

Learning from the best

ALICE XUE

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Leading family businesses Barkman Concrete, Columbia Bottle Enterprises, Lammle's Western Wear, Regional Group (winner), Camp Arowhon and Van Bree Enterprises were national finalists for the 2019 FEX Family Enterprise of the Year Award.

Family Enterprise of the Year Award finalists share insights for long-term success of their business family

Barkman Concrete

About three years ago, the family behind Barkman Concrete in Steinbach, Man., formed a family council to govern the relationship between the family and the business throughout various generations. As part of this process, the family went through the exercise of redefining the family council's mission, vision and set of values.

"This was a unique bonding experience for us, and it really set a solid direction that we all contributed to," says Scott Barkman, director of marketing and corporate communications and future co-owner of Barkman Concrete. "The process itself was so important. It's one thing to agree on some eloquent or profound-sounding vision, but it is another to really get buy-in from everyone, especially through a long and challenging process."

The family is now looking ahead to the fourth generation. Mr. Barkman says the family council has been helpful in setting expectations and conditions for those who want to join the business in the future.