

HR Toolkit

Your guide to positive employment relationships



Welcome to the DairyNZ HR Toolkit

Congratulations on getting the DairyNZ HR Toolkit!

This toolkit will give you help and solutions that are practical and effective. It will support you to:

- Attract and keep the right staff for your farm
- Make managing your staff easier and less time consuming
- Avoid costly mistakes
- Increase the performance and productivity of your people and therefore your farm
- Help you and your staff to achieve your goals.

Leadership, communication and understanding people are three crucial skills to have when employing people. This toolkit will help you to develop and implement these skills.

A great practical starting point to becoming a better employer is to use the DairyNZ Quickstart Kits. In conjunction with the HR Toolkit, you will be well on your way to becoming an employer of choice.

The HR Toolkit is divided into seven sections:

1. Where to start
2. Finding the right person
3. Getting people started
4. Keeping your team working
5. Retaining and motivating staff
6. Skills you need to lead people
7. Ending employment.

The detailed contents pages will help you look for more specific topics. You will find these at the start of the HR Toolkit.

You can find the
templates for all the
forms in this document
at dairynz.co.nz/people

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Before you get started - your HR strategy

Why this is important

Having a human resource (HR) strategy helps to ensure there is consistency between your image as an employer, the work environment you provide and the way you support and develop your employees. Inconsistencies between what you say and what you do are a significant factor in affecting employee motivation, performance and ultimately retention. People do not like working for employers who say one thing and do another, effectively breaking promises they make.

Ultimately poor staff retention rates will result in reduced productivity and business performance because staff do not gain the specific skills and knowledge required to be effective on your farm. Consistent turnover reinforces the cycle.

This fact sheet will cover

- What is an HR strategy?
- HR strategy options
- Developing your own strategy
- Implementing an HR Strategy in the workplace

What is an HR Strategy?

HR Strategy is essentially about making a statement of intention declaring the type of employer you want to be and what employees can expect as a result. With the strategy in place you then align resources, systems, policies and procedures to assist you in achieving your goals for the business and your employees. Once again it is critical these aspects of the business are all consistent with the stated intention. There are four key areas to align as described in Figure 1 below.

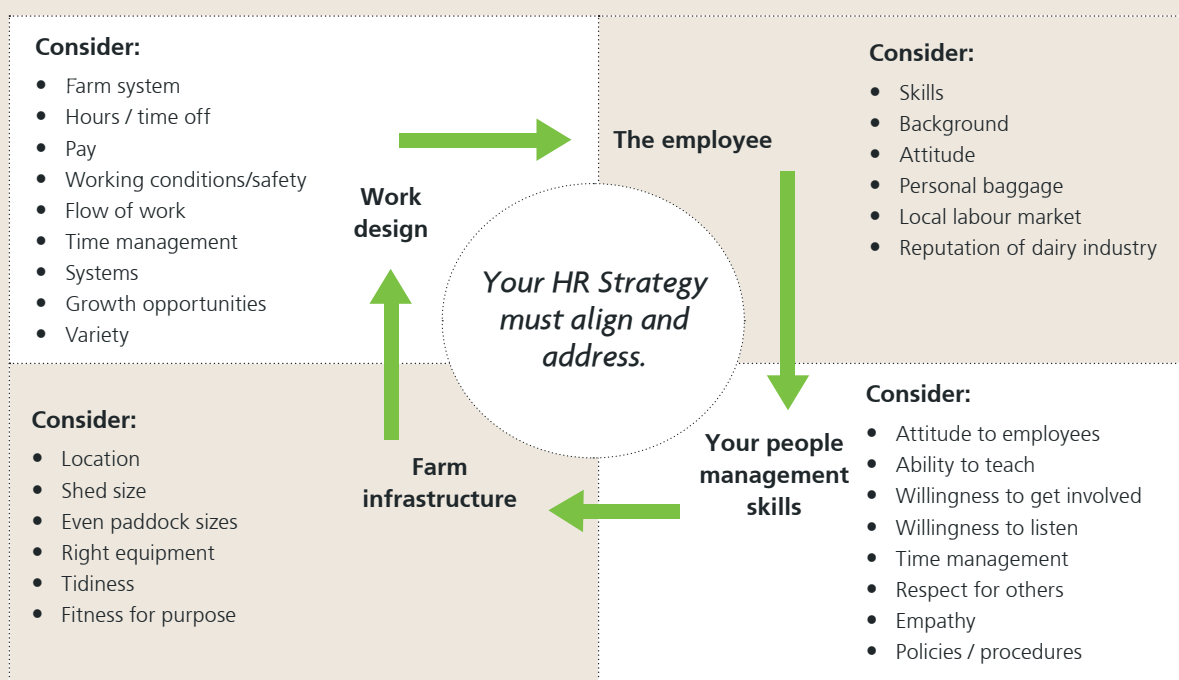


Figure 1: Components to consider when enacting an HR strategy.

HR strategy options

There are three generic HR strategies available to dairy farm businesses:

High commitment strategy

This is a long term strategy that is adopted by an employer who aims to build employee commitment by developing and growing people to meet the needs of the business. Typically employees are recruited at a lower level, then developed and grown within the business. This strategy has the benefit of specifically developing employees to meet the needs of the business, rather than selecting employees who are 'ready made'.

This strategy requires HIGH input and HIGH commitment from the employer.

Low cost strategy

This strategy has a short-term focus with the aim of hiring people with the required skills who are able to do the job now. Future needs will be catered for by purchasing skills when they are required.

This strategy requires LOW input and LOW commitment from the employer, but the cost of purchasing required skills is often HIGH.

