



*Ten Commandments for*  
**WORKING WITH YOUR SPOUSE**  
 MARCIA NELSON

1. Always treat each other with respect. Do not interrupt even if you think you know what your spouse will say. That may work at home or socially, but should not be part of business protocol.
2. Remember what hat/role you are wearing when you talk to your spouse. Are you business partner, spouse, or friend? The conversation will be different depending on your role. At home, put on your marriage hats; leave the business at work.
3. Be dependable. Be accountable to your commitments. Do your part with integrity. You are equal partners in a family business venture and thereby need to carry your load.
4. Forgive. Be your personal best every day and forgive each other on the days you fall short of expectations—your expectations of yourself and your expectations of your spouse.
5. Share ideas and invite counsel in order to make a good plan better...BEST. Put your egos aside so you can utilize each other as well as outside sources. Don't let the genetic gene pool limit what can be achieved with diverse input/creativity for your business.
6. Find something to laugh about every day. Ask each other, "What happened today that made you laugh?" as part of your post-work ritual.
7. Never surprise your spouse. Do not withhold information they need to hear/know. Have each other's back. By doing this you are best prepared for every meeting, can anticipate contingencies, can meet difficulties head-on and thereby avoid embarrassment for your spouse or your business.
8. Do the right thing even if it is the hard thing. When we have the courage to make mistakes, advise our clients that what they want to do is not really in their best interests, spend the time to listen to our spouse or co-workers/clients, we bring empathy and integrity to our personal and professional lives. Do not fear confrontation, it breeds intimacy.
9. Not take credit from your spouse; celebrate their greatness. When you celebrate the greatness of your spouse, you honor them and yourself because one's spouse is instrumental in developing a better me.
10. Sit together at the end of the day, week, or month and remind yourselves why you love each other. Or, make an investment in counseling to do the same.



## MARCIA NELSON, MS

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MARCIA NELSON, MS has been involved with her husband, Gary, in the human capital management industry for the past 34 years. Their 40 year business, Nelson Family of Companies, provides contingent and direct hire staffing, payroll, compliance, and VMS/MSP/SOW services and software for small and enterprise companies in the areas of Administrative, IT, Accounting, and Legal. Most recently the family has begun the succession process to the second generation as well as the establishment of a Family Office for the continued legacy of their business concerns to the third generation.

Her Marriage Family Therapy training has been instrumental in Marcia's job as CEO (Chief Emotional Officer) of this blended family business. Establishing the ground rules for employment by family members in a family business, navigating the difficulty between father and sons when employment issues emerge, and facilitating meetings among the generations surrounding rights and responsibilities such that everyone is heard and understood before decisions are made is part of her job. Creating age appropriate educational opportunities for development of the third generation, the grandchildren, is next on her list of to-dos.