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## Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers: Dilemma of Sustaining Family Unity

Dr. Ashraf Sheta,<sup>1</sup> Nadia Ashraf, Nadine Siag, Lamis Sallam, Hoda Safy Eldin, Mai Hashad, & Mariam Ahmed

<sup>1</sup>Adjunct Assistant Professor, The American University in Cairo, Egypt

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### Abstract

This case is addressing the story of a very successful family business, Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers. It discusses the business's establishment over time and how it evolved along with all the issues it faced. The business was established in the 1950s by a greatly hard-working entrepreneur, and his persistence and love for the business enabled him to pass on a highly successful enterprise for his family under the name of Ishak Co, which later changed to Egyptian Tires and Batteries. However, during this journey, the business structure and ownership statuses changed due to many conflicts and issues. The case discusses the challenges faced throughout the generations and what future challenges they might face. The current CEO of the business has been facing a couple of tough decisions that he should make regarding the business ownership structure, succession plan, governance, and a potential merger with his uncle.

**Keywords:** Family business, Business Families, Succession Planning

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### A joyful event full of worries

It happened on Christmas Eve 2018 when the whole family gathered together to celebrate. The family was surrounded by music, food, gifts, and, most importantly, by one another. Ashraf Seha, the CEO of Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers, was genuinely enjoying these precious moments and thinking of the value of family. At the back of his mind was the memory that had never left him all week long, when his son Mina came into the office and offered to unite their businesses together. *"Father, I believe that there is power in unity."* Then one of the uncles who had come with Mina added, *"Ashraf, do you remember when we all lived in one apartment together and started the day with a productive spirit and aspiration to bring the family business further? Don't you feel like it is time now to unify the business and become Ishak Co again?"*. Time stopped for a while, and he recalled this conversation that had been a bit too informal to be referred to as a business conversation. Ashraf had always believed that family and business discussions should not be mixed again, but then he remembered all the good times the family enjoyed working together during the time of his grandfather, Ishak Hakim.

During dinner, the whole family was extremely excited about their upcoming trip in just a few days during the New Year; they were planning a trip to Ain El Sokhna (an Egyptian seaside location). They could not wait for their annual trip when the whole family gathered together to celebrate New Year's Eve. Marie (Ashraf's wife) then realized that her husband Ashraf was not focusing with them.

*"What are you thinking about?"* asked Marie.

*"A lot of things are on my mind right now,"* answered Ashraf.

*"Tell me, I can try to help you out,"* said Marie.

*"The children are making it very hard for me; none of them are interested in the business, and I do not know what to do. I want them to be happy,"* he added.

Ashraf Seha was immensely hesitant about what he should do. He was worried about several issues, first his uncles wanted to redeem the business relationship, and he did not want to risk his personal connection with his uncles by agreeing to work officially with them. On the other hand, he always had memories of how successful and happy they were when the family worked together during his grandfather's time. Second, he was also thinking about his own business, and whether his ownership of 50% of the imported batteries business and the rest owned by the Turkish investor would lead to further decision-making dilemmas in the future. Third Ashraf Seha was also thinking about the succession of the business. His daughter does not want to work in the family business, and this will pose a threat to the ownership of the business and the future succession with only his son being a potential successor.

### **The evolution of an empire: Where it all started**

Ishak Hakim, Ashraf Seha's grandfather, had started the business with full support from the government due to the funds his father Hakim Morgan was providing to President Mohamed Naguib to help the country financially. These funds equaled twenty thousand pounds in 1954. His father, Hakim Morgan, started the business from scratch by buying taxis and owning them, then later expanded the business by owning buses that were used in public transportation. Later on, Ishak had seven children, six males and a female. He handed over his business to them equally and made each of them the owner of one shop with their name on it. However, things were about to change. One of the siblings had a problem with the government, accordingly creating mischiefs for the businesses of the other six siblings as well. This led the siblings to take their shares and change the name of their businesses to their respective names along with the father's name to avoid governmental problems, except for the daughter, Nadia, who kept it unchanged with her father's name Ishak co. Nadia grew her business and started becoming a market leader, again proving her success. Later, Nadia's son, Ashraf Seha, started his own independent business. Ashraf's business focuses primarily on importing car tires and batteries from many countries, including China, Singapore, and Turkey. He then sells the products to different wholesalers and retailers. By time, he started selling to his uncles, who started becoming one of his main customers.

