

Fueling Your Future.



Information for Oilheat,
Propane & Petroleum
Business Leaders

GRAY GRAY & GRAY[®]
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS | ADVISORS

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BEYOND THE NUMBERS

June 2015

Issue No. 32

It takes more than numbers.

Gray, Gray & Gray is here to help you "Fuel Your Future" by going beyond accounting services. With 70 years in the energy business, we go beyond the numbers by delivering insight, guidance and knowledge to our energy clients so they can achieve growth and profitability.

Oil & Energy Magazine Features

"How Much Should You Pay Family Members?" Article

by C. Joseph Ciccarello, CPA, MST

Managing Partner at Gray, Gray & Gray



Many companies in the oil and propane industry are family-owned businesses. The dynamics of a family business can be very different from those in a non-family corporation. Personal history, differences in personality and emotions that can be dismissed in a corporate setting can take center stage when the company is family owned.

There is no more sensitive topic in a family business than that of compensation. Who gets paid, how much they earn, and who controls the level of compensation are issues that, if left unresolved, can tear a business apart.

Let's be clear right up front: family members should receive compensation that is commensurate with their role within the company and their performance. The problem lies in objectively measuring that performance, then having the courage to tie it to compensation.

Blurred Lines

Many people assume that the spouses, children, cousins and in-laws working in a family-owned oil or propane business are paid more than their non-family co-workers, simply because they are part of the family. Unfortunately, this is true in many cases. We've seen many instances where the child of the company owner earns an inflated salary that is far out of proportion to his or her contribution to the bottom line of the business.

The opposite can also be the case: family members may be compensated at a lower level than others in their position at similar, non-family companies. The reasons for this are as varied as the differences between family-owned companies. Some family members "apprentice" at a young age, in an entry-level position, making the rise to an equitable level a slow process. Or the family may choose to keep salaries artificially low to avoid the perception of nepotism.

Neither situation is good for business. But resolving such conflicts and inequalities is tricky. The challenge is that the lines between employee and ownership are often blurred in a family business.

[Click here to read the full article.](#)

**Join Us at This Month's Blue Cow User Group Annual Meeting
& New England Fuel Institute Energy Expo!**

THIS WEEK: Blue Cow User Group Annual Meeting 2015

Gray, Gray & Gray's Jeff Foley & Marty Kirshner to Present:

"How to Build Value in Your Company"



June 3-4, 2015

Boston Marriott Peabody - Peabody, MA



Jeff Foley, CPA - Partner



Marty Kirshner, CPA, MSA - Manager

Stop by our booth at this week's Blue Cow User Group Annual Meeting, and don't miss our business session tomorrow afternoon, June 3rd, entitled "**How to Build Value in Your Company**" by Gray, Gray & Gray's [Jeff Foley](#) and [Marty Kirshner](#). This session is designed to help you gain a better understanding about the importance of early and consistent planning in order to achieve a successful transition from ownership to retirement.

NEXT WEEK: New England Fuel Institute Energy Expo 2015
*Gray, Gray & Gray's Joe Ciccarello to Moderate:
Families in Energy Panel Discussion*



June 10-11, 2015
DCU Center - Worcester, MA



Come by **Booth #9** to pick up your copy of Gray, Gray & Gray's 2015 Energy Survey Results and ask us your questions about tax, accounting or business advisory needs for your energy company. On Wednesday morning, June 10th, attend the **Families in Energy Panel Discussion** moderated by Gray, Gray & Gray Managing Partner [Joe Ciccarello](#). The panel discussion will focus on the everyday situations a family business deals with - from hierarchy, to management and operations challenges - and ways to help keep the business profitable for the next generation.

Interested in scheduling a meeting with us at an upcoming event?
[Click here to schedule a meeting in advance.](#)

Answer to Last Month's Gray, Gray & Gray Poll:
What Will Your Approach Be to Meeting the Health Care Mandates of The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act?

Based on our experience and your feedback, options **A** and **D** appear to be the most popular approaches:

- A.** Continue offering our current health coverage
- B.** Change health insurance plans
- C.** Drop health insurance altogether
- D.** We have under 50 full-time employees and are not affected by the health care mandates



Stay tuned for our next poll question!

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