et al., 2019; Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Iqbal et al., 2019). To determine which areas a potential or current leader should focus attention on growing within themselves or their chosen successor, the individual should utilize self-assessments and obtain input from others. Subsequently, family business leadership could provide potential successors with a list of attributes necessary for their specific business's leadership and a plan for ways to grow the desired attributes.

Value of External Help. The study's results indicated the value of obtaining external help for the succession planning process. This theme was not expected within the data, but the participants interviewed remarked how external sources helped them with their succession-related planning. The literature reviewed also denoted the value of external help for succession planning (Fowler & Edquist, 2017). The study's participants listed various sources for external succession-related planning, including the following: certified public accountants, lawyers, and family business planning professionals. These external resources can specifically focus on unique aspects of the succession planning process. Therefore, family business leaders should seek external sources to help as part of their succession planning process.

Summary of Application to Professional Practice

The results of this study could potentially be used by business leaders to help improve their family business's succession processes. Family business leaders could implement the three potential applications elaborated in this section. First, they can begin their succession planning process well before the anticipated succession date. Second, they should examine the necessary leadership attributes for their family business, and they can use this information to determine a growth plan for their potential successors. Finally, the family business leadership can include external professionals, such as lawyers, accountants, and family business planning professionals,

within their succession planning process. This information should be tailored to fit the needs of the specific family business.

Recommendations for Further Study

This qualitative multiple case study revealed gaps that could be addressed in future research. This researcher recommends three specific areas for further study to better understand the business problem identified. The researcher recommends further researching of the following aspects to gain a clearer picture of the family business succession process: an in-depth review of a single-family business, the extension of this same study into other geographical and industry areas, and examination of this topic through a quantitative approach. The reader may also notice additional areas that could be researched further.

A Single Case Study

This researcher utilized data from four family businesses operating in eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry to generalize findings that could apply to other family businesses within the same geographical and industry-specific atmosphere. A single in-depth case study focused on one family business that is willing to elaborate on the specific steps they undertook during the planning for succession could benefit other family businesses and provide specific application ideas. Case studies are a popular means of gathering information from businesses, so they would be an appropriate means for further studying family business succession planning.

Examination of Processes Utilized in Other Locations or Industries

This researcher collected data from only four family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry, so extending this study into other industries or locations could provide additional information on the family business succession planning processes.

Some researchers have already begun investigating the process of family business succession planning in other industries and locations (Bruce & Picard, 2006; Darmawan, 2020; Farah et al., 2019). This researcher believes that additional research on the family business succession planning process would be beneficial to the continuation of family businesses into the successive generations of family leadership.

Quantitative Examination of Potential Correlation Between Reason for Succession and Level of Intentionality

The researcher questions if the data collected in this study could potentially indicate a correlation between the reason for succession and the level of intentionality given to the succession planning process, with increased intentionality potentially correlated with the incumbent leader's desire to retire. Since this study was qualitative in design, the researcher was unable to ascertain if this potential correlation exists. Therefore, a quantitative study could examine this potential correlation to discover if it exists and the extent of the potential correlation between the specific factors.

Reflections

This section expanded on some of this researcher's thoughts specifically regarding personal and professional growth from this study. The researcher also utilized this section to elaborate how some of her thought processes have changed because of this study. The researcher concluded this section with insight into the Biblical perspectives addressed within this study.

Personal & Professional Growth

This researcher began this study with previous family business work experience. She was blessed to be raised in a family with a growing third-generation family business, which now includes members of the family's fourth-generation within its workforce, including this

researcher. The researcher's appreciation of her family's business and a desire to see it continue successfully in the future provided the impetus for this study. Due to this researcher's rich family history regarding family business, the researcher would be remiss to not acknowledge her preconceived thoughts or biases regarding family business.

As part of a family business, this researcher acknowledges she had some preconceived ideas about the participants' potential answers to the interview questions, which could have influenced the researcher's follow-up questions in the interview process. The researcher utilized the interview guide to ensure each interview addressed the same questions. Notwithstanding, the clarification or follow-up questions asked to help the researcher better understand the participants' responses could have been influenced by the researcher's preconceived biases. The researcher provided each participant with a preliminary draft of the study's findings to mitigate this. This gave the participants a chance to question the validity of the results. The researcher received confirmation back from each participant that their experiences were correctly reflected in the findings, which assured the researcher that her biases or preconceived notions did not significantly impact the findings of this study.

The researcher plans are to continue learning her family's business to eventually take on a future leadership role. This researcher has learned a lot about planning family business leadership successions from this study. The researcher found many commonalities between her personal experience with the family business and the data from the literature and participants.