The family name was one of the primary aspects that has affected Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers positively; the family business's history has helped greatly in making the company well-known in the market. The company was formerly named as "Al-Ashraf & Ishak Co.," but then changed to "Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers" upon Ashraf's mother's request, to build for her son an independent identity from his grandfather. However, it was necessary to mention Ishak Hakim's name at the beginning of the business establishment as he was a remarkable and well-known figure in the market.

### **A glimpse about tires, and batteries industry in Egypt**

Ashraf Seha sold both tires and batteries imported from different countries (Exhibit 1: Tires Products). The tires that Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers sold were only those in class A, which were of high value. Helden and Varta were the two biggest products in the battery portfolio that Ashraf invested money in. The batteries were classified into two classes, A and B, depending on their power. Like tires, batteries were imported from Europe and Asia. Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers provided a vast variety of tires and batteries, which made it target all car owners. The company also targeted retailers, who target car owners from A, B, and C classes with different tire and battery types to suit their needs.

The batteries and tires market were highly competitive, and the company has faced many challenges due to the several players in the market. The biggest competitor to the company was Chevrolet Mansour, who had been posing a significant threat to the company by introducing the same tires brand that Egyptian Tires and batteries is offering. This brand was the primary one in the tire portfolio at Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers. The brand owner that dealt with Chevrolet Mansour granted Mr. Ashraf to work in the market with a competitor on this same brand, although Ashraf was the one who introduced the brand to the Egyptian market. The business highly depended on imports, which was why there is a considerable emphasis from Ashraf on the relationship he had with international suppliers. The supply chain of the batteries and tires business was a substantial factor in the success of the business, especially when it came to the transportation of the imported order. Mr. Ashraf deals with businesses all over Egypt, in cities like Alexandria, Tanta, and Port-Said to which orders arrive through trucks by drivers that work at Mr. Ashraf's company. The business owner made sure to visit all his big customers once each month, no matter how far they were from Cairo to maintain business with them. Furthermore, there is a sales team specialized in following up with the customers after they receive their orders until they sell all their units.

This business was necessary for any individual who owns a car, making the threat of a substitute low, considering that there are no substitutes for batteries or tires. Also, the threat of new entrants in the market is not high since this business highly relies on importing that is costly, and requires permissions and several legal actions, all of which would create a hassle for potential entrants. Thus, the competitive rivalry is low. However, the suppliers' bargaining power is high since they are the basis and main providers of the business, which is why Mr. Ashraf always makes sure to establish a good relationship with his suppliers. For instance, based on the achieved target, a total sale beyond 50,000 units of batteries, the business owner provides a complimentary international trip for his suppliers. On the other hand, customers do

not have high bargaining power because the tires and batteries are a necessity rather than a luxury product. Furthermore, the industry is growing, and Mr. Ashraf and other family members are noticing the continuous interest of business owners' successors in the business, as there is an opportunity for those who are already in the industry to grow.

Through the past years, there has been an increase in the prices of imports of batteries and tires, a 5% increase compared to 2010. This poses a great threat to the company because they rely on imports only, and with the increase in prices, business is becoming harder.

### **Business challenges: How to overcome the hurdle?**

Ashraf owned 100% of the shares of the batteries sector in the Egyptian tires and batteries importers which gives him complete freedom in decision making. Ashraf is worried about the situation of the tires sector in his company. The tires are imported from Turkey; he owns 50% of the shares because of his partnership with Turkey (Exhibit 3: Business Ownership). This agreement in the tires part of the business leaves him with less liberty and limits his actions. Therefore, ownership and governance challenges are expected in the future due to the decision-making inabilities that Ashraf might face. Also, having another owner with a different nationality, one with different values and traditions will make it harder to dictate the family values and policies. This may create conflict and an unstable environment for business growth. Ashraf had to consider other stakeholders when taking actions on different levels regarding goals, desires, and interests. Another problem that may arise is the effect of this partnership on the family's shared future vision; different values and regulations may create legal and ethical issues. These stem from the different business knowledge for the two partners; the Turkish partner will not share the same insight regarding financial goals, business strengths and weaknesses, external threats and opportunities, and families' investment expectations. In addition, there have been many governmental restrictions, especially when it comes to importing from Turkey, because of the political tensions between Turkey and Egypt.

