

The director of the Family Business Council, Mike Trueblood, designed and helps teach a course "Family Business Dynamics" along with having the responsibilities of keeping the council functioning properly. Trueblood has a background in advertising and teaching, as well as strong marketing skills.

"It's a very rewarding job, because we can see how our services help families succeed," said Trueblood. "The next generation also becomes very inspired by the workshops the council provides, and it leads to positive outcomes for the future of the business."

The workshops provide families with a variety of issues and concepts. The topic that recently received the highest preference from members is how to hire great employees. From this, a workshop was offered to help members become aware of the qualities and skills that a

contending interviewee should have. The next challenge was how to motivate and retain these great employees – the subject of a follow-up workshop.

Other popular topics have included creating effective exit strategies for the senior generation, building corporate governance structures and properly mentoring the next generation.

Most of the council members have more than 100 employees, and average annual revenues of \$15-50 million. Most are in the second and even the third generation.

Second-generation families make up 41 percent of the council, first generation make up 30 percent of the council, and third generation make up 10 percent of the council, followed by fourth and fifth.

GBS Linens is a familyowned business that recently marked its third year as an active member of the Family Business Council. Pravin Mody is one of the two founders of this 23-year-old business that manufactures, sells, rents and launders table linens and religious products for special events. GBS Linens has also grown to establish itself in Northern California, Arizona, Nevada and Texas.

"We participate annually in the Family Business Council because we strongly believe in it," said Mody. Mody, who was previously president of GBS Linens, has passed the position down to his hard-working daughter Sujata Kamdar. Kamdar, who started off working part-time at the business while in school, has proved to be successful as the new president. Mody's son-in-law, who has earned his MBA in engineering, has also joined hands in the family business.

"Problems that a typical business may have – as well as uncommon problems – have been discussed at many meetings we have attended," said Mody. "In particular, problems that are unique to family businesses that are not frequent in regular businesses are covered."

An example of a problem that may arise in a family business is how one fires a son, daughter or any relative if they are not performing their job. The members are given advice on issues such as these and how to manage the

negative circumstances they may be facing.

While the older generation of the business wants to keep control at times, the newer generation needs the liberty to prove themselves and what they can bring to the business. For this, the Family Business Council has created a group for the new generation where they can discuss with their peers how relatives manage and transfer control from founders to the new generation.

"My daughter and son-inlaw attend the meetings regularly and prefer that other families come to the meetings as well, and they say it is very helpful," said Mody. "This allows them to meet others their age who face the same challenges."

Mody describes the Family Business Council as a helpful way to keep the business prospering



GBS Linens founder Pravin Mody, left, believes the CSUF Family Business Council has helped his family business thrive. With Mody are the business' second generation: his son-in-law, Ashesh Kamdar, and his daughter, Sujata Mody Kamdar.

and growing.

"I am very satisfied with our membership at the Family Business Council. We do not discuss business at the dinner table and do not allow these issues to affect the business or the family," Mody said.

Please go to http://business.fullerton.edu/centers/ fambusiness/ for more information.