

## Like Father, LIKE DAUGHTER

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by Margie Goldsmith

These CEOs push their children hard, surround them with big ideas, but often try to keep them out of the family business--with little success.

Sanford I. Weill, chairman and CEO of Citigroup, never thought his daughter, Jessica, now Jessica Bibliowitz, would go into business. "He didn't put a lot of pressure on me, says Jessica. "I had an older brother and I was the girl. It was different then, 30 years ago. I guess his expectations were that I'd go out and be self-sufficient one way or the other and that I wouldn't stay on his payroll." Jessica, now 40 with a husband and two children, ages 8 and 10, is president and CEO of National Financial Partners, a New York City-based independent financial services distribution system. She signed on as CEO when the company was formed with \$125 million from Apollo Management LP, a leveraged buyout firm. "She liked working and she always talked about wanting to have a career," Weill says. "I didn't know she'd end up in the financial services business, but I feel good that she did. Obviously we must have had some good conversations around the dinner table."

Do CEO fathers help or hurt their daughters' chances for success? Chief Executive magazine asked many prominent CEOs and their successful daughters this question and found that fathers did little to encourage their daughters to follow in their footsteps. Instead, they automatically made sons the heirs apparent. Most CEO dads expected their daughters to marry and raise children, and to have little to do with the business.

Despite this underwhelming support, CEO daughters are reaching the top. They are balancing work and family, managing the spotlight from media, and choosing to ignore the thoughts and taunts of colleagues who believe they receive special privileges because they are the bosses' daughters.

To reach the present has not been easy. Some comments offered for this article were so sensitive that the individuals preferred to remain anonymous or spoke only if there would be no attribution. One daughter interviewed says her chief executive father never really gave her any advice (except to marry), and even though she is successful today she laments, "If my brother did what I do, my parents would say, 'Oh my God, where did we go wrong?'"

Another says her father never expected her to have a career, but when she entered the workplace he gave her constant unwanted advice. "He doesn't know how not to," she says. Another boss's daughter is still resentful because when she chose to work for him he gave her only administrative and hospitality jobs. In addition, she complains that he doesn't at all understand what it means to be a mother and work for him. Still another begrudges the fact that her father treats

her more harshly than any other person in a similar position at the company. Even when daughters talk about their fathers for attribution, they are very careful about the words they choose.

One thing they all agree on is that even though their mothers were the nurturers, their fathers' "tough love" paid off. Here are five corporate daughters who followed their fathers to the C-suite and could be considered pioneers in helping to change "like father, like son" to "lie father, like daughter."

### **Independent Streak**

Weill's daughter Jessica learned about business when her father brought associates and their innovative ideas into the home. Jessica recalls that as a child, she constantly heard her father talk about work. "I think the advantage was the terminology. I could understand it because I grew up around it. There were always people at our house having meetings and I'd wander in and that became my normal life. I loved it. They seemed to be having fun, and that left the biggest impression on me." Jessica says many women feel financial services is not a good place for them, but there were no big barriers for her. "Growing up around it really made me lie it," she says.

At 14, Jessica began working every summer for Cogan, Berlind, Weill & Levitt, where her father was a partner (it later became Shearson). She graduated from Cornell, as did her father, and began her career in product management at American Express. After nine months, she married and went into asset management at Shearson, where she remained for nine years. "In the early '80s, the money management system exploded," says Jessica. "I got to formulate it, market it, and travel all over the country at the age of 22."

In 1992, her father offered her a job at Smith Barney, which he was running, but she turned it down for a better offer at Prudential Securities. Two years later, she accepted a job at Smith Barney, owned by Travelers, where her father was then CEO.

"The first couple of years were terrific," says Jessica. "My father is a really great driver and I saw him in action. He'd get people excited and we did conferences and speeches together. It was fun, but it's a very competitive place, and when you have this additional disadvantage of being the boss's daughter, it's a bit rough. I think that over time, if your father is the CEO of a public company, it creates a certain amount of uncertainty for everyone around you. Public companies are quite a bit different than family businesses and in some cases it's best not to [have CEO fathers employ their daughters]."

Jessica left in 1997, wanting to do something different and to be in a position where she would have more freedom. She now runs National Financial Partners. Passionate about her work, she says, "I think I actually would have found my way into this world even if my father weren't a CEO."