As a consequence, Mr. Ashraf's decided in 2019 to stop importing from Turkey, after conducting business with them for almost ten consecutive years, because of the struggle and the hassle he had faced. However, his family was entirely against this decision since they believed that supplier loyalty is crucial, and many customers demand the Turkish brand specifically. This created slight tensions between the family members. Mr. Ashraf's decision was mostly based on the increasing costs, rules, and regulations restricting his business transactions. However, his family did not view it in that light since they got the products right away without going through the hassle he went through. Therefore, Mr. Ashraf decided to start importing tires and batteries from Italy. Nonetheless, this posed some risks since it was a new international business operation they did not conduct before. Given that Ashraf's uncles are from older generations; they were unwilling to take such risks. While Ashraf recognized that it posed some risks to the business, he viewed it more as an opportunity.

### **Family Dynamics Challenges: Maintaining family unity**

The family had always been unified by a strong sense of loyalty, love, and commitment in the business. During the grandfather's days, the family followed values that guided the family members to prioritize the family relationships (Exhibit 2: Family Genogram). However, as the business grew, the dynamics started becoming more challenging. However, this was muddled after an incident occurred due to the misconduct of one of Ashraf's uncles. Kamel, one of the uncles, had an expansion plan; however, it created a tax problem with the government. Before the tax incident, all the siblings trusted each other and had no doubts about each other's decisions, but all that changed after the incident. They started doubting each other's decisions, and all wanted to review each other's decisions to avoid future problems. Suzan, one of the daughters, had excellent leadership skills and numerous social connections that helped resolve the problem by paying the required amount of taxes over more extended periods. Moreover, she helped unify the family once more. After the tax incident of one of the uncles, trust issues surfaced, and caused some skepticism. Prior to the incident of one of the uncles, the environment was full of trust, with no one needing to proofread another family's work.

Although all the uncles, along with Ashraf and his mother, supported the uncle struggling with the government, they concluded that in order to protect their family unity, they needed to be separated as business owners. This decision was firstly proposed by the uncle who had the tax problems, a suggestion that resulted from guilt and was supported by the other family members. There was no tension as a result of this decision, as it was for the benefit of everyone. On the contrary, the family's unity started growing more positively when the business got out of the way.

Since that day, Mr. Ashraf Seha decided to operate on his own and opened his store in El- Mohandessin area (a neighborhood in Cairo) under the name of "El Ashraf and Ishak co," which later changed to "Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers." Each of the uncles did the same, and the one that had the governmental problem decided to travel abroad to begin anew in the real estate business.

### **Succession Challenges: Who will be next?**

Ashraf believed in family unity so he ensured to give training for every family member who started working in the business to be ready and understand more about the business before beginning their work. This training is only given to family members joining the business, while outsiders are not given any training prior to entering the business. Ashraf conducted the training himself to ensure that all family members understood the business well before joining. The main reason for training the family members was the conviction that the company should be owned, and managed by family members only, and that potential successors should be family members as well.

Ashraf faced an important decision: who should be the successor to the business? He decided to discuss this matter first with his wife Marie and, then with his son and daughter, Mina and Helen, respectively.

Ashraf initiated the conversation by asking, *“Marie, who do you think is most suitable to become the business successor?”*

Marie did not take long to answer and said, *“Mina, of course. Helen does not seem interested in pursuing a career in your field of work.”*

*“But don’t you think that I should at least try to make her interested? I think that if she takes a course related to running a family business or reads content about family businesses, she could be motivated,”* replied Ashraf with enthusiasm.

*“Yes of course, I agree! Would you like me to talk to her about it?”* Marie asked, but Ashraf insisted on being the one to open the discussion with his daughter; he knew that Helen’s response might be influenced by her love for her mother and not wanting to say no to her.

Ashraf decided to organize his thoughts before talking to his potential successors, Helen and Mina, as he was well aware that this generation does not agree on a proposed idea if it is not convincing enough. He summoned Mina alone for a thorough discussion.

