



**Carole Spiers Group**

International Stress Management and  
Employee Wellbeing Consultancy

Established 1987



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# ‘Conquering the Unique Pressures That Build Up in a Family Business’

**A long-established family business is a classic showcase for  
Managing Stress and Organisational Change**

**A Special Report by**

**Carole Spiers** MIHPE MISMA

**World Leading Authority on Corporate Stress  
BBC Broadcaster & Best-selling Author**



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International Stress Management &  
Employee Wellbeing Consultancy (UK)

**'You *can* leave a company.....  
.....but you *can't* leave a family'**

.....is the truism applicable to a family member, of whatever gender, age or status, who may feel discontented with their position within a family business.

Those who work in a family business know it generates its own particular set of pressures and challenges. The obvious benefits of loyalty, security and continuity can be nullified by personal conflicts and issues of control and seniority that can cause resentment. Working with your family all day and living with them in the community can create a claustrophobic environment which, without professional help, can lead to frustration, poor health and performance. As an experienced stress consultant, I view a family business as an environment where most of the usual workplace stress-factors can be observed to be of a greater intensity than in a non-family concerns.



## Expectations of the Young

The effective management of change plays an essential part in re-motivating those individuals who may be feeling demoralised by the prospects of organisational change that they (incorrectly) may perceive as adversely impacting their career prospects. In a family business, this naturally can become a major frustration. Consider the position of the bright youngster who is given a glowing picture of his future as a potential partner or MD. With this prospect in mind and having been reminded that he has a duty to serve the family business, he turns down other, often more attractive career-choices to remain within the family dynasty.



So he opts to invests maybe 20 years, or so, in securing his position by steadily climbing the ladder, deferring to all family-members older than him, (anticipating the same deference to himself, in due course), and eventually, if he is lucky, he realises his ambition in being appointed a Director. However newly qualified graduates from western universities can be more assertive and questioning of long-held assumptions and business practices creating tensions in family businesses that are not easily resolved and often forcing well educated individuals to question more closely if the family business is indeed the right place or them to forge a career. Furthermore, the male expectation of automatic superior status within the family business has been affected by the emergence of newly enfranchised women. Products and markets have changed beyond recognition. The company itself might be engaged in a takeover or merger negotiations. All of which means that the expectations nurtured over the past 20 years might not be fulfilled, so that hopeful promise “One day, all this will be yours” rings more hollow than ever.

## **Blind Loyalty Won't Help**

Change is inevitable in any business - more so in a family business and such change is likely to impact on everyone in the organisation. It is therefore critical that the whole family feels involved in this change process, to ensure strength and unity. Change is unsettling and can be testing on different generations' ideas and values as they wrestle between the tried and tested and new innovations.



Take, for example, the point about sibling's duty to the family business. In a fast-changing world, a young person's first thought is to find a job that they feel able and are qualified to do which is likely to give them a steady career path and a degree of personal satisfaction. There is no absolute imperative that says they will find a niche within the family business and to cling to a sinking vessel out of misguided loyalty will achieve no purpose. Ambitious young people may serve their families better by going in a different direction, and possibly reaching a position eventually where they may be able to help some of their relatives, either as employer, client or even supplier. The time has come for the traditional closed-shop nature of a family business to be adapted to the present era of diversity. Young people today are far more well travelled and technically astute than their elders, and may even have run a couple of online businesses before leaving college! To attract a well-travelled and experienced young, high achiever back into the family circle as a career-choice is a major challenge that needs handling with extreme sensitivity and tact. But it can pay handsome dividends, with the cross-pollination of the traditional with the new and untried.

## **Specialist Guidance Is Available**

Whenever different branches of a family are working under one roof, certain measures are needed to build a harmonious and effective team striving for the corporate good. Very often, specialist guidance on relationship-building within the family-business environment can be the subject of formal training and coaching.

Being a relative can sometimes lead to a clash of loyalties and confusion of identities, especially over promotions, retirement, succession planning, and the necessary adapting of patriarchal traditions. These tensions and potential conflicts can be avoided by ensuring clear roles and responsibilities by the utilisation of effective verbal and non-verbal communication at all levels.

Proprietorship is a more active and demanding role than it may look. It requires high credibility, to forge successful partnerships with other professionals, both within the family circle and beyond it. To measure up to it, candidates may need Personal Development Coaching, in order to master essential Management skills such as managing people, mediation, coaching and mentoring.

