



A Mother Daughter Succession Story: The Tie That Binds



*“There can only be
one sun
in the sky”*

Tina Lee

Tiziana Casciaro, Rotman Prof and Academic Director, The Judy Project & Emerging Leaders, in conversation with Tina Lee, The Judy Project alumnae and CEO of T&T Supermarket Inc., during The Gender Dividend in Family Business at Rotman, March 7, 2017

The T&T Supermarket chain was conceived in the 1990s by Tina Lee’s mother Cindy, who sought to create a one-stop Chinese grocery shopping experience for mothers. After 20 years at the helm, Cindy was planning to pass the baton to Tina, but as Tina reveals in an engaging conversation with Tiziana Casciaro, the transition was anything but smooth.

In a last minute turn of events, Tina revealed that her mom’s protective spirit for her daughter set in and Cindy withdrew her support for Tina. Cindy knew firsthand how much work it takes to run a large national retail business – the long hours and the commitment – and she didn’t want Tina to have a tough life. Likely Cindy considered Tina’s personal situation (she was 6 months pregnant) as well.

No doubt this was a turbulent time for both Cindy and Tina. Besides the cultural (Tina was born in Canada) and generational differences, there were differences in business philosophy and leadership styles. The situation strained their mother-daughter relationship greatly. In the end when Tina conceded and accepted her mother’s decision, Loblaw (who purchased T&T in 2009) stepped in and announced that they wanted Tina as T&T’s CEO. It was only then that Cindy relented and accepted Tina as CEO.

Tina inspired everyone at the event with her story. Here are her key insights which can apply to all business leaders:

1. Succession can’t be taken for granted. Tina still needed to earn her own stripes and work twice as hard to overcome the perception that she had the inside track.
2. “There can only be one sun in the sky”. Put in place a smooth transition plan that allows your predecessor to lead until you assume the position. (Until then, bite your tongue.)
3. Be very vocal. When the Management Team is mostly men and older, you need to express your perspectives.
4. Be self-aware.
5. Find the white space to define yourself as a leader, that’s different from your successor. In Tina’s case, her mom bought in “innovation.” For Tina, it was a focus on “company culture” and “infrastructure.”

Communicating Across Cultures



In today’s work environment, your ability to communicate across cultures is an important skill whether you’re a coworker or manager. Erin Meyer, an expert in cross-cultural management, describes the importance of subtle behavioural cues and how we can “turn in” to these cues. Here is the [link](http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/Connect/Rotman-MAG/Idea-Exchange/Erin-Meyer) to the article, or go to: <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/Connect/Rotman-MAG/Idea-Exchange/Erin-Meyer> (Spring 2016 issue of Rotman Magazine).

#GoSponsorHer



Photo credit



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#GoSponsorHer is a social media campaign that challenges business leaders to sponsor a woman in their network and increase the number of women in leadership positions. On International Women's Day, the Initiative for Women in Business and 30% Club Canada hosted Growing the Diversity Dividend: The Power of Sponsorship at Rotman. The event was sponsored by Deloitte, McKinsey & Company and Catalyst. With a notable panel of sponsors and sponsorees, the participants discussed their advice for sponsorship success.

Best practices for a successful sponsorship include • Sponsor someone you like and can relate to • Choose someone you respect regardless of gender • Sponsorship is a two-way street: you both have something to offer • Invest in the relationship

New Rotman Women & Leadership Expert Speakers Series Event, sponsored by BMO Financial Group

Just announced! Mark noon on Wed, May 10, 2017 in your smartphone and join **Lorna Borenstein, CEO Grokker**, formerly of eBay Inc., Yahoo and Move Inc. Lorna will be speaking on **"From Your Big Break to a Big Mistake: How to Have Resilience and Remain Authentic"**. Grokker was named to the 2017 CNBC Upstart 25 list for successful startups and Lorna was highlighted by TechCrunch as a top female founder of 2016. Click [here](http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/women) to sign up or go to: www.rotman.utoronto.ca/women.



Summary of our Survey



In December 2016 we asked for your feedback on how we can help you to advance your careers. In addition to your input, we have received many good suggestions. Thank you for taking the time to respond!

Here are the top three things you told us:

1. You seek professional development and skills to advance to the next level
2. One-day leadership workshops have strong appeal for you
3. You find mentorship and networking opportunities useful to your career development

Registration now open! Our upcoming Pro Dev Programs:

April 3-6	Last call! Emerging Leaders – for AVPs, Directors, Senior Managers in all industries
April 25-26	Last call! Business Leadership for Women Lawyers – for Senior Associates, Partners, Patent Lawyers in law firms who are aspiring to a management/partnership role
Starts Sept 25th	Back to Work Program – for professional women re-entering the workforce
Oct 11-12	Leadership in Administration – for Executive Assistants and Program Coordinators in all industries
Nov 7-8	Athena Program –for Project and Team Leads, Managers and aspiring leaders. 10% discount until July 31st

Any questions? Email Donna at women.initiatives@rotman.utoronto.ca or call 416.978.5036

Job Opportunity: G(irls)20 CEO: http://www.girls20.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/JobDescription_CEO.pdf



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Spring 2017