*“Mina, how are your studies going?”* Ashraf asked.

*“Well, Dad, my studies are going very well. I love being a business student, and the fact that I had previous training at our company is really helping me understand the material.”*

*“I am glad you mentioned the importance of real-life work and its impact on your studies. Do you think that it will be beneficial for you, even more, to join me in a full-time position besides your studies?”* Ashraf proposed.

*“Take it slow, Dad! Full-time? That is so much pressure for me; I want to maintain good grades and focus on my studies. If I dedicate my time to work now, I will definitely lose track. I also want to get experience from other places before joining our company. I want to give so much to our company, not just what I learn from college, but also from what I will learn from my mistakes at work and the experience I will acquire from working at a big corporation. My first job cannot be on a seniority level.”* Mina replied.

*“What do you mean by ‘big corporation?’”,* Ashraf asked. *“You will never earn half as much as your salary as the owner of our company.”*

*“Dad, it is not about money. It is about learning and gaining experience.”* Mina concluded and excused himself as he needed to study.

Ashraf was very disappointed with his conversation with Mina, who wanted to join a company that is not the families. He was hoping his conversation with Helen would lead him to a better outcome.

*“My dear daughter, you are graduating in a few months, and it is time for you to think about your career. Have you?”* Ashraf asked.



*“Yes, of course! I am thinking of joining an FMCG as part of their marketing department,”* replied Helen.

*“That sounds really interesting! But have you thought about being a marketing manager?”*

*“Yes, Dad, that is what I am hoping to become in almost six years.”*

*“How about you become the manager now? In your company,”* Ashraf stated.

*“Dad, I cannot work with you. I do not understand anything about the field of batteries and tires. Also, do you remember when I came for a one-day training, and all the employees started whispering to one another about my presence in the store? It is a field that does not welcome women,”* said Helen.

*“I think you should learn more about family businesses and their positive effects on relationships between the family members,”* Ashraf suggested.

*“Sure! I will take a course at university that discusses family businesses, and let us decide afterward. Deal?”* Helen proposed.

*“Deal,”* said Ashraf, ending the discussion.

Ashraf decided that the greatest answer regarding the potential successor was Mina since he showed interest to join the family business, unlike Helen. However, Ashraf also hoped for his daughter to hold a marketing seniority-level position in the business, which made him think of all the possible ways to convince her to join the family business. However, Ashraf must keep in mind that his son, who was perceived as the most suitable potential successor, is twenty-one years old. Mina’s young age was not helping him own a strong position among the employees. Whenever he went to the business location, he did not receive enough help to make him move forward and get all his assist from the father. Another point that Ashraf was keeping in mind was that the employees were one of the most vital assets in the business because of their longtime presence and were professional at what they do. This situation implies a challenge to Mr. Ashraf as he could not force them to help his son Mina against their great resistance because of his young age.

### **Dilemma: A Struggle to Satisfy All Sides**

The idea which was proposed by Mina, and Ashraf’s uncle did not leave his mind. The possibility of unifying all the stores together, had its pros, and cons. It might unify the family again; however, it can affect the family relations negatively. Ashraf was confused about how he would be able to differentiate between family, and business relations. Ashraf recalled all the memories from his childhood of the unified business and the power it had because of unity. However, with the good memories, all the conflicts of the uncles together came back as well.

Even though Ashraf was excited, He was quite concerned because that meant that his own name would not be displayed again but the family's name instead. Indeed, a significant part of the business's success came from the family name, but Ashraf also added a substantial value to the business through his efforts. However, since the industry is growing, unifying the family businesses under one name would mean more power against the intense competition. Ashraf has three stores in Egypt, and his uncles have eight stores in total, meaning a total of eleven stores if unified, which will give the family further competitive advantage. Ashraf was very confused on whether to propose the idea to the family or this would bring back the same challenges as before, and if so, how could the family solve the problems that could come their way? Ashraf is also faced with another problem. Mina does not want to join the family business on a seniority level, but Ashraf believed that as a potential successor, it would be the best starting point for Mina to learn and hold a crucial place in the workers' eyes to be taken seriously, regardless of his young age. The choice that will be made has to consider the family's importance in the Hakim family, and the value of the business that Ashraf built throughout the years that he aspired to pass on to his potential successor.

