



# The Cycle of the Gift: Family Wealth and Wisdom (Bloomberg)

*James E. Hughes, Susan E. Massenzio, Keith Whitaker*

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## A comprehensive guide to giving well to family members

Giving is at the core of family life--and with current law allowing up to \$5,120,000 in tax-free gifts, at least through December 2012, the ultra-affluent are faced with the task of giving at perhaps largest scale in history. Beyond the tax saving and wealth management implications, giving to family members opens up a slew of thorny questions, the biggest of which is, "How do I prepare recipients of such large gifts?" With that question and others in mind, Hughes, Massenzio, and Whitaker have written *The Cycle of the Gift* in three main parts: "The Who of Giving," "The How of Giving," and "The What and Why of Giving." The first part focuses on the people most deeply involved in family giving, especially the recipients and givers (parents, grandparents, spouses, trustees). The second part, "The How of Giving," addresses the delicate balance of givers who want to maintain some level of control and recipients who want some level of freedom in accepting and growing their gifts. The final part, "The What and Why of Giving" describes various types of gifts, from money to business interests to values and rituals. The authors also introduce their "family bank" concept as a model that combines loans, trusts, and outright gifts. It embodies a framework and set of practices for long-term family growth. Even families without great wealth--or those who have already made large gifts to their children and grandchildren--can benefit from the human wisdom and practical advice found in *The Cycle of the Gift*.

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