## **Bonding Power**

These are serious challenges for a family business to handle. But they can be overcome. They should not obscure the model that family businesses offer to the rest of the industry, by forming a solid, continuing unit increasingly lacking in today's work environment. For the hidden strength of the family business lies in its bonding power - the power to generate an ethos of ownership among the whole team, and encourage a stakeholder attitude among all, from the highest to the humblest.

**'World-class corporate giants, often  
soulless and dissatisfied at rock bottom,  
have plenty to learn from the community  
mind, spirit and heart of the  
well-run family business'**

## **Some Familiar Challenges**

- **Patriarchal style**  
Over-preserving the methods and routines of the founder
- **Age, rank & status**  
Confusion between executive rank and family seniority
- **Clarifying of terms**  
Dangers of informal directives and statements of intent
- **Consensus over big decisions**  
Consulting all employees over major issues of policy
- **Succession planning**  
Averting rivalry by documenting plans for ownership transfer

## **Role of the Family Relationship Coach**

- **Stimulating self-development**  
Empower employees to take responsibility for themselves
- **Generating effective dialogue**  
Coaching in key communication skills for high performance
- **Family-related stress issues**  
Defusing potential conflicts between family members
- **Policies & procedures**  
Formalising of cautions, rules and complaints processes
- **Next phase of the business**  
Stimulating open discussion of business aims and targets

## **Carole Spiers MIHPE MISMA**

**World Leading Authority on Corporate Stress.**

**Motivational Speaker. BBC Broadcaster. Best-selling Author**

**'Achieving sustainable success by adopting a healthy corporate culture'** has been Carole Spiers' mission for the past 20 years. She provides the cutting-edge of expertise in this vital field and brings together **individual empowerment and executive management** to improve performance and increase profit.

This gives her unique credibility as an authority on personal empowerment and as a **BBC Broadcaster** and **best-selling author** on stress-related subjects. Carole is frequently contacted by the **international media** for professional comment and is a sought-after **Keynote Motivational Speaker** for international conferences and seminar platforms. She is also an **Expert Witness before the UK Courts**.

***TESTIMONIAL:** Her inspiration is touchable as she provides you with the impetus to permanently transform the quality of your life, be reinforcing in yourself the absolute will and determination to succeed'. Mark Stagg, HR, Maritime Coastguard Agency*

## **Experience in UAE**

Carole doesn't just talk success – she lives it!

Over the past 2 years, **Carole has been working in the UAE** – primarily to fulfill public speaking engagements, stage in-house training and deliver High Performance Coaching assignments to Senior Board Executives

As a **weekly columnist for Gulf News**, Carole writes on topical business issues facing Middle East managers, their staff and employees, in the most critical areas affecting growth, development and success -

<http://www.carolespiersgroup.co.uk/gulf.html>



## **Corporate Expertise**

She works with Senior Boards and Management to forge dynamic leadership teams to think and act strategically in a world that moves faster every day.

**Author of the industry bible**, Tolley's *'Managing Stress in the Workplace'*, Carole is also a **successful entrepreneur and founder of the Carole Spiers Group (CSG)**, an international Stress Management and Employee Wellbeing consultancy which, for over 20 years, has advised, coached and trained clients to achieve sustained success through a healthy workplace culture.

## Passionate, International Motivational Speaker

Carole is a high energy, charismatic, motivational speaker with a unique ability for **empowering people to change attitudes and mindsets** that hold them back from unlocking their untapped potential.

### Let her audience speak for her!

*'Carole's event hosting produced excellent direction for our high profile event...it was an experience to work with someone with such boundless energy and strong eye for detail who combines charisma with credibility'*. Lawrence Young. Director, Packfords & Young. UK.

*'Carole Spiers' energy, experience and knowledge was greatly appreciated....the value she added was immeasurable. Her presentation was intelligent, interactive and energetic – just what we needed as the closing keynote to our Family Business Forum in Abu Dhabi'*. Purva Hassomal. Director, Leaders of Abu Dhabi, Family Business Forum (June 2008)

## Proven Results from a Proven Expert

In her role as a High Performance, Executive Coach, Carole Spiers **helps bring out the best in business leaders**, enabling them to deliver sustainable performance both individually and in their teams.