Contracting out HR management

Industry research tells us that a high proportion of employers do not enjoy the people management aspect of their job. If this is true, their performance in this aspect of the business may be detrimental to the overall business and the continued growth of their investment in the industry. An alternative option for these people may be the employment of a manager, sharemilker or HR professional to manage the people aspect of the business on their behalf. This person will then be responsible for implementing the business's HR strategy.

Which strategy is best?

No strategy is necessarily better than another, it is how it is implemented and the expectations of both parties when entering into the employment relationship that most affect the outcomes. However, different employment environments can call for different approaches.

Full employment

A high commitment strategy is likely to be more appropriate when there's full employment and it's hard to find new employees. In this situation potential employees select jobs based on a range of factors not just pay and time off. Less tangible factors, such as the workplace culture or the training on offer become more important attractants to a position when there is full employment. Whilst you may get new employees joining your workplace, they will soon leave if these other factors are not delivered as promised.

Skill shortages

During times of skill shortages a high commitment strategy is likely to be more appropriate as it focuses on building skills to meet the businesses's needs. Relying on recruiting talent when you need it can be risky and may mean that you miss out on the people you need or you are drawn into a bidding war to secure the talent you need. Either of these outcomes has serious implications for your business bottom line.

High unemployment

Where employees are in plentiful supply your options as an employer are more open. However, even in these times you should remember that you will build a reputation as an employer in the industry, and positive or not, this reputation will follow you into times of tight labour supply.

Can you have different strategies at different levels?

Employees usually demand equitable treatment. They like to see their colleagues treated fairly and the same way they are treated. Small businesses such as dairy farms are usually highly transparent, with all staff reporting to one manager. This makes it difficult to operate different strategies for different levels of employees.

Do you need different strategies for different age groups?

Different generations are motivated by different factors. Generally younger generations have grown up in a different environment and have different expectations of work. They want more than just fair pay for a fair day's work. They want to feel valued, to have the opportunity to grow in their roles and to be offered the opportunity to do a variety of work. Older generations are likely to accept the fair pay for fair work paradigm, but will also respond to management aimed at younger people. Different strategies may be required to ensure that each of your employees are motivated and recognised.

Can you mix the strategies to form your own?

Absolutely, but remember the catch phrase is consistency! You need to make absolutely sure the strategy does not lead you to say one thing and then act differently. This will lead to people leaving.

How do I develop an HR strategy?

Table 1 describes two generic strategies, high commitment and low cost, in more detail. To clarify or develop your HR strategy, follow this process:

- Write down your goals for your business with respect to people. Consider:
 - Your role in the business and desired workload
 - Business goals, the skills required to achieve these goals, who needs these skills and how you will get them into the business (build or buy)
 - Farm infrastructure and equipment and how that helps or hinders your strategy
 - Your desire to give back to the industry through growing people and helping them progress in the industry.
- Work out which strategy best describes current practice on your farm. For each characteristic in Table 1, circle the descriptor that best describes the current situation in your business. For example:

| Characteristic | Descriptors | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| | High Commitment | Low Cost |
| Employer attitude | People-focused. Believes people are greatest asset to business. | Task-focused. People employed to do the job as directed. |
| Employer skill | Has good people skills, or is actively developing those skills. | Training mainly production-focused. People are secondary consideration. |

The column where you have most circles describes your current HR strategy, either high commitment or low cost.

- Is this what you would have expected?
 - If you have a lot of circles in different columns your strategy may be considered to be confused. Consider the way in which your current strategy flows. Is it consistent? If so, that's great!
3. Decide if your current strategy is best for your business, or whether you need to change it.
 - Will the strategy allow you to meet your longer term business goals?
 - What impact is the labour market having within the immediate area? Do you need to change your strategy in direct response to any specific skills shortage or particular difficulties recruiting for your local region?
 - Discuss this with key stakeholders such as your partner, advisors and your staff.
 - Consider whether your ideal HR strategy is achievable at present, or is a longer term goal to work towards, and therefore do you have an interim strategy that can be adopted and is more realistic for immediate use?
 4. Look at the staff you have available and your skill to determine how they match with your desired strategy.
 - What will have to change?
 - Once again this may be planned over a longer time period.
 5. Develop an action plan to implement the strategy.

Table 1: Characteristics of workplaces employing one of two generic HR strategies.

| Characteristic | Descriptors | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| | High Commitment | Low Cost |
| Employer attitude | People-focused. Believes people are greatest asset to business | Task-focused. People employed to do job as directed |
| Employer skill | Has good people skills, or is actively developing those skills | Training mainly production-focused. People are secondary consideration |
| Recruitment | Based on attitude and fit with team. Skills are important but secondary | Based on ability to do the job, or to be trained to do the job in short space of time |
| Job Description | High degree of multi-skilling allowing staff to work in variety of areas | Highly defined, with narrow scope |
| Employee autonomy | High | Low |
| Age profile of employee | Any age | Tend to be younger as young people work for less |

| Characteristic | Descriptors | |
|--|--|---|
| | High Commitment | Low Cost |
| Salaries | Above average with performance incentives linked to business performance | Minimised |
| Visibility of business | Team understand the “big picture” | Staff only told what they need to know for role |
| Workplace culture | Shared culture common to all. Usually collegial | No unique culture. Usually hierarchical |
| Policy and process | Important but at all times relationship focus is maintained | High level of prescription |
| Performance management | Critical part of calendar. Development focused | Only used when things go wrong. Compliance-focused |
| When things go wrong | Employer asks what they could have done better to avoid the situation | Employer usually looks to staff as the source of the problem |
| Employee training and development | Provided to develop the person, recognising they may leave. Helps individual be more flexible & adaptable, benefiting business | Only provided in relation skills required for job, often informal & on farm |
| Promotion | Promote from within where possible | Low investment in development means new hires are required to fill senior positions |
| Career planning and progression | Assists employees to plan career and provides opportunity for employees to develop within business. May help employee to find next job | No progression offered |
| Retention | Aims to retain staff for multiple years to benefit from investment | Low investment so turnover not a problem |
| Job security | High level of job security. Coaching provided to improve performance | Security dependent on performance |
| Flexibility | Flexibility demonstrated where possible to meet the needs of the team | Routine goes on regardless |
| Accommodation | High quality accommodation you would be happy to live in yourself | Meets standards |
| Work design | Continually review work design to be efficient and enjoyable for staff | Doing the job the same way it has always been done |
| Infrastructure | Reviews infrastructure and tools to make sure they are suited to the job | Makes do with inadequate infrastructure and tools |

