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The
**FAMILY
WEALTH
CHARTER**

**A REFERENCE GUIDE FOR
INTENTIONAL STEWARDSHIP**

Use this Charter to focus your first family wealth meeting. The goal isn't finished answers but a conversation that moves past the generalities and ends with a draft mission statement your family can actually build on.

SECTION 1

Core Values

Identify 5–7 core values that reflect your family's collective history and goals for the next generation. These become the through-line for every financial conversation going forward. Examples: Work Ethic, Stewardship, Discretion, Generosity, Education, Curiosity, Resilience.

To get the conversation started, ask each member to share one story from the past year where a specific family value showed up in action. Stories tend to surface agreements and disagreements that a list alone won't reveal.

Our family's core values:

SECTION 2

The Purpose of This Capital

Discuss what you want the family's resources to achieve for the next generation. Put priorities in a documented order because when competing requests arise, the answer needs a foundation.

Select the primary focus areas:

- **Option-Creating Safety Net:** Baseline security that allows for personal professional risk-taking without catastrophic downside
- **Fuel for Entrepreneurship:** Capital specifically reserved for starting or funding new ventures
- **Philanthropic Engine:** Wealth directed primarily toward community impact or specific causes
- **Educational Foundation:** Funding multigenerational intellectual growth and professional development

The primary purpose of our family's capital is:

SECTION 3

Rights and Obligations

This is the section families are most likely to leave incomplete and the one that causes the most friction later. Document the guardrails for each of the following:

Distribution standards: What governs access to family capital?

- **Needs-based access** (health, education, housing emergencies) vs. discretionary access (lifestyle support, business funding)
- **Behavioral or professional requirements:** maintaining employment, completing a degree, attending annual meetings

The family business (if applicable):

- Are heirs expected to be owners, operators, or both?
- What preparation is required before joining?
- Is ownership automatic or earned, and what are the rules for exiting?

Equal and equitable distributions are not the same thing. If your plan calls for different amounts or structures for different heirs, document the reasoning here. A written rationale is far easier to discuss than a decision that arrives without context.

Our family's distribution standards and expectations:

Rules governing the family business:

SECTION 4

Practicing Stewardship

Before major assets transfer, the next generation benefits from real experience making financial decisions with real accountability, even at a small scale. Two projects that work well:

- **The Giving Budget:** Assign a specific amount for children or young adults to research and direct toward a charity of their choosing. They make the case, weigh the options, and live with the outcome.
- **The Junior Investment Committee:** A structured project for managing a small investment account. Managing the account teaches something returns alone can't: how risk, taxes, and time horizons interact in practice.

Stewardship projects we'll implement:

SECTION 5

The Mission Statement

Using the inputs from Sections 1-4, draft a 3-to-5-sentence statement that captures your family's money philosophy. Return to it annually, adjust it as the family evolves, and use it as the reference point when a major financial decision is on the table.

Template: "Our family wealth exists to [PURPOSE]. We commit to the values of [VALUES] and will use our resources to support [PRIORITIES]. We view ourselves as stewards with an obligation to [RESPONSIBILITIES]."

Our family mission statement (draft):



Bring This to Next Vantage

If your family has worked through this Charter, or made it partway through and run into questions you didn't expect, that is a good starting point for a conversation with us.

Next Vantage works with families to develop the formal governance structure that turns these answers into a framework that holds up over time and across generations.

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