## Carole the Person. Going Beyond Expectations

As a **Vice President of the International Stress Management Association<sup>UK</sup>**, and Immediate Past-President of the **London Chapter of the Professional Speakers Association**, Carole's philosophy is wide acknowledged *'Your corporate edge will increasingly depend on a healthy workplace culture – an environment of mutual respect where well-rewarded employees can feel a sense of mission in optimising performance and productivity!'*

In 1999, on behalf of the International Stress Management Association<sup>UK</sup>, **Carole created and established the UK's highly successful media campaign – National Stress Awareness Day.**

**TESTIMONIAL:** *Carole Spiers' industry's bible 'Managing Stress in the Workplace' will be compulsory reading for all HR Managers and Directors, as well as secretaries and business Managers with responsibilities for people (Personnel Today 04/04)*

**Her client list reads as a roll-call of leading international organisations including -**

- Unilever, Accenture, Etisalat, Tecom (Dubai), AXA Insurance,
- Walt Disney, Panasonic, IIR (Dubai), Bank of England,
- Nat West Bank, TiE Dubai, MBC Media, Law Society (London),
- British Transport Police, Zawya (Dubai), W H Smiths,
- London Underground, Kanoo Group and many others.



## Stress Management Training, Workplace Counselling and Consultancy at the Service of Top Corporations

***'Our mission is to empower organisations to achieve sustainable success  
through a healthy corporate culture' Carole Spiers***

Established in 1987, the Carole Spiers Group (CSG) has established a valuable niche in the field of workplace stress management, working with equal success in the contrasting cultures of the UK and Dubai bringing proven benefits to blue chip corporations such as Abbey, Tecom, AXA Insurance, Rolls Royce, Walt Disney, Panasonic UK, Unilever, Marks & Spencer, Debenhams, IIR (Middle East), London Underground, Etisalat, Kanoo Group, TiE Dubai, Accenture, the Bank of England, W H Smith, Zawya (Dubai) and many others.

CSG consultants have introduced, into these organizations and companies, anti-stress measures that have decisively shown to have improved productivity and competitive advantage through healthier employees working in a healthy corporate culture.

With a network of professional consultants, trainers and a nationwide Employee Counselling team, CSG are uniquely equipped to advise professionally on both the human and the legal aspects of workplace stress, including workplace bullying, organisational change, cultural diversity and post-trauma.

### Training Courses, Coaching and Employee Counselling Service

- Specialist stress management courses, individual coaching for all employees
- Professional counselling for stressed employees and post-trauma cases
- Demonstrating ways to de-fuse a crisis by eliminating stressor-elements
- How Mediation can re-start broken-down talks and avert lengthy arbitration

### Media Commentator, Columnist and International Motivational Speaker

**CSG** are regularly called for professional comment by the BBC, Sky, CNN and other media as well as being a regular contributor to the UK national press e.g. Guardian, Financial Times, The Times, Observer, trade press and professional journals.

Carole Spiers is a sought after Motivational speaker, provocative weekly columnist for Gulf News on managing corporate stress and human resources issues and is the author of *Tolley's 'Managing Stress in the Workplace'* – industry's bible published by LexisNexis<sup>UK</sup>.

She is an Expert Witness before the UK Courts and launched National Stress Awareness Day on behalf of the International Stress Management Association<sup>UK</sup> of which she is a Vice-President.

Carole is also the immediate Past-President of the London Chapter of the Professional Speakers Association.

## Continue Where This Special Report Leaves Off!

Get deeper into stress reduction – with CSG's selective catalogue of Special Reports, Trainer packs, Manuals, CDs and Audio by Carole Spiers, World Leading Authority on Corporate Stress. Visit our ecommerce site [www.carolespiersgroup.co.uk](http://www.carolespiersgroup.co.uk) for the definitive solutions to stress management.



**'Conquering the unique pressures that build up in a Family Business'** is just one Special Report out of a series, so please contact us for details of our other titles.  
Email: [info@carolespiersgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@carolespiersgroup.co.uk)

Book Carole Spiers for a charismatic, motivational presentation for your next conference and for more information on CSG's in-house Stress Management Training, Mediation, Mentoring, Executive High Performance Coaching, please contact us at:

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