The people overlay

As small businesses' dairy farmers generally employ less than five people. The type of person employed becomes an important consideration in fine-tuning the HR strategy. The table below describes some of the different requirements that are placed on employers as a result of hiring different types of people.

Table 2: Requirements of different employee types.

| | Young Trainee | Rising Star | Career Changer | Immigrant | Experienced Dairy Worker |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Employer attitude | People focus required | People focus required | People focus required | People focus required | People or task focus |
| Hours of work | Low | Average | Average | Average | Average |
| Salaries | Lower, in line with hours | Average. May be offset by training provided | Average. May require good quality family accommodation | Average | High |
| Employer commitment required | Very high with degree of parenting included | Very high to continue challenging & growing star | High | Very high, language & cultural issues | Low |
| Training required | High. On-farm task focused | High. Including off-farm training, discussion groups, conferences, etc | High. Initially on-farm focused then wider | High. On-farm focused | Identifying career path/ advancement |
| Additional support | Board or Meals during peak workload periods | Opportunity to try things and sometimes fail | Getting through first spring. Assimilating family into community | Assistance with transition to new culture & language | Nil |

Implementing your HR strategy in the workplace

Now that you have identified your HR strategy you should review your policies, procedures and processes and identify any gaps. As you conduct this review it is critical that you look back at the HR strategy you have chosen and make sure that your systems and practices are consistent with that vision.

The remainder of the HR Toolkit deals with processes and practices that will help you to successfully manage people on farm. Specific things to focus on for each strategy are discussed below:

The low cost strategy

If you have identified this as your strategy then the key focus for your plan of action should be a review of your employees' current skills base/knowledge level. Identify any gaps that need to be addressed immediately and plan how the gaps will be met. Do you need to re-allocate work to more experienced employees, to get more involved yourself or hire new skills?

The high commitment strategy

If you have identified this as your strategy then the key focus is to review your staff-focused procedures and policies and consider:

- Have training needs been identified and appropriate training scheduled?
- Have performance reviews been planned?
- Is there a clear career path identified for your employees?
- Are you confident that your on-farm practice is a true reflection of this strategy?

What do I do next?

- Work through the process of developing your HR plan as described in this fact sheet
- Examine your farm infrastructure, systems and processes to ensure they are consistent with your chosen strategy
- Get help, if needed, from an HR professional
- Attend HR training on building teams and performance management to gain more insight into these topics
- Develop and implement the action plan.

What are the benefits to me?

When you are clear on what you are trying to achieve you are more likely to be successful as an employer. This success will lead to:

- Greater commitment and increased productivity from staff
- Reduced turnover and associated costs
- Better business performance
- Reduced stress in dealing with employees
- Building a reputation as a good employer and as a result the ability to attract a greater number of people to any vacancies you do have.

Useful references

The PrimaryITO Rural Staff Management Workshops offer the opportunity to find out more about performance management and building high performing teams, both of which are critical to successfully implementing HR strategy.

This fact sheet is part of DairyNZ's HR Toolkit - a guide to the fundamentals in establishing successful employment relationships. To access the full HR Toolkit please visit the DairyNZ website at dairynz.co.nz

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1.1 Legal Responsibilities

It's the Law – Your obligations as an employer

Why this is important

The foundation of being a good employer is knowing and adhering to your legal rights and responsibilities. It is your best means of protection if an employment dispute occurs.

This fact sheet will cover:

A brief introduction to the employment law relevant to dairy farming including:

- Employment Relations Act
- Wages Protection Act
- Human Rights Act
- Holidays Act
- Residential Tenancy Act
- Minimum Wage Act
- Equal Pay Act
- Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act
- Health and Safety in Employment Act
- KiwiSaver
- Privacy Act

Please note: This Fact Sheet is a summary only and not an exhaustive legal reference. The law changes frequently and can be complicated. Should you have any employment-related problems, please seek expert advice.

Employment Relations Act 2000 (ERA)

The ERA took effect from 2 October 2000, replacing the Employment Contracts Act 1991. Any new or renegotiated employment agreements need to comply with the ERA's requirements. The main requirements are:

Dealing in "good faith"

The ultimate goal of the ERA is to build productive employment relationships by dealing with one another in good faith. At the most basic level, good faith is about telling the truth and each party being able to have trust and confidence in the other. The requirements of good faith recognise that both the employer and the employee have a role in making the employment relationship work.

Good faith is not about always saying yes and it does not mean the two sides have to agree, but both sides should get a fair hearing.