### **A Plenty of Unanswered Questions**

There were a lot of decisions that Mr. Ashraf had to make to ensure the business's success and continuity, yet, he had to bear in mind the consequences of each decision, its implications on the business and its operations. Should he cooperate with his uncle and join forces? How will his son proceed concerning working in the family business as an owner in a top position, while gaining respect from the employees? What should he decide to do about his daughter's unwillingness to join the business? Should he try to convince her to join or let her pursue her dream? Ashraf shifts his focus back to the triggering event at the Christmas party while the back of his mind is preoccupied and concerned with these issues.

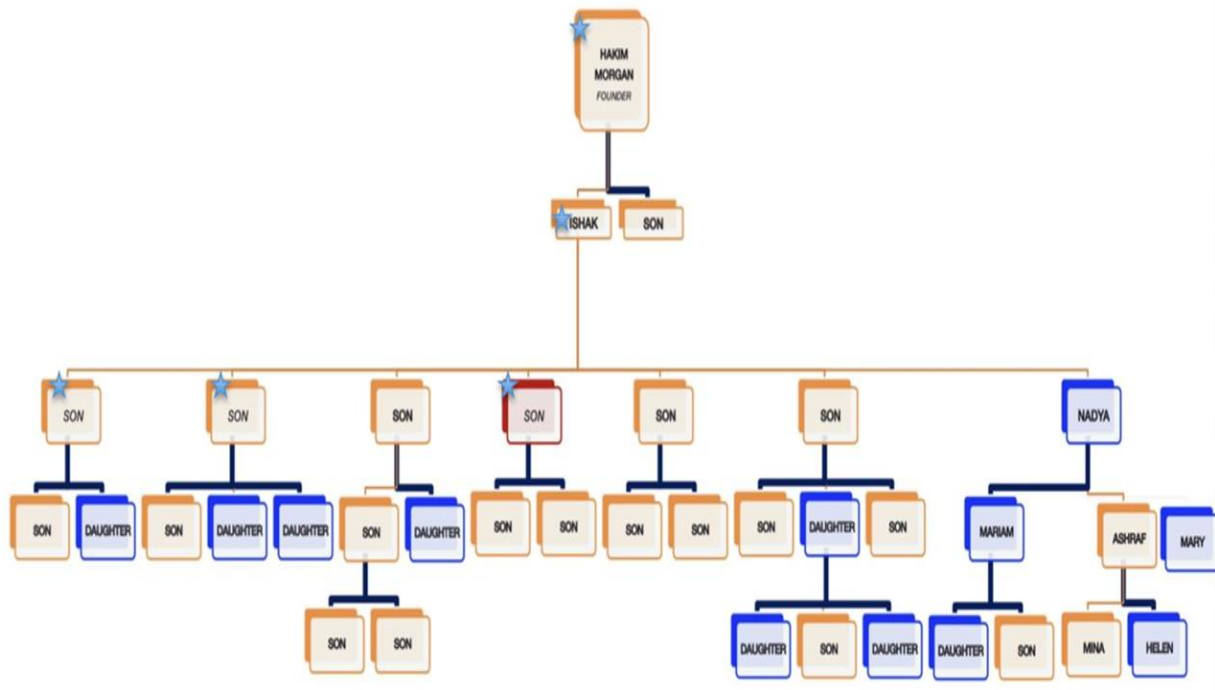


## Exhibits

### Exhibit 1: Tires Products



### Exhibit 2: Family Genogram



★ : Deceased

Orange lines: Involved in family business

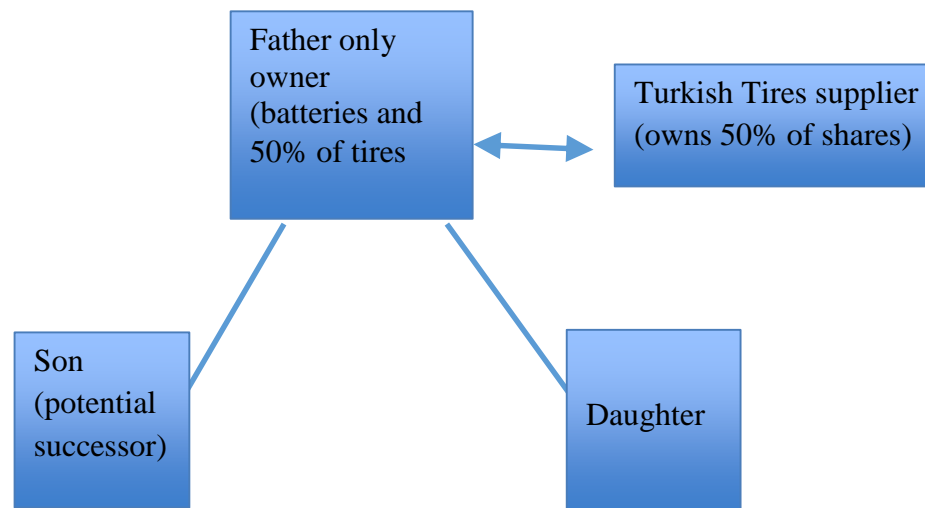
Blue lines: Involved in family business

Orange boxes: Male family members

Blue boxes: female family members

Red boxes: Tenuous relationship with the rest of the family

### Exhibit 3: Business Ownership



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## **Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers: Dilemma of Sustaining Family Unity**

### **Teaching note**

This case was written by Dr. Ashraf Sheta, Nadia Ashraf, Nadine Siag, Lamis Sallam, Hoda Safy Eldin, Mai Hashad, and Mariam Ahmed

It is intended to be used as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a management situation.

The case was compiled from field research. No part of this publication may be copied, stored, transmitted, reproduced, or distributed in any form or medium whatsoever without the permission of the copyright owner.

### **Case Synopsis**

Egyptian Tires and Batteries Importers is a hugely successful business enterprise in Egypt. Its history dates back to the 1960s when Founder Hakim Morgan pursued his passion and fought against all the odds to make it work. He showed persistence and perseverance that enabled the business's continuity despite the great issues he faced. The third and fourth generations currently manage the business. This case covers all the details regarding the business's establishment, operations, and the challenges it faced regarding governance, ownership, and succession, and how they were resolved. It also describes the family dynamics and structure and states the issues the current owner is facing and the implications of each decision that has to be taken.

### **Keywords**

Family business, Family dynamics, Governance, Succession, Professionalism, Strategy, Culture

### **Teaching objectives**

The instructors' goals for teaching this case:

- Understand the importance of having a strong family bond and how it affects the family business.
- Analyze the different challenges that family businesses face in Egypt.