## Team Player

Katherine Brown Blackburn also learned terminology of the family business--draft picks, Hail Marys, and Super Bowls--at home. But Mike Brown, a former Dartmouth quarterback and now president of the Cincinnati Bengals, is another businessman who did not encourage his daughter to join the family enterprise. "Most parents want their children to do something other than what they do," he says. Brown himself followed his father's path: He took over the franchise the day his father, Paul Brown, a legend in professional football, died in 1991.

"My father didn't want me to go into the football business, but I wanted to and so I did," Brown says. "The same was true with Katie. She was around it all her life. It's what she grew up knowing."

Katherine, 36 and married with two young daughters, is the executive vice president of the Cincinnati Bengals. Like her father, Katherine went to Dartmouth and worked in a law firm before joining the Bengals in 1991.

"My dad raised me to do what I want to do," she says. "He's had a huge influence on everything I do today. The business hasn't always been pretty, but I still haven't changed my mind. And even with media pressure, I've never had second thoughts about wanting to run a football franchise."

Modest and quiet like her father, she works with him daily as a key executive in all of the club's major operations, overseeing player acquisitions under the new National Football League salary cap system, handling many complex contract negotiations, and supervising the team's radio and TV networks. What motivates her is to perform better on the field. "In our business," she says, "that's the best motivational thing there is because you're out there to get a winning football team in the field."

Aside from showing black ink on the profit and loss statement, one measure of success in professional football is "win and loss" statistics. On the field, it has not been easy. Last year the Bengals were 4 and 12. Another measure is victories in the Super Bowl. So far, the Bengals have reached two Super Bowls, in 1981 and 1988. That's a long time without a championship.

Another member of the Brown family, Katherine's 31-year-old brother, Paul, is a vice president of the team and both are on the board of directors. Brown says Katherine will eventually take over the operation. "Katie is the eldest and she was at it first. That's how it works." Says Katherine, "Given the fact that my grandfather did it and my dad has done it, it would be the thing that ideally I would love to do. Sure, there are tough times, but that's never deterred my dad."

Brown says that his granddaughter, Katherine's 8-year-old daughter Elizabeth, recently wrote a story about a football star named Tyrannosaurus Rex who, playing for the Bengals, helped them win the Super Bowl, 200 million to 3.

Says Brown, "I don't know how the other team got 3, but the point is I see Elizabeth coming along just about the same way Katie came along. Maybe that's the way it works around here."

### **Willing Accomplices**

Laura and Rachel Kohler say their father--Herbert V. Kohler Jr., chairman and president of Kohler Co.--didn't push them into the family's kitchen and bath business, but urged them to set goals and achieve them. That practice would help them both succeed in the business world. At first they distinguished themselves outside the family enterprise, and later at the Kohler Co. in Kohler, WI, one of the oldest and largest privately held companies in the United States.

Started in 1873 by Herbert Jr.'s grandfather, the company has passed from father to son for three generations, growing more prosperous at each stage. Herbert Jr. became chairman and CEO in 1972, four years after his father's death. Under his tenure the company has grown from \$300 million to almost \$3 billion.

When his own father pushed him to follow the company line, Herbert Jr. initially rebelled and took up poetry and theater instead. Consequently, he didn't encourage his own three children to go into the business. "I didn't even talk about the company unless they specifically asked questions about it," he says. "I thought it was more important for them to find their own talents and dreams." Nonetheless, he made each of them an offer because he felt they had the potential to be good leaders.

Laura, 39 and vice president of human resources, says, "My father challenged all of us to take risks and push ourselves. His theme growing up was, 'You are going to know the value of the dollar; there are no free rides.'" Kohler, a proponent of character building, sent all three children to Outward Bound, of which he is a trustee, to experience physical challenge and the wilderness.

"He wanted us to be passionate about whatever we did, and to seek out adventure," Laura says. "My mother was the nurturer. My dad was the pusher."

Rachel, 37 and vice president of interiors, says, "My Dad hasn't made it easy for us; his expectations were for us to achieve. He didn't care what we did, as long as it focused on achievement." Laura admits, "It was tough love with him and consequently as adults we're very capable. He believes we are in our positions because we can do the job, not because our last name is Kohler."

Says their father, "They have to make their own mistakes. If I were to protect them, they wouldn't be the business leaders I want them to be."

Laura, who has worked for the company since 1995, graduated from Duke, received an MFA from Catholic University, and then founded a small theater company. "My father had been an actor, and he was living vicariously through me," she says. "But after a while, I wanted a steady paycheck, so I asked to join

the company." She became executive director of the Kohler Foundation. Now a mother of three children, Laura says, "The day after I delivered my third child, I was still in the hospital and my father hooked me up to a conference call--from my bed." Laura says she and Rachel are both passionate about the company, but "none of us is my father, who is larger than life."