Written employment agreements (see Employment Agreements Fact Sheet 1.2)

From 1st July 2011, all new employees must have a written employment agreement. This includes all casual staff employed on farms, such as relief milkers. All agreements are required to contain:

- The name of the employer and employee
- A description of the work to be performed
- An indication of where the work is to be performed
- An indication of the hours of work
- Wages or salary to be paid
- A plain language explanation of how employment problems will be resolved and the 90-day opportunity the employee has for raising those grievances once they have become aware of the grievance
- A clause stating the Employee's right to be paid time and a half if they work on a public holiday, and to be given a day off in lieu
- An "employee protection provision". An "employee protection provision" is a clause in an employment agreement that aims to provide employment protection for employees in sale of property and restructuring situations
- Details of any trial period agreed to between the employer and employee
- The start and end date for fixed term periods of employment (see Fixed Term agreements below)
- From 1st July 2011 employers are required to retain a signed copy of the employment agreement or current terms and conditions of employment for all employees.

Fixed term agreements

It is assumed that all agreements will run indefinitely unless there is a valid reason for them to be of a fixed term nature. Such reasons may be where project work finishes, where a temporary worker is filling in for a permanent employee on leave or where work is seasonal, e.g. calving.

A fixed term agreement may be for a fixed period or until a specific event happens. Either way the employer must put it in writing and make clear to the employee at the commencement of the agreement when and how the agreement will be terminated.

The dairy "season" of 1 June to 31 May measures a financial and production year but it does not mean dairy work is seasonal. Fixed term agreements are not appropriate in this situation.

Opportunity to seek advice

Prior to employment, employees should be presented with a copy of the proposed agreement and allowed a fair and reasonable time to take the agreement away, study it and to seek advice. They should also be given the opportunity to negotiate the terms of the agreement.

Trial periods

The Employment Relations Act 2000 contains provision for a trial period for new employees.

A trial period allows you time to see how a new person performs on the job and whether they fit into the team. The trial period can be for up to 90 calendar days. You can't put an employee on a trial period if you've previously employed them and a trial period can only be agreed on once for each employee. During the trial, you can give notice to dismiss the employee without them being able to take a personal grievance for reasons of unjustified dismissal against you.

It is important that you record the details of the trial period in an employee's employment agreement including a termination of trial clause at the end of the agreement.

For more details see www.dol.govt.nz/er/starting/relationships/agreements/trialperiod.asp

Probation periods

A probationary employee is a permanent employee who is yet to be confirmed in their position and the probation period provides time for this to occur. The period should only be long enough for the employee to demonstrate their suitability for the job.

You can agree to a probation period with a new employee no matter how many employees you have but you must record, in writing, the duration of the probation period, what you expect from your employee, and what you'll provide to help your employee achieve these expectations.

Probation periods may be extended if both parties agree.

What you must do:

- Negotiate a trial or probation period in a fair way with your new employee
- Follow the minimum employment rights regarding pay, conditions, holidays and leave, and health and safety during a trial or probation period
- Consider and respond to any issues raised by the new employee during their trial or probation period
- Ensure you clarify your expectations first and give employees the resources, support and training they need to succeed.

For more information see www.dol.govt.nz/er/starting/relationships/agreements/probation.asp

Minimum Wages Act 1983 (MWA)

The MWA stipulates minimum hourly wage rates for all employees. These rates are regularly updated by the government and can be found by calling:

- Labour Inspectorate contact centre – 0800 20 90 20
- Federated Farmers of New Zealand (members only) – 0800 327 646

Note that there is no longer a minimum wage for youth and that there are provisions for a training wage to be paid to people who are in recognised industry training.

Employees must be paid at least this minimum rate for every hour they work (even if on a wage or salary). If employees are provided with board or lodging, a deduction can be made to a point where the effective hourly rate is up to 15% for board or 5% for lodging below the minimum hourly rate.

Wages Protection Act 1983

An employer is required to pay wages in cash unless:

- The employee has provided written consent to be paid in another way
- The employee is absent from work at the time wages are normally paid.

The frequency of pay should be by agreement between employer and employee and at regular intervals. A midweek pay-day is recommended to ensure that direct credits are less likely to be affected by public holiday bank closures.

Unless a deduction is ordered by a court or for statutory purposes (such as income tax, child support or student loan payment) an employer can only make deductions from an employee's wages with their written consent. Typical deductions include rent, telephone and power.

Equal Pay Act 1972

An employer cannot differentiate in pay rates where the only difference between employees is their gender.

Human Rights Act 1993

An employer must not discriminate between people in hiring and firing or training and promotion based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation, marital or family status, employment status, age, religious belief, political opinion or if the employee has a disability.

Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987

It is illegal to either dismiss or discriminate against an employee on grounds of pregnancy or for taking parental leave under the Act, although there are limited grounds for dismissal where it is unreasonable to hold the job open. (It is very rare that a job cannot be kept open).

Entitlements

Birth mothers and their partner/spouse are eligible for parental leave on the birth of a child or adoption of a child under six years of age. To be eligible, the employee must have worked at least an average of 10 hours each week, including at least one hour per week or 40 hours per month, for the same employer for 6 or 12 months before the expected date of birth or adoption.

There are four types of unpaid parental leave. These include:

1. Special leave of up to 10 days for a pregnant mother for pregnancy-related reasons
2. Maternity leave of up to 14 continuous weeks for the mother, with up to six weeks available before the birth or adoption of the child, if employed for greater than six months before the due date of the baby
3. Partner's parental leave of up to two weeks on the birth or adoption of a child
4. Extended leave of up to 52 weeks, less any maternity leave taken if employed for at least 12 months before the due date of the baby. This can be shared between the parents, if they are both eligible.

With the exception of the 10 special days during pregnancy, other long term leave entitlements must be applied for in writing at least three months before the baby is due.

Statutory paid parental leave scheme

Eligible employees are entitled to paid parental leave. The payment replaces 100% of the employees previous earnings, up to a predetermined level and is paid by the Government. This paid leave is included in other entitlements, not in addition. For further information on entitlements contact the Labour Inspectorate contact centre on 0800 20 90 20 or www.dol.govt.nz.

