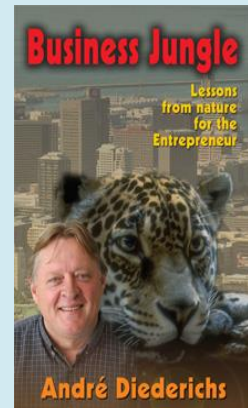




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Lessons from the **BUSINESS JUNGLE BOOK** by André Diederichs



INTERNAL FAMILY BUSINESS POLITICS: LESSONS FROM HYENA'S

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FAMILY BUSINESS TIPS

Of the many business lessons that wildlife offers businesses, the behaviour of the hyena best describes the consequences of internal office politics among family & team members if not contained and brought within healthy limits.

BUSINESS LESSONS...

Upon observing the behaviour of a hyena clan in the Mala-Mala game reserve, certain comparisons become clear between the 'unethical' or selfish charac-

teristics of some of these hyenas and certain players in the business world.

Internal rivalry and unfairness affected the effectiveness of the hyena clan in the same manner that business politics between family and staff members hinder progress in a business. If not managed within the boundaries of healthy rivalry, a family business can be seriously affected.

A hyena clan constantly needs to focus on its environment to ensure it's always aware of the activities of competing predators and potential prey to feed the clan's core business, namely eating. And eating is vital to a fully grown hyena that can weigh up to 90kg and eat a third (30kg) of its weight in one meal!

Likewise, businesses also need to focus on their competitors and market oppor-

tunities to ensure they maximise their core business namely, turning a profit.

This hyena clan mostly caught its prey alive instead of feeding off the carcasses left by other predators. The leader of this clan was aggressive and selfishly devoured large amounts of prey, leaving little for other clan members. The leader would kill any clan member that interfered with her eating habits. She only allowed the main hunter of the clan, her lieutenant and potential successor, to eat a little more.

Interestingly, a similar pattern in both large and small family businesses can exist if people step on each other and resort to unethical tactics in their endeavours to move up the ladder. However, such negative behaviour can have a devastating effect on morale and ulti-

mately business performance.

In this hyena clan, the outcome of the increasing aggression resulted in an explosive situation. One day the lieutenant hyena caught an Impala. The leader attacked her for eating from the prey before she did. She fought back and attacked the leader so viciously that she almost died from the attack. The lieutenant became the leader of the clan and displayed more fairness towards other clan members at eating time.

The leader became the lowest-ranking member of the clan and could only feed once the clan finished. When a lion injured the new leader, the clan defended her leadership position until she was well enough to take over again.

The business lesson we can learn from hyenas is that no business will ever be without

tension. But, if certain members are continuously discriminated against or treated unfairly, the tension can reach explosive proportions.

An unhealthy amount of internal tension or rivalry in a business will cause family and staff members to focus more on internal rather than external competitors and marketing opportunities.

Also, beware of mistreating your cash cows i.e. your best performers, whether family members or other staff. They may turn around and bite you where you will feel it most - your pocket! Well-managed competition amongst family members can be healthy, as long as it is FAIR!

To order the Business Jungle Book visit:

<https://andrediederichs.co.za/books-dvds-cd/>

Treating others with FAIRNESS & DIGNITY is the RAIN that helps them to GROW & BE FRUITFUL.