- Develop an understanding of how to deal with family members who do not want to join the family business.
- Understand the impact of government regulations and rules and how they can affect the business.
- Understand the difference between management, ownership, and family.
- Develop an understanding about succession challenges inside family businesses.

### **Target Audience**

The target audience of this case is undergraduate students studying family business related coursework. Students should have basic business knowledge and entrepreneurship exposure. Familiarity with family business concepts like ownership, succession planning, and governance is key to understanding the case. The case can also be used by family business owners of the first and second generations to get an outside perspective of governance, succession, and ownership. In other words, this case will really benefit the older generations of the business as it will expose them to different dilemmas and how to deal with them. Furthermore, this case can also be used by second or third generations, who are willing to take the lead after their family to get an idea about the challenges they might face during the early start of their career, concerning, for example, the distinction between family relations and business affairs.

### **Assignment Questions**

1. If you were in Ashraf's Position, would you pursue uniting the different family businesses under the name of Ishak co or not? Please mention the pros, and cons of each option
2. If your answer for question 1 is yes, please propose an approach to convince the rest of the family to work within the same company? What will be the action plan for forming a mother company where all the family members are involved?
3. Please explain the challenges which might face Mina as a potential successor
4. What are your suggestions to smooth the process of succession of Mina?
5. The daughter, Helen, does not seem interested in joining the family business. Do you think that the family can give Helen incentives that can help her change her mind? Discuss.

### **Teaching Approach**

This case is directed to undergraduate students taking family business courses. The optimal approach to teaching this case is to give the students three days to read it before discussing it. The instructor should then ask the students about recommendations and the important concepts and ideas that grabbed their attention regarding this case. Furthermore, the instructor should stimulate some discussion. After that, s/he can divide the students into groups and ask them - questions regarding the challenges faced and how to solve them. Each group will answer those questions based on their opinion. In addition, the students can be asked to answer those questions individually and submit them within a specified number of days. Answering the questions in groups would be a better approach as it allows for the integration of different ideas together. Some of the questions below can stimulate the students' thinking and be asked in class.