Holidays Act 2003

Annual leave

At the end of each 12 months of employment with any one employer, the employee is entitled to four week's of annual leave. While on leave the employee is paid for the time that they would normally be at work.

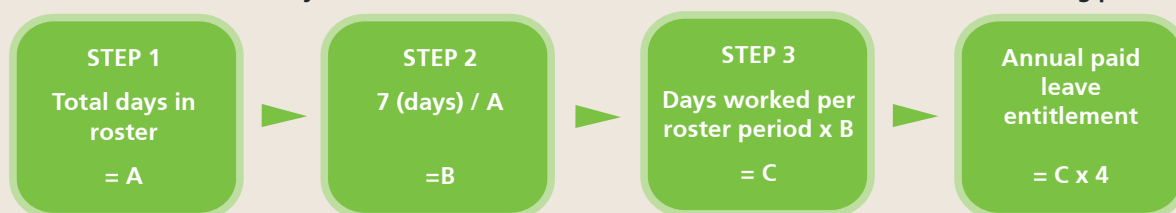
Two of those weeks must be allowed as uninterrupted leave if required. Technically the employer is not required to allow holidays until such time as the 12 months is up, however leave is accumulated on a daily basis and may be taken in advance if the employer allows. Where possible, the timing of holidays should be by negotiation but the employer has the final say.

Holiday allowances are accrued on a pro-rata basis throughout the year. At the end of the employment agreement the employer must pay the employee for any holidays owed to them.

Defining the working week and leave entitlements

The working week varies for different staff depending on their rostered time off. The amount of paid annual leave they are entitled to is calculated on the average working week of the employee, multiplied by four weeks.

To calculate annual holiday entitlements for staff who work rostered time off use the following process:



| PROCESS | EXAMPLE 1 Roster every second weekend off (12 days on and 2 days off) | EXAMPLE 2 Roster 11 days on, 3 days off, 5 days on, 1 day off | YOUR WORK SPACE |
|---|---|---|---------------------|
| Work out the employee's roster period (A) | Roster period: 12 + 2 = 14 days | Roster period: 11 + 3 + 5 + 1 = 20 days | A = |
| Divide 7 days (one week) by the roster period (B) | 7 days per week/14 days in roster period B = 0.5 | 7 days per week/20 days in roster period B = 0.35 | B = |
| Number of days in an average working week (C) = Days worked in roster period x B | 12 days worked in roster period x 0.5 = 6 days in an average working week | 16 days worked in roster period x 0.35 = 5.6 days in average working week | C = |
| Number of days of annual paid leave entitlement = Days in average working week (c) x 4 weeks annual leave | Leave entitlement: 6 x 4 = 24 days | Leave entitlement: 5.6 x 4 = 22.4 days | Annual paid leave = |

Note: This formula is only for use with salaried staff on set rosters. Casual employees can receive their holiday entitlement pay on a 'pay as you go' basis. This should be explicitly detailed in their employment agreement and the amount to be paid must be at least 8% of the employee's gross earnings and must be shown separately on the employee's pay slip.

Due to the flexible nature of dairy farming and changing rosters, it is important that you clearly communicate this process and entitlements with staff. Employees can ask (in writing) to cash-up up to one week of their annual holidays each year. Employers can't pressure employees to cash up annual holidays and requests to cash up can't be included in employment agreements.

Holiday records must be kept for six (6) years.

Public holidays

Employees are also entitled to 11 paid public holidays on pay if they fall on days the employee would normally work. Those days are:

- New Year's Day
- January 2nd
- Provincial Anniversary Day
- Waitangi Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- ANZAC Day
- Queen's Birthday
- Labour Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- The Anniversary Day of the province in which an employee works will also need to be included as a statutory holiday.

On a public holiday an employee must receive a full day off, not just the time between milkings! If an employee is required to work on any public holiday they are entitled to an alternative day off, which is a full day off at another mutually agreed time. They are also entitled to payment at time-and-a-half for the hours actually worked on the public holiday. Any casual staff employed on a statutory holiday must be paid at time-and-a-half for all the hours they work. An employer and employee can also agree to transfer a public holiday from the day listed in the Act to another working day. The purpose of the transfer cannot be to avoid paying the employee time and a half for working on a public holiday or providing them with an alternative holiday (although this may be the end result).

Sick leave

After six months with an employer, an employee is entitled to five days' sick leave on pay and a subsequent five days per 12 month period thereafter. An employee can also take sick leave when they are required to stay at home to care for a spouse or another dependent person. This group includes the employee's spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild or the spouse's parent and any other person agreed to be a dependant. Unused sick leave under the Holidays Act 2003 is carried over with a maximum accumulation of 20 days including the current entitlement.

Bereavement leave

After six months with an employer, the Holidays Act 2003 allows employees up to three days' paid leave for the death of an immediate family member. In the case of a multiple fatality, the employee is entitled to three days' bereavement leave in respect to each death. Bereavement leave does not have to be taken immediately, nor on consecutive days. In the event of a death outside the family, an employee is entitled to one day of paid leave if the employer accepts that the employee has suffered a bereavement. Bereavement leave is not limited to a specific total number of days.

Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 *(see Health & Safety Fact Sheet 1.3)*

Under the Act employers have two specific duties:

1. Duty to warn authorised visitors of hazards
2. Full duty to employees, contractors and people who are paying customers, to provide and maintain a safe working environment. This includes:
 - a. all employees, both permanent and casual
 - b. all contractors
 - c. all people buying or inspecting goods offered for sale
 - d. all people in the vicinity of the farm.

It should also be noted that employees have a duty to act in a safe manner and not to place themselves or others in danger.

