

Testimonial for Silver Tip Family Enterprise Advisory Corporation January 2019

Mitchell Bros Ranches Ltd. is a 3rd generation family business currently operating a cattle ranch on 1000 acres in the Porcupine Hills near Pincher Creek Alberta. As of 2007 it has been owned and operated by Phil and Bette Mitchell and their 4 sons aged 24-35. For all of the family - except Bette whose role is Ranch Manager - the ranch operations represent their side interest not their main source of livelihood.

In the fall of 2018, the Mitchell family started working with Silvertip for the purpose of formalizing the business while engaging, and building 'buy in' from the sons. Of equal importance was creating a succession plan for the ranch and its main businesses of cattle ranching and hospitality for this 3rd. generation and their future children.

Historically, before the current owners took over, Mitchell Bros. Ranches Ltd. Succession planning and transparency was perceived to be non-existent or severely lacking by family members. Among Phil's older siblings especially, this lack of structure caused great unrest. Huge resentment and mistrust have divided the 2nd generation of family members. To Phil and Bette, this discord represented the worst case scenario for the future of our family relationships and business. We needed serious help preventing a repeat of this disastrous outcome.

Of equal importance was being transparent with our sons about the support the business needs over the next 5 years in order for Phil and Bette to transition into retirement. We needed to get into the same room and have the important, facilitated conversations that we had managed to avoid.

Trish and Josh of Silvertip provided the much needed professional guidance with this journey. Their professionalism, compassion, inclusiveness, and guided, relationship-based approach made all the difference to us. Each and every member of the family instantly engaged with their easy demeanour and we all benefited greatly from listening to each other. We learned so much about each other because of this.

Before starting the consultations, we were concerned that getting the family to commit to the time frame and the chance that they would find it 'without purpose' was a strong possibility. Phil and I were very pleased at how quickly and easily each son engaged with the whole process. They completely appreciated the purposefulness of the time spent working together.

What made the difference between a laborious exercise and an enjoyable one was the enlightening activities that revealed our similarities and differences. The safe and fun manner in which Trish and Josh facilitated the engagements were paramount to its success.

A business where our sons can see a structure and have the tools to support this speaks to them in spades. The whole abyss of the unknown overwhelmed all of us. Today, this stress no longer exists. We have such a solid plan moving forward with each family member having a role - whether big or small.

Our family is so much stronger thanks to this experience. It has personally brought us together in such a positive way. We now realize how much stronger we are together and how much talent exists in our close group. Where we may have just seem differences or deficiencies in each other, we now see the gifts and common grounds we all share.

This benefit of this gift made possible by Trish and Josh can never be expressed strongly enough. We just feel such gratitude - they gave us hope and joy moving forward. We can not say enough good things about this experience - we hope some beef and hospitality helps show our appreciation in a small way :)