### **Discussion plan**

Students should read and analyze the case before the class discussion during the discussion, the students should cover the following important topics: ownership (challenges and

resolution), governance (challenges and resolution), succession challenges, transfer of power, professionalism (challenges and resolution).

The case addresses family business themes, including:

- Family business challenges.
- The importance of governance in family businesses.
- Succession.
- Ownership scenario.
- Family relationships.

### **Suggested class schedule**

75 minutes teaching Plan (The case should be handed before the class discussion.)

Introduction	10 minutes
Discussion of Question 1	10 minutes
Discussion of Question 2	10 minutes
Discussion of Question 3	10 minutes
Discussion of Question 4	10 minutes
Discussion of Question 5	10 minutes
Conclusion (Students need to have an opinion regarding the applicability of the proposed solutions related to family business, taking the cultural context into consideration.)	15 minutes

### **Research Methods**

The primary source of data was face to face interviews with Ashraf Seha, completed between Septembers – December 2019. The secondary sources were taken from free online reports.

### **Case Analysis (Answers to Case Questions)**

- 1. If you were in Ashraf's Position, would you pursue uniting the different family businesses under the name of Ishak co or not? Please mention the pros, and cons of each option (This question can be answered within the context of group debate related to the decision-making theory).**

#### **Pros of uniting the different family business under the name of Ishak Co:**

- The family name has owned an important place in the market since the 1980's.

- A bigger market shares.
- There is power in unity as each uncle of Ashraf, along with their children and Ashraf's children will contribute in the business and continue the legacy.
- A competitive advantage as the uncles won't be competing one another but will unify.
- As they have worked in the past together, when uniting again they will avoid the old conflicts which is an encouraging factor to work again together as they know their weaknesses.
- More social connections.

**Cons of uniting the different family business under the name of Ishak Co:**

- Ashraf will give up on his separate identity which he has been building for the past years.
- Family problems might interfere with the family business.
- The ownership challenges
- Succession challenges that might be difficult to resolve
- All members of the business will have to take responsibility of any member's mistake which will definitely cause tension and stress during the business procedure.

**2. If your answer for question 1 is yes, please propose an approach to convince the rest of the family to work within the same company? What will be the main topics of consideration when establishing Ishak co, where all the family members are involved (This question can be answered within the context of group discussion related to the and socio cognitive theory of trust).**

The proposed approach to convince the rest of the family to work within the same company will involve several steps:

- Start by having informal talks with different family members to take their opinion about having a unified business.
- Lobbying with the family members who think that the idea is appealing; in order to have change enablers within the family.
- Gather the family members for family retreat, maybe at El Sokhna beach resort, and to start addressing the issue with them as a group.



- If the family members agree on the decision to have unified business, then the family can start nominating members for family council.
- The family council can then nominate a third party to be involved in the process of valuation of the shares, and deciding on the legal form of the company; most probably it will be a limited liability company, where each family member will have shares.

The main topics of consideration when establishing Ishak co are:

- Form of ownership: Limited Partnership Limited Liability Company, Corporation
- Possible ownership configuration, for example are shares going to be owned by family members working in the business only, are shares going to be given to males only (This is dependent on the family culture)
- Ownership agreements, where these agreements should confirm, how the shares can be transferred (sold, redeemed, and so on) and what benefits the stock creates (board membership, dividends, and so on).
- Ownership structure to identify the distribution of equity with regard to votes and capital, but also by the identity of the equity owners.