Residential Tenancies Act 1986

Where a farm owner or sharemilker provides housing for their staff they also have a dual role as landlord through a service tenancy (see Accommodation Fact Sheet 1.4). A service tenancy differs from a standard tenancy arrangement, in that where an employment agreement ends, 14 days' notice of eviction can be given rather than 90 days. Where an employment agreement is terminated notice should also be given terminating the rental agreement. They are not one and the same!

As a landlord an employer must ensure that the dwelling is of a liveable standard and meets the requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act and the Health and Safety Act. In the case of a sharemilking agreement, it is the sharemilker who is responsible for meeting the required standards for their employee. Any costs incurred by the sharemilker in doing so must then be sought from the owner of the dwelling in accordance with their sharemilking agreement, as the owner has the same obligations to the sharemilker.

Rest and meal breaks

Employers are required to provide workers with paid rest breaks and unpaid meal breaks.

Workers are entitled to the following paid rest breaks:

- One 10-minute paid rest break if their work period is between two and four hours;
- One 10-minute paid rest break and one unpaid 30-minute meal break if their work period is from four to six hours;
- Two 10-minute paid rest breaks and one 30-minute unpaid meal break if their work period is from six to eight hours.

Where employees work for periods longer than eight hours, these provisions automatically re-apply to each succeeding work period.

For more information see www.dol.govt.nz/er/starting/relationships/mealbreaks/index.asp

Legal responsibilities and IRD

The IRD has a wide-ranging interest in employment agreements and especially in the way in which staff are remunerated. Some of the duties of an employer include:

- Registering with IRD as an employer
- Deducting PAYE, child support and student loan payments from employee wages
- Payment of Fringe Benefit Tax on any “perks” to employees
- Charging staff a fair market rental for accommodation.

For further information or assistance contact the IRD via www.ird.govt.nz or 0800 377 772.

KiwiSaver

An employer’s main roles with regards to KiwiSaver are to:

- Check whether new employees are eligible to join KiwiSaver
- Check whether new employees should be automatically enrolled
- Give the KiwiSaver employee information pack (KS3) to:
 - new employees who qualify for automatic enrolment, and
 - existing employees who want to opt in
- Provide information to the IRD about:
 - all new employees who qualify for automatic enrolment, and
 - eligible employees who want to opt in to KiwiSaver
- Deduct KiwiSaver contributions and make compulsory employer contributions at the correct rate and forward them to the IRD by the due date along with your PAYE payments
- Act on opt-out and contributions holiday requests
- Stop or start deductions when the IRD advise you to
- Contact the IRD when you require more KiwiSaver employee information packs (KS3).

More information

The KiwiSaver and IRD websites contain all the information you need to know about your obligations as an employer and how to go about making payments.

Useful links

www.ird.govt.nz/kiwisaver/employers/

www.kiwisaver.govt.nz

The Privacy Act 1993

Personal information is, by its nature, personal and often sensitive. The Privacy Act sets out principles surrounding the handling and management of personal information, to avoid upsetting and damaging misuse.

The Privacy Act became law in 1993. It is concerned with the handling and management of personal information and aims to encourage the development of good practice. Every employer should have a 'privacy officer' who is familiar with the main requirements of the Act. On-farm, this would likely be the owner or manager.

Meeting the requirements of the Privacy Act

The Privacy Act contains a number of principles which should be followed at all times when dealing with personal information. In summary, these are:

| | |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Only collect information you need |
| 2. | Collect information from the person concerned unless it is available publicly |
| 3. | Tell the person what information is being collected about them and why |
| 4. | Don't put pressure on people to provide you with personal information |
| 5. | Store all personal information securely |
| 6. | Give people access to their personal information and allow them to correct it if necessary. If you refuse to show someone their personal information, tell them why |
| 7. | Make sure that personal information is accurate before using it |
| 8. | Don't keep information for longer than you realistically need it |
| 9. | Don't use information collected for one purpose for anything else, unless absolutely necessary |
| 10. | Don't disclose other people's personal information without good reason. You wouldn't want it to happen to you. |

Useful websites

www.ema.co.nz (information for employers - membership required)

www.privacy.org.nz (Office of the Privacy Commissioner)

www.legislation.govt.nz

Legal responsibilities and ACC

Under the Accident Compensation Act employers must pay a levy from their business to fund ACC for work-related accidents. In addition, they must also pay a levy for each employee based on the employees earnings to cover the employee for non-work related accidents.

What are the benefits to me?

- Abiding by the law surrounding the employment relationship means that you will limit your exposure to a potentially costly action surrounding breach of agreement or a personal grievance.
- The dairy farm labour market is very competitive and compliance will provide an advantage in attracting staff by demonstrating that you are a professional employer and provide a safe and healthy work environment.
- Discussing these issues with an employee before they start work with you will help to clarify expectations around the job, increasing the likelihood that you employ the right person for the role.

What do I do next?

- If you need to know more contact the appropriate group as listed below
- Ensure that all practices on your farm are compliant
- Review compliance annually as the law changes on a regular basis
- Seek legal advice if required.

Useful references

Further information can be obtained from the following sources:

Labour Inspectorate contact centre 0800 20 90 20 (website - www.dol.govt.nz)

The Department of Labour has comprehensive fact sheets on employment relations and health and safety online as well as free phone and email help desks.

Inland Revenue, 0800 377 772 (www.ird.govt.nz)

The IRD site contains information on compliance with taxation law including access to a wide range of information in the "library" section. The freephone help line also offers phone-based advice.

Federated Farmers of New Zealand, (members only) 0800 327 646 (www.fedfarm.org.nz)

Federated Farmers provides a range of employment-related services to members, including legal and practical employment advice and agreements.

Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) (www.acc.co.nz)

The ACC site provides contacts and information for employers and employees.

New Zealand Employment Law Guide,

Rudman, R., (2007), CCH New Zealand Ltd, pp408, ISBN: 978-0-86475-698-5.

Useful links

Minimum Employment Rights: www.dol.govt.nz/er/minimumrights

Pay: www.dol.govt.nz/er/pay

Holidays and Leave: www.dol.govt.nz/er/holidaysandleave

Online tool to calculate entitlement and pay for public holidays: www.dol.govt.nz/holidaytool

Parental Leave: www.dol.govt.nz/er/holidaysandleave/parentalleave

This fact sheet is part of DairyNZ's HR Toolkit - a guide to the fundamentals in establishing successful employment relationships. To access the full HR Toolkit please visit the DairyNZ website at www.dairynz.co.nz

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1.2 Employment Agreements

Agreeing to work together

Why this is important

It is important to have an employment agreement with all staff, as it clarifies the employee's rights and responsibilities. This is one of the important ways in which an employer can clearly communicate expectations to an employee and is the first step in effective performance management. In addition to this, employers are legally required to provide all employees with a written employment agreement.

This fact sheet will cover:

- The information required in an employment agreement
- Negotiable terms and conditions
- The duration of an agreement

Background

As of 2 October 2000, the Employment Relations Act 2000 replaced the Employment Contracts Act 1991. As a result we now talk about agreements rather than contracts, emphasising the cooperative intent of the new Act.

Who has to have an agreement?

Previously employers were required to provide written agreements for all staff who commenced work, or renegotiated terms and conditions, after 2 October 2000.

From 1st July 2011, all employees must have a written employment agreement. This includes permanent, fixed terms and casual workers such as relief milkers. Employers are required to retain a signed copy of the employment agreement or the current terms and conditions of employment.

Independent contractors such as variable order and 50/50 sharemilkers, or agricultural service contractors are not covered by this act, although written contracts are still advisable.

Information required in an individual employment agreement

The employer must provide a written individual employment agreement that contains the following legal minimums:

- **The name of the employer and employee.** The name of the employer must be the name of the person or entity that pays the employee. In most cases this will be the name of the farming partnership, but may also be a company or trust. The name should not be that of a manager, who has supervisory responsibility; however the manager could be responsible for the employment of staff.
- **A description of the work to be performed.** As a minimum this should give a clear description of the tasks and responsibilities the employee is to carry out on the farm. A one-liner to the effect of "general farm duties" is not enough. This description should also include any special or different tasks that are carried out on the farm.
- **An indication of where the work is to be performed.** This should include the locality and road address of the property. Also list any other properties that the employee may be required to work on, such as a runoff.
- **An indication of the hours of work.** Hours of work should be as accurate as possible. As good practice, the farming year should be split into seasons and different hours of work indicated for each season. You should also indicate when the employee is expected to be at work.
- **Remuneration.** This should include an explanation of how wage payments will be worked out, how often wages will be paid, when they will be paid and the method for payment e.g. cheque, direct credit. Included in this section should also be any other allowances that will be paid including non-taxable allowances such as wet weather gear and taxable allowances such as accommodation, so that a total package value can be determined.
- **Holidays.** From 1 April 2004, the Holidays Act also requires new employment agreements to contain a clause stating the Employee's right to be paid time and a half if they work on a public holiday, and to be given a day off in lieu.
- **90 day trial period.** If employer and employee agree to a 'trial' period, this has to be included in the employment agreement.
You should state:
 - The length of the trial period - start and end dates
 - That during this trial period, the employee acknowledges that the employer may dismiss the employee by giving X week's notice in writing prior to the end of the trial period
 - That the employee acknowledges that in the event of dismissal, they are not entitled to bring a personal grievance or other legal proceedings against the employer, in respect of that dismissal
 - The employer reserves the right to terminate this agreement, without notice, for serious misconduct, and on notice for other issues of misconduct.
- **Fixed term agreements.** If the employment period is for a fixed term, the agreement must clearly state the start and finish date of the employment relationship
- **Employee protection provision.** From 1 December 2004, new employment agreements must contain an "employee protection provision". An "employee protection provision" is a clause in an employment agreement that aims to provide employment protection for employees in restructuring situations.
- **A plain language explanation of how employment problems will be resolved.** This should outline the employee's right to take up a grievance up to 90 days after becoming aware of the issue they wish to raise a grievance for, and the steps the employer will take to ensure that any employment problems are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner. Employment problems may include, but are not limited to, personal grievances. It should also explain what options are available to both parties should internal procedures fail to deliver a satisfactory solution.

Other employment agreement issues

While the Employment Relations Act 2000 only specifies the above minimums, additional information should be included either in the agreement or as an attached policy manual that more clearly defines expectations. Some of this information may include:

- Leave entitlements
- Accommodation provisions and how rent will be deducted
- Health & safety obligations
- Performance review policies
- Workplace policies
- Security and confidentiality agreement
- Processes for dealing with termination of employment
- Processes for dealing with misconduct and serious misconduct
- Harassment policy
- Disciplinary process
- Serious misconduct.

Negotiable terms and conditions of employment

A number of terms and conditions may be negotiated or bargained about in employment agreements. Bargaining and negotiation mean the same thing. Some of the things that may be negotiated include:

- Remuneration
- Frequency and method of payment
- Timing and frequency of pay reviews
- Hours of work and time off (including annual and special leave above the minimums)
- Training required or desired by the employee and how time and cost is dealt with
- How much notice is required when leaving
- What, if any, redundancy provisions are included.

