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hat led you to join the family business? Did you always expect to do so?

Elena Odysseos: Joining the family business was a conscious decision and one that was given much thought. Some might say that it's extremely unusual for all four siblings to be interested in following the same career path and while we undoubtedly all have varying personal interests, career-wise we all chose to obtain similar academic degrees and professional qualifications, and ultimately enter our father's profession. Our decision was not based on the actual idea of joining a profession in which the family was already very involved and well-established. Rather what has always intrigued us all is the wide range of prospects for development that this profession offers.

Gold: So just how important was your father's role in your choice of career?

Myria Odysseos: Our father has always been a role model for us. It might sound surprising but the truth is that he never attempted to influence us into choosing this profession. What he always tried to communicate to us, though, were the values that all professionals should have, regardless of the area in which they are involved, such as being committed to providing the best quality of work. So rather than being influenced by his career choice, I can say pretty confidently that we were actually influenced by the qualities and the professional conduct he has demonstrated as an accountant and entrepreneur over the past 40 years.

Gold: What are the benefits of working with members of your own family? Is there a downside to it?

Pambina Odysseos: Undoubtedly, the benefits by far exceed any

By Artemis Constantinidou | Photo by Christos Tsekouras



FAMILY Matters

WHEN FORMING HIS OWN AUDIT, TAX AND ADVISORY FIRM IN THE 1980S, ODYSSEAS ODYSSEOS COULD HAVE NEVER IMAGINED THAT, 30 YEARS LATER, HIS FOUR CHILDREN WOULD NOT ONLY FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS BUT WOULD FILL MANAGERIAL POSITIONS IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS WITHIN THE ORGANISATION. THE NEW GENERATION OF ODYSSEOS CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS – ELENA (TAX DEPARTMENT), MYRIA (AUDIT DEPARTMENT), PAMBINA (BUSINESS ADVISORY DEPARTMENT) AND STELIOS (INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS UNIT) – SPOKE TO GOLD ABOUT THEIR DECISION TO JOIN THE FAMILY BUSINESS, HOW THEY MANAGE TO MAINTAIN A WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND WHAT THEY SEE AS THE SECRET OF THEIR SUCCESS.

downside. Working with like-minded individuals, who share the same zeal, vision and passion for delivering the highest quality of service every time, is a privilege which few companies can claim to enjoy. As individuals, we all strive to perform to the best of our ability; however, the collective advantage of being a team is what really enables us to remain fully committed to excellence. Of course, working together can be challenging at times! As we all have vibrant personalities with rather strong opinions and distinct management styles, decision-making regarding organisational and managerial issues is frequently an area of intense conversation. However, mutual compromise based on safeguarding our organisational vision, is the key to always reaching a sensible decision.

Gold: Do you manage to keep work and family life separate?

Elena Odysseos: The work-life balance is quite challenging to maintain, especially when working with family members. It is easy to fall in the trap of bringing up work-related issues at family gatherings. However, we strive to draw a firm line between family and business time. This is essential in order to maintain healthy family relations. In our view, excessive business interaction can harm a genuine family bond, so we always make sure that the boundaries in this respect are always "kept clear".

Gold: How do your clients perceive this "family effect"?

Stelios Odysseos: As our organisation embarks on its fourth decade in business, our clients are maturing, becoming increasingly sophisticated and wealthy. If I can speak about foreign family-run businesses and HNWIs whom we assist with wealth management, I get a strong sense of appreciation for the fact that we operate as a family-run organisation, since these people operate likewise within family-run businesses and trusts across the world and can easily relate to this kind of operation.

Apart from the positive feedback we receive from our clients, I am always impressed by the extent to which this "family effect" inspires and motivates our own staff. We make conscious efforts to convey the warmth and cosiness that family exudes to every single employee in our organisation, so that everyone feels part of the team. This, in turn, has a domino effect both on our team's productivity levels and interpersonal behaviour.

Gold: As representatives of the new younger generation of accountants, have you introduced more modern, innovative methods to the traditional working policies of the family business?

Myria Odysseos: The profession has evolved in recent years and, at Odysseos Chartered Certified Accountants, we strongly embrace progress and innovation. This reflects both on our methods of doing business as well as the speed with which we adapt to the ever-changing business environment. In our view, the combination of "old-school" values with fresh and innovative ways of doing business is a blend for success. That is what my advice would be to all our colleagues who excel in family-run businesses. Family and tradition should not be seen as a burden but as a blessing. By capitalising on the qualities and values that have contributed to our organisation's prominence in the profession for the past 30 years, the management has smoothly transitioned to the new generation, while retaining client trust and loyalty as well as dynamic expansion rates.

Gold: How do you see your future career? Would you ever consider working elsewhere?

Pambina Odysseos: Being involved in our own organisation, has given us the opportunity to enjoy the privileges – and the responsibilities – associated with personal entrepreneurship, so none of us would

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consider changing this. In our view, which is partly based on personal experience, if a person feels good at work, then he/she is more likely to perform equally well. Knowing this, we combine modern aesthetics with out-of-the-box techniques to create and maintain a friendly and inspiring operational environment where aspiring individuals want to work and strive to reach their full potential. Our top priority is to see our organisation expand and excel at even higher levels, while remaining strongly focused on maintaining the same quality of work with close attention to the client.

Gold: What is the secret behind the success of your particular family business?

Stelios Odysseos: Our success is based on the constant and strong commitment to providing efficient, cost-effective and wealth-maximising solutions to our clients with the utmost discretion and professionalism. We strongly believe that, for everyone, the sky's the limit, and so we maintain a healthy level of ambition and confidence in all our business endeavours. Staying humble and loyal to our traditional values and core business areas is what has kept us at the forefront of this profession for the past 30 years and it is what will lead us in our professional future. If I were to describe the secret of our success in one word, it would definitely be "family". ☑

Thanks to the Four Seasons Hotel, Limassol, where the photograph was taken.