**Starting from question 3 it is supposed that Ashraf did not adopt the option of having a unified family business with the rest of the family members.**

**3. Please explain the challenges which might face Mina as a potential successor? (This question can be answered within the context of group discussion related to the family business succession theory).**

Some challenges that Mina will be facing are age differences and family conflicts. Age differences between him and the workers will be a challenge. Since the tires, and batteries industry involves dealing with the elder employees within the company, and Mina might be coming with relatively new ideas to develop the business; accordingly, he will be faced with a lot of resistance He has been training within the business since childhood, however stepping into the company with a controlling power will be a challenge, because he might face conflicts of interest with other family members. Another challenge that Mina might face is resistance to change, especially under conditions of great success in previous generations, which is related to the concept of “Shadow of the founder”. Family members and even workers might be resistant to this change, claiming that the business had been functioning in a certain way for a long time and changing that might introduce risks. In order to resolve these challenges, some orientation meetings for the successor might be conducted with prominent employees within the company (who might not be in a top management position). This would be in order to communicate to them Mohamed’s role and what might be expected from them, and to ease any tensions that might occur. Job rotation for Mina might also help him to communicate with

all department employees, and to develop concrete know-how concerning the business.

**4. What are your suggestions to smooth the process of succession of Mina (This question can be answered within the context of group discussion related to the family business succession theory, and theory of planned behavior)?**

Suggestions include:

- It might be better to choose one of the trusted experienced employees in the business to act as a mentor for Mina for some time
- Conduct regular meetings between Ashraf, and Mina in order to transfer knowledge about the business.
- Hold extended family meetings which include Helen periodically to communicate the business status.
- Involve Mina in job rotation in order to develop his technical skills under the supervision of his mentor, and not Ashraf to avoid any subjectivity in assessing his performance.
- Develop a clear job description with designated targets for Mina to reach, before stepping into a higher position.
- Taking Mina's suggestions for developing the business into consideration, and implementing it gradually if it is feasible.
- Assigning a family business consultant to develop a constitution, that includes employment policies, ownership agreements, and succession planning to avoid all of the mistakes which led to the dismantling of Ishak co

**5. The daughter, Helen, does not seem interested in joining the family business. Do you think that the family can give Helen incentives that can help her change her mind? Discuss. (This question can be answered within the context of group discussion related to the family business succession theory).**

The daughter is not interested because the industry of batteries and tires is not really a field where women are found to work there. Another discouraging factor for her is that she will not go through a corporate job progression where she starts an entry-level employee and then a year after another will get promoted. Her father seems to offer the children a managerial level from the beginning as they are perceived as business owners. However, as a fresh-grad who wants to be challenged, to learn and to earn her position; the mindset of the father might not fit Helen's aspirations. Therefore, Ashraf could offer Helen firstly an entry-level job in the marketing department, the former does not believe that marketing is essential in the industry

but the latter strongly believes that it is. Thus, her first task could be to convince Ashraf of the crucial role that marketing has in any business. **Other incentives could be offering her a trip if she has successfully filled her role in the marketing department.**

### **Epilogue**

This case was completed in December 2019, and several events have taken place after that period. During January 2020, Helen was given the role to deal with the international accounts in Turkey and Bulgaria where she has worked as an intermediate coordinator between the international business accounts and Ashraf. She continued this work till April 2020, where she then was given the position of a designer. However, Helen did not feel that she is ready yet to work as a designer and has quitted working with her father till further notice. Regarding Mina, he has successfully shown commitment and deep understanding in the business where he spent the last four months developing a feasibility study to open a store in Sheikh Zayed which targets class A customers and provides high-end tires and batteries. The decision of having a unified business was not considered, and Ashraf is thinking about establishing a factory to manufacture batteries in Egypt using the technical knowledge of his foreign suppliers

### **Online courses case teaching approach**

The nature of online courses must be mainly interactive, it is mainly depending on individual interaction, group interaction, debates, discussions. This is a challenge faced in moving to online based courses; accordingly, this required designing the case delivery mode into usage of blended tools. In order to maximize the learning outcomes, and preserve the interactive nature of the case discussions, the case discussion will be conducted during the class time. The reasons are:

- To ensure fairness amongst students regarding participation, and interaction.
- To ensure providing maximum amount of information, and learning
- To give more time for answering questions during class time.
- To give more time for exercises during class time.

In order to do this, it is preferred to use synchronous tools rather than recorded ones. The tools for delivery include zoom meeting, Microsoft meet, and google classroom (according to the tool preferred by the university. Students will interact with the instructor, and sometimes will be divided into groups within a chat room, breakout room, or discussion boards, according to the communication tool used. This is done to stimulate debates, and discussions with the class.

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