

If Doug Tozer had his way, he'd go without a title. "I don't believe in corporate hierarchy or managerial layers." It's no surprise really, considering that mutual respect is one of the values on which Tozer built Wheels Group. "We've had many people come over to our organization because they saw that they spread their wings here and do what they are really good at. This is because of one of our core processes: respect."

Tozer's \$300-million-a-year logistics company is also built on integrity, innovation, perseverance, passion and knowledge—principles that remain as strong as the day the "wheels" started turning 20 years ago.

But the founder is pretty modest about taking credit for its success. Today, Wheels Group has 15 offices across North America, 300 employees, more than 400 drivers and 1,400 dry and refrigerated trailers that serve clients such as Con-Agra Foods, Unilever, General Mills, Goodyear, Hershey and Ford. "I didn't set out in 1988 to create the company that is here today." He adds: "It wouldn't be what it was today if it weren't for all the people behind it."

Nevertheless, Tozer's appreciation for the "human element" and providing added-value customer solutions are what's landed the company on the National Post's "Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies" list since 1997 — and also what underlies the company's annualized growth of 25 per cent.

He recalls how, in the first year of startup, it struck him: "One day, looking around at the 10-plus people I had, I realized I was the only person who couldn't just quit. I had all these other families depending on me." By reinvesting up to 75 per cent of the fund backs into hir-

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Doug Tozer, Founder and Chairman

ing expertise, and developing the necessary systems and processes to provide the best standard of service available, Tozer and his team grew the non-asset company into a multi-modal transportation, dedicated logistics, transload, warehousing and supply chain consulting business. Expansion plans are underway for China, Pacific Rim and Europe.

And says Tozer, "I'm confident because I know my team is behind me, and I have the greatest respect for them all."

Any advice? If you create a work environment where there is complete honesty about any issue, then you have trust. And that will put you way ahead of anybody else.