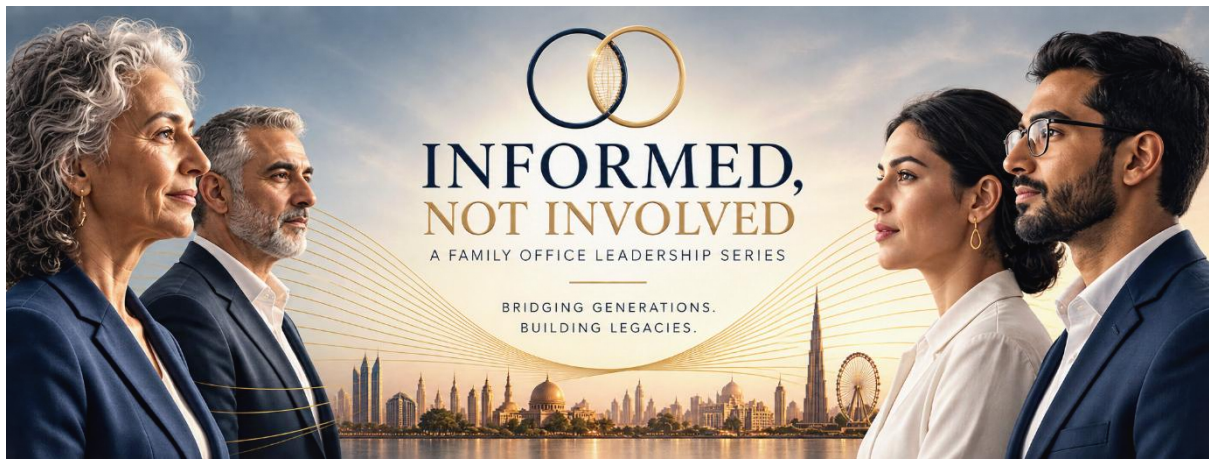




Part 4: There Should Be More Than One Way to Belong

When families begin discussing the next generation, the conversation often revolves around one question:

Who will take over?

Hidden inside that question is an assumption that can create problems for years:

If you belong to the family, you should eventually want to run the family business.

And if you don't, perhaps you are somehow less committed to it.

I believe that is the wrong way to think about belonging.

Families grow. Businesses evolve. And people develop different ambitions, capabilities and definitions of success.

Not everyone dreams of becoming CEO.

And not everyone should.

Some members of the next generation will become exceptional operators. Others may be better investors, entrepreneurs, Board members or specialists. Some may build the family's next business rather than run the existing one.

And some may choose careers and lives completely outside the Family Office.

That should not make them less part of the family.

One family. Different paths.

The corporate world learned long ago that talented people do not all need to follow the same career path.

Organizations create different routes for people to contribute: management, technology, finance, commercial leadership, innovation, specialist roles and eventually governance.

Why should a Family Office offer fewer choices?

A **Family Leadership Platform** should create different paths for different people.

For some, that will mean operational leadership — learning the business, managing teams and eventually assuming executive responsibility.

For others, it may mean governance — serving on a Board, Investment Committee or Family Council and helping shape direction without managing the organization day-to-day.

Others may become entrepreneurs — building new businesses, entering new markets or developing investment opportunities that did not exist when the family's wealth was originally created.

And some may choose to become informed and responsible owners: understanding the family's assets, values and responsibilities while pursuing entirely different careers.

All are legitimate paths.

But they are not the same path, and they should not carry the same responsibilities.

Belonging should not require a job

This distinction becomes particularly important as families move into their third and fourth generations.

Being a family member, being an owner and being an executive are three different things.

Confusing them creates entitlement. Separating them creates clarity.

An executive role should require capability and performance.

Governance should require preparation and judgment.

Ownership carries rights, but also responsibilities.

And belonging to the family should not depend on holding a position in the business.

Once those distinctions become clear, families can have some of the conversations that are often postponed.

What happens if someone wants liquidity rather than long-term ownership?

Can a family member leave the business without leaving the family?

Should someone who is actively building the business have exactly the same decision rights as someone who has chosen to remain outside it?

What happens if someone wants to sell some—or all—of their interest?

These may sound like uncomfortable questions.

They are healthier than the conflicts created by never asking them.

The goal is not participation

A strong Family Office should not force every generation into the same definition of involvement.

Some will lead.

Some will govern.

Some will invest.

Some will build something new.

And some will choose to stay outside the business while remaining responsible owners and committed members of the family.

The objective is not maximum participation.

It is maximum clarity about how each person chooses to belong.

That is also where succession becomes something much bigger than choosing the next leader.

It becomes the design of a family structure capable of surviving different personalities, ambitions, careers and generations without requiring everyone to become the same thing.

Closing the circle

We started this unit with a simple tension: the next generation may be informed, but not truly involved.

But involvement cannot mean giving everyone a seat in management.

It means creating real choices, real responsibilities and real authority for those who choose to participate — while creating a respected path for those who don't.

A Family Office should not be a waiting room where everyone is expected to compete for the same chair.

It should be a platform with more than one way to belong.

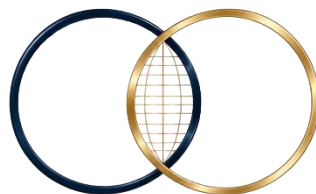
Because ultimately, the greatest legacy is not simply a business that survives another generation.

It is a family that still chooses to build its future together.



Ask yourself

If every member of your family had to choose their role today, would they genuinely have a choice — or have you unconsciously created only one definition of success?



**INFORMED,
NOT INVOLVED**

A FAMILY OFFICE LEADERSHIP SERIES