This researcher also learned much about herself within this study; she learned the value of straightforward communication, patience, curiosity, and planning. Straightforward communication was necessary with the study's participants and the iterative dissertation process. The Bible has much to say about patience (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, Isaiah 40:31;

Ecclesiastes 7:8-9; Galatians 6:9). This researcher found that each step of the dissertation process required patience with the time necessary to complete the work and with herself. The researcher's inquisitiveness helped her learn more about the chosen topic by asking questions and reading more literature. This researcher found that planning was necessary to complete this research project and for the family business succession process.

Biblical Perspective

This researcher found several biblical principles related to this study. First, the researcher's focus within this study on succession is a noted biblical concept, with the theme of the Bible focused on the generations leading up to the birth of Christ, Salvation, and building up the church of God (Peterson, 2005; Pugh, 2016). Second, the researcher noted the value of planning within the succession process. The value of planning can be found in Genesis 13 and Luke 14:28-33 (*New International Version*, 1978/2000).

Succession. The concept of succession is vastly promulgated within the Bible. The Old Testament lists genealogies building up to the birth of Christ, and the New Testament shares the spread of Christianity into all parts of the world, which is a form of succession (*New International Version*, 1978/2000; Peterson, 2005; Pugh, 2016). Christ, the foundation of Christianity, focused His attention on growing His followers, the disciples (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, Mark 6:7; Matthew 24). Jesus's role of as an incumbent leader mentoring His disciples can be a guide for incumbent business leaders focused on developing their successors for future leadership positions within the family business. The researcher found that family business leaders utilize a succession of leadership to continue their businesses into the next generation. Likewise, Christians should be focused on ensuring the Gospel is shared

worldwide to continue growing successive generations within the family of believers (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, Matthew 28:19).

Planning. The Bible has many passages focused on planning for the future. In Genesis 13, there is an early mention of planning focused on mitigating the arguments between herdsmen (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). Jeremiah 29:11 shares God's plan for those who believe in and follow His Word (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). The book of Proverbs denoted that wise people make plans, and they use those plans to achieve success (*New International Version*, 1978/2000; Proverbs 6:6-8; Proverbs 21:5; Proverbs 24:27). Luke 14:28 highlights the planning process needed for completing a building (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). 2 Timothy 2:15 denotes "do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). The biblical value of planning relates to how the participants in this study noted that their businesses underwent some level of planning for the leadership succession process, and that the devised plan formed the basis for succession-related actions.

Summary of Biblical Perspective. The Bible has emphasized succession and planning, the Christian is tasked with acquiring wisdom and acting on these aspects of the Christian faith. In both the spiritual and the physical realms, one can make applications of these teachings. In the spiritual realm, the Christian focuses on building the family of believers by sharing the Gospel with all. In the physical realm, the family business incumbent focuses on developing potential successors to continue the family business into successive generations of family leadership. The Christian is advised, "'for I know the plans I have for you' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, Jeremiah 29:11). In the physical realm, the incumbent family business leader should

plan for the future successes of their family businesses. This planning can include potential conversations to mitigate resistance to the succession process, financial aspects, and the inclusion of outside sources of information.

Summary of Section Three

Section Three delineates the results of this study along with potential applications for professional practice and recommendations for future research. The researcher identified the following themes from the interview data: a reason for succession, intentional planning, necessary leadership attributes, individualized consideration, desire to learn, self-confidence, strong work ethic, humility, succession process, succession process steps, timing of succession, resistance to succession, overcoming resistance, and external support. The information gleaned from these themes answered the research questions posed in this study.

Section Three concludes with the researcher's thoughts regarding the dissertation process, including the personal reasons for undertaking this study and the ways that she tried to mitigate her potential biases surrounding the subject matter. The researcher then included a Biblical integration to link the aspects of succession and planning from this study to God's Word, the Bible. The researcher found true hope in Jeremiah 29:11 "'for I know the plans I have for you' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (*New International Version*, 1978/2000). God's plans are perfect, and He holds the future.

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Summary and Study Conclusions

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In conclusion, the purpose of this qualitative multi-case study was to understand how family businesses within eastern Pennsylvania's construction industry plan and implement their succession practices. This study filled a gap in family business literature on the value of

succession planning. The researcher interviewed family business leaders from four family businesses, a close friend of one of the family business leaders, and two family business succession planning professionals to understand this research problem.

Six themes and eleven sub-themes were identified from the individual interviews and archival data compared to the scholarly and professional literature reviewed. The data denoted that succession planning is vital for the continuation of the family business into successive generations of family leadership. A significant influencing factor discovered was the value of external help in planning and implementing the succession-related process. Every participant mentioned the value of external sources to aid them in choosing, planning, and executing the succession process.

The results of this study can be applied to other family businesses worldwide, both within the construction industry and outside it. Family businesses can use this information by starting their succession planning process early, identifying growth areas for successors, and acknowledging the value of external succession-related help. Family business succession planning should be an on-going process as one family leader plans to relinquish control while another family leader plans for taking on that control. Recommendations for future study include the following: single case study, examination of process utilized in other locations or industries, and quantitative examination of potential correlation between reason for succession and level of intentionality.