Rachel, who is responsible for \$280 million of business, joined in 1992 as director of corporate planning and development. A graduate of Princeton with an MBA from the University of Chicago, Rachel worked as an investment analyst for First Boston in New York and then in management consulting at Booz Allen & Hamilton. "I planned these two steps in my career," she says. But having a family was also a priority. "What I didn't plan was how much I enjoyed being a mom. I am at Kohler because of what my father created and the attraction it's held."

Joining Kohler in 1993, son David, 35, now group president of the Kohler Co. Kitchen and Bath Group, has the biggest portion of the pie: \$1.2 billion. But his father has not yet decided who is going to be the next successor. "No one at this point is an obvious successor," Kohler says. "Gender doesn't mean a damn thing anymore, and there's no reason to select a male or a female for any particular job we have." Says Rachel, "I think the way we've structured the company, it will be the three of us." Her father does not discourage competition "because as long as it's respectful, a small amount is good."

### **The Philanthropist**

Laurie Tisch Sussman grew up learning about business through the lens of Loew's Corp., where her father, Preston Robert Tisch, is now co-chairman.

The only daughter in a family of men, Laurie had two brothers and four male cousins: brother Jonathan, chairman and CEO of Loew's Hotels; brother Steve, a Hollywood movie producer; cousins Andrew, chairman of Loew's executive committee; James, Loew's president and CEO; and Tom and Dan, money managers.

"It wasn't easy being the only female," Laurie recalls. "People say because I was the only girl in the family, I must have been spoiled. And I say, 'I wish.' I wasn't raised to be a princess. I'm an example of what doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

"It's harder to be a father than a CEO," reflects Tisch, who as co-chairman of Loew's with his brother Laurence A. Tisch, oversees \$70.9 billion in assets and almost \$21.3 billion in revenues. "When you're a CEO, a lot of people do a lot of things for you. When you're a father, you can't delegate it."

Both of Laurie's brothers found jobs at her father's corporation, but after graduation from the University of Michigan, Laurie found the Tisch empire wasn't ready to take her in. "It never worked out that we had the right job and the right place for her," says her father.

So Laurie set out for Park City, UT, taught Spanish in an elementary school, and became a ski bum. Five years later she returned to New York and fulfilled her father's expectation for her, which, she says, was to get married. She became Laurie Tisch Sussman and had a child. Four months after the child was born, she volunteered at a small museum that under her guidance and chairmanship became the Children's Museum of Manhattan. Almost single-handedly, Sussman turned this museum into one of the country's leading children's institutions.

"It never occurred to me, business career or not," says Laurie, "not to have some kind of philanthropic involvement and not just to write checks but to do things. That's the most important thing my parents taught me: That you can do things with money, you can make things happen." As chairwoman of the Center for Arts Education, a nonprofit organization, Laurie played a pivotal role in restoring arts education to 50,000 New York City public school children. Starting with a \$12 million challenge grant from the Annenberg Foundation, Laurie successfully raised \$24 million, hand-picked a board of directors, and has indirectly helped leverage \$225 million in public funds in support of arts education in New York City public schools.

It's not surprising that Laurie is so committed to improving New York City's cultural and educational institutions. Her father, also chairman and co-CEO of the New York Giants football team, is a founding co-chairman of Citymeals-on-Wheels, the giant feed-the-needy program in New York City and along with his family has been a significant contributor to many of the city's human services, educational, civic, business, and charitable communities. But he undertook his latest philanthropic venture through his daughter. "Laurie called me up one day and said, 'Dad, why don't you do for sports what I'm doing for the arts?'" As a result, Tisch founded a not-for-profit organization, Take the Field, which is rebuilding athletic facilities in the New York City public schools. "I started this with a grant from Annenberg based on Laurie's reputation," Tisch concedes.

Tisch, who originally excluded his daughter from the family enterprises, says, "When I ran Loew's, we had one woman in a high position. Things have changed dramatically over the past 20 years, and today over half the executives are women. If I had to do it all over again, I'd have Laurie work in the company.

Laurie, now 50 and divorced with two teen-aged daughters, says: "My greatest frustration is I didn't go to law school or business school. I hope my daughters will go further than I've gone."

If her children only do philanthropic work, Laurie says, that's fine, but they should not be limited to that. "And that," she adds, "is a change that has happened in the past 30 years."