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Controlling the 'Burn' of Conflicts in Family Businesses

2-3 minutes

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – It's that time of year in the upper Midwest when "trained experts" conduct controlled burns of prairies, where unwanted weeds and invasive species are eliminated and lead to desirable new growth and a thriving natural biodiversity.

Ann Kinkade, founder and president of Lucid Legacy, observes that well-managed conflict in a family business presents many of the same benefits of a controlled burn. New professional energy, more deeply connected relationships, creative problem-solving of work issues, and superior innovation are common outcomes.

However, learning to become a "trained expert" in conflict management is not a requirement for family members; even becoming slightly more proficient can lead to positive results. Building skills to navigate conflict takes time, and one's proficiency, as with any skill, is gained through practice. Fortunately, in many multigenerational family businesses, there is an abundance of training ground to practice.

During a NACS Show education session next week in Atlanta, "[Running Your Business Without Disowning Your Family](#)," Kinkade will talk about the universal challenges and opportunities of family-owned businesses, and offer insights and techniques to overcome

common complexities.

Families working together in business benefit when they recognize that properly managed conflict provides an opportunity for growth, discussion and learning. When things start to heat up or when the sparks start to fly, the best thing to do is to pause and commit to coming back to the conversation when the smoke has cleared. But without the commitment to come back and “control the burn,” the familiar unwanted weeds and invasive species will thrive.

We encourage you to cultivate growth through conflict, and to seek the resources you need to learn to manage conflict in healthy and productive ways.

The NACS Show takes place October 18-21 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. [Register today!](#)

Ann Kinkade is the founder and president of [Lucid Legacy](#).