To conclude, the researcher found the following Scripture helpful throughout this study, "do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (*New International Version*, 1978/2000, 2 Timothy 2:15). Correctly handling the truth should be the goal of any researcher. This researcher

hopes that the findings from this study would empower family businesses to develop and implement succession processes to continue their family businesses into the next generation of family business leadership.

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Appendix A: Case Study Protocol

This researcher has chosen to utilize a qualitative multiple case study to explore the value of succession planning within construction-related family businesses located in eastern Pennsylvania. This field study plan elaborates on the participant selection and recruitment process. This researcher will interview 10 people from approximately four to five family businesses in the construction industry to achieve data saturation. The potential results of this study could extend the current knowledge regarding family business succession and aid other family businesses in sustaining their business through succession.

Anticipated Participants

The researcher will select four to five family businesses for this study. Potential family businesses in eastern Pennsylvania will be identified through the local yellow pages and other local public publications. The researcher's initial contact with the identified businesses will be through phone or email to verify that the businesses are family construction businesses in the second generation or later of family leadership located within eastern Pennsylvania. The researcher will clarify that each business considers its succession to have been successful during the preliminary call, and the business's addresses will be verified as part of the initial phone conversation.

Once the potential participating family businesses have been identified, the researcher will identify potential individual participants from within those businesses. Those individuals identified will be members of the business's leadership team or close to those who are, and they will have an in-depth understanding of the family business's succession process. After these individuals have been identified, the researcher will make initial contact with them via phone or email to confirm they meet the study's criteria, specifically that the participants are over the age

of 18, work within a second generation (or later), with direct participation in the implementation of a successful succession process; and the participants have had successful, self-reported, successions of leadership.

Data Collection

This researcher will collect data from interviews and document reviews related to the family business succession process. The researcher will compare the data collected to the literature reviewed focused on the concepts selected, namely Lewin's change model, Bass's full range of leadership model, and Rumelt's strategic kernel.

Interviews

After participants have been selected, the researcher will email or call the individuals to set up the individual interviews. The interviews will take place via an online interview or in person; each potential participant will have the opportunity to review and sign the informed consent form prior to the interview. The interview guide (Appendix D) will direct the interview, and follow-up questions will be utilized to ensure that the researcher truly understands what is being shared.

The researcher will audio record the interviews with the participant's permission. All recorded interviews will be transcribed verbatim. The full transcription process for each interview will be completed within 72-hours of the initial interviews. The transcriptions will be saved as Microsoft Word documents. Audio recordings will be stored in a locked filing cabinet until transcribed, and they will be deleted once transcription is completed. The transcripts will be stored on a password-protected computer for a period of no less than three years, and then they will be destroyed. After the transcription process is finished, this research will begin the coding process.

Document Review

The researcher will also be collecting and reviewing documents, found online or provided by participants, regarding their individual business successions. This information could be in the following formats: internal business documents, publicly available web pages, or news articles related to the succession process. These documents will be reviewed via the codes identified in the interview analysis or literature review phrases, which allows a further triangulation of data.

Appendix B: Phone Call Script for Screening and Recruitment

As a student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to better understand the succession process within family businesses, and I am calling to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older, second generation or later family business leaders in the construction industry who have gone through a successful succession of leadership in their family businesses and familiar with their family business's succession process. Successful succession will be self-reported by participants. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in an in-person or web-based, audio-recorded interview and to review the interview's transcript. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the interview and 15-30 minutes to complete the transcript review. The transcripts will be emailed to participants within 3-4 days of the interviews. Participants will be asked to confirm the accuracy of the transcript or to return the corrected transcript to me by email within 1-2 days of receipt. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please confirm you meet the eligibility criteria above.

A consent document will be sent by email if participants are eligible to participate in the study. The consent document contains additional information about my research. Participants will be provided with a consent form to sign at the time of the interview.

Appendix C: Informed Consent

Title of the Project: Family Business Leadership Succession
Principal Investigator: Elissa Ann Rogers, School of Business, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, a second generation or later family business leader in the construction industry who has gone through a successful succession of leadership in your family business, and familiar with your businesses succession process. Successful succession is to be self-reported. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about, and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to better understand the succession processes within family businesses in the construction industry. Specifically, I want to learn what leadership-related behaviors and leadership styles led to the choice of successor and the steps in the actual succession process.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Participate in an audio-recorded, in-person interview. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the interview.
2. Review your interview's transcript. Transcripts will be emailed to you within 3-4 days of the completing the interview and should take approximately 15-30 minutes to review. Any corrections to the transcript or the confirmation of its accuracy should be emailed back to the researcher within 1-2 days of receiving the transcript.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include addressing gaps in scholarly literature about family business succession practices.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of codes. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Physical data will be stored in a locked safe and scanned to a password protected computer. The physical data will then be shredded. Electronic data will be stored on a password-locked computer. The data may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased using the Advanced System Care File Shredder program. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address or phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Elissa Ann Rogers. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxx. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Rol. Erickson, at xxx.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____

Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix D: Interview Protocol (Adapted from Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018)

Family Business Leadership Succession

Elissa A. Rogers

Liberty University School of Business

Background

The general problem to be addressed is the high rate of family business failures beyond the second or third generation of operation. Between 80% and 95% of businesses within the United States are family-owned, but only a third of these businesses are capable of continuing from the first generation of family ownership into the second generation, half of these businesses continue into the third generation, and only 3% of all family businesses continue into the fourth generation of family ownership (De Massis et al., 2008; Dyer, 1986; Fleming, 2000; Hubler, 2018; Paisner, 1999; Sreih et al., 2019; Visser & van Scheers, 2018). This high level of family business closures may cause more leaders to consider the value of succession planning to remain viable (Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Sreih et al., 2019; Ward, 2011). The specific problem to be addressed is that some family business leaders lack adequate succession planning to support sustainability of family businesses beyond the first or second generation of family ownership in eastern Pennsylvania (Bork, 1993; Dyer, 1986; Fowler & Edquist, 2017; Miller et al., 2003; Sharma, 2004).

Research Questions

The questions proposed for this study are focused on understanding the nuances of family business succession planning from a leadership perspective to understand better the constructs that allow family businesses to flourish beyond the first or second generation of family leadership.

- RQ1. What conditions or factors motivate family business leaders to develop succession plans?

- RQ2. Which leadership competencies are effective is developing strategic succession-related plans?

- RQ3. How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans?

Study Design

The researcher chose to utilize a multi-case qualitative research study to examine the family business leadership succession process. Creswell (2014), Creswell and Poth (2018), and Yin (2014) advised that the case study research design is most suitable for researchers to explore a given process within a specific context or bounded situation. A case study researcher's goal is to obtain descriptive content to help better understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lapan et al., 2011).

Study Participants

The researcher will interview family business leaders who have experienced a succession from one generation of family leadership to the next. The researcher utilizing interviews can glean information about reality that is typically inaccessible to them, such as historical events and individual's personal experiences and attitudes regarding their reality (Perakyla & Ruusuvuori, 2005; Stake, 1995; Patton, 2002). Since the family business succession process is a historical event that the researcher was not personally able to observe, she has chosen to utilize interviews to better understand what happened from the interviewee's perspective.

Date of Interview: _____

Place of Interview: _____

Interviewer: Elissa Rogers

Interviewee: _____

Interview Questions:

- Icebreaker Question: Can you explain your position within your family business?

- What conditions precipitated the need for a succession planning process?

- What specific steps were taken after the need for change was acknowledged?

- Which leadership competencies were of the most value to you in developing the succession plan?

- How did your individualized consideration of others aid in overcoming any potential resistance to the succession process?

- How did your ability to support others' critical thinking support the succession process?

- What was your role in developing or implementing the succession plan?

    o Which leadership behavior or style was used to guide decisions related to the succession plan?

    o Which specific leadership actions or steps were taken in the succession planning process?

    o Which steps were taken to overcome any resistance to developing the succession plan?

    o How did you measure success in developing and implementing the succession plan?

- Can you add any other information about your leadership role in the succession plan's development?

- Closing Questions: Do you have any documents that explain your businesses succession process that you can share with me?

Thank you so much for sharing this information with me. I will be transcribing this interview. If I have any questions or need clarifications, I will reach out to you within the next week via phone or email. After the interview is transcribed, I will return a copy of the verbatim transcript for you to review and comment on. You will have one week to advise of any changes or additional information. Thank you again for your time.

Appendix E: Interview Questions Linked to Research Questions

RQ1: What conditions or factors motivate family business leaders to develop succession plans?

- What conditions precipitated the need for a succession planning process?

- What specific steps were taken after the need for change was acknowledged?

RQ2: Which leadership competencies are effective in developing strategic succession-related plans?

  o Which leadership competencies were of the most value to you in developing the succession plan?

  o How did your individualized consideration of others aid in overcoming any potential resistance to the succession process?

  o How did your ability to support others' critical thinking support the succession process?

RQ3: How do family business leaders develop and implement effective succession-related plans?

- What was your role in developing or implementing the succession plan?

  o Which leadership behavior or style was used to guide decisions related to the succession plan?

  o Which specific leadership actions or steps were taken in the succession planning process?

  o Which steps were taken to overcome any resistance to developing the succession plan?

o How did you measure success in developing and implementing the succession

plan?

- Can you add any other information about your leadership role in the succession plan's

development?