Negotiating agreements with new employees

The employer must supply a draft employment agreement to the prospective employee and allow them the opportunity to seek advice about it **prior to** commencing work. Once advice has been received, the employee may seek to negotiate further changes to the agreement subject to final acceptance. The employer is obliged to enter into these negotiations in accordance with the principles of good faith (see Legal Responsibilities Fact Sheet 1.1).

Allowing time to seek advice

A potential employee must be provided with an appropriate amount of time to allow them to take a draft agreement away and get independent advice on its content. For a permanent employee this may be a period of one to two weeks, while for a casual employee this may be overnight, provided they have a reasonable opportunity to access advice.

Duration of the agreement

In the absence of written direction the duration of an agreement is open-ended, which is to say there is no end date. There is no such thing as a one-year agreement unless there is a genuine reason for it to be a fixed term agreement. In general, it is assumed that the employer is engaged in a sustainable long-term business and that it is in the best interests of both the employer and employee for this to continue. Therefore, the employee can expect to have a job until such time as they are made redundant, retire, decide to change jobs or are dismissed.

Fixed term employment agreements

There are situations where it is appropriate to hire an employee for a fixed term. An employer may offer fixed term employment where there are genuine reasons for doing so such as:

- Seasonal work, project work or work that will come to an end at a specified point
- Where an employee on a fixed term agreement is filling in for a permanent employee on leave.

The dairy "season" is a financial and production benchmark and is not sufficient reason for a fixed term agreement. Fixed term agreements cannot be used as a precautionary measure or to resolve any performance or personality issues.

The employer must advise the prospective employee prior to signing an agreement that the agreement is of a fixed term, the reasons for this and how or when the agreement will end. These terms must be included in the agreement.

What must NOT be in an employment agreement

Employment agreements must not include anything that goes against any law whether civil or criminal. An example of this may be an attempt to contract an employee out of statutory holidays. Unlawful provisions in an employment agreement cannot be enforced.

Drafting an employment agreement

For some businesses, drafting their own employment agreement may be appropriate. This can be a very technical exercise. Care must be taken to ensure that it is a legal agreement. There are numerous draft agreements in the marketplace that have a "fill in the gaps" type format that can be used to overcome problems with drafting an agreement.

Employment agreements for casual staff

Casual staff members also require employment agreements. In the majority of cases a simplified agreement is acceptable. Federated Farmers provide a good example and template.

What are the benefits to me?

- A written agreement helps to more clearly explain the position to the potential employee in terms of the type of work they will be doing, where they will be doing it and when
- An agreement provides a description of the terms and conditions agreed between employer and employee and provides a legal safeguard for both parties.

Access to employment agreements

- **Federated Farmers of New Zealand 0800 327 646:** Federated Farmers provides a “fill in the gaps” type written agreement for both permanent and casual employees. These are available at a small fee to members and at cost to non-members. Members are also able to receive advice from Federated Farmers’ employment experts, a service not available to non-members.
- **Labour Inspectorate contact centre, 0800 20 90 20, www.dol.govt.nz:** The ERS has example employment agreements as well as a wealth of information on fact sheets that may provide the basis for a business to draw up their own agreement.
- **Rural Professionals:** A wide range of rural professionals including lawyers, accountants, farm and HR consultants have draft agreements available.

What do I do next?

- Ensure that you have written employment agreements for all staff and that these have been signed by both parties
- Check that any fixed term agreements are for a valid reason
- Ensure that agreements used are legal and binding
- Review policies to allow staff to consult with others before signing the agreement.

Useful links

Employment Agreement Builder: www.dol.govt.nz/er/starting/relationships/agreements/builder.asp

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1.3 Health and Safety

A brief guide to working safely on farms

Why this is important

There are approximately 7000 reported accidents on dairy farms in New Zealand each year. A good health and safety process on-farm will prevent accidents that cost money and open people up to legal action.

This fact sheet will cover:

- The Health and Safety in Employment Act
- What is a hazard?
- Hazard identification
- Meeting the requirements of the Health and Safety Act
- Hazard management examples and templates

The Health and Safety in Employment Act

The Health and Safety in Employment Act became law in 1992. The Department of Labour's Health and Safety Inspectorate (previously known as OSH) was established to provide advice in administering the Act. The Act is updated from time to time so please go to www.business.govt.nz/worksafe to check for the most up to date information.

Preventing harm

The Act's main focus is to prevent harm at work. A workplace is any place where a person works for any form of gain or reward. This includes places where employees come to eat, rest or get paid, or any place they may have to pass through to reach a place of work. Domestic accommodation provided for employees is not considered a place of work, although there are Health and Safety requirements for accommodation provided by an employer.

Duty to warn

People who control workplaces only have to verbally warn visitors, who have permission to be on their property, of work-related and out-of-the-ordinary hazards. The warning needs to be given at the time the person asks for permission to be on the property. There is no responsibility for people who are unauthorised to be in the workplace.

What does it mean?

- The Act imposes duties, primarily on the employer and owner, to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment
- The person who is in control of the workplace must take all practicable steps to ensure that while at work, people in the place of work, themselves and people in the vicinity, are not harmed by an action, inaction or hazard in the workplace
- The person in charge of the workplace must also manage people acting dangerously in the workplace
- Employers and employees must have an active role in the management of health and safety in their workplace. To achieve this, everyone in a workplace must be involved in identifying and actively managing hazards at work. It is a requirement under the Act that employees have reasonable opportunities to participate in the health and safety systems in their workplace.

Self-employed people

Self-employed people have to take all reasonable and practical steps to ensure that nothing they do while at work harms themselves.

Contractors

If you hire contractors you are considered to be a “principal” under the Act. Principals have to engage competent and safe contractors and provide contractors with health and safety information that concerns them while they are working, to ensure no one is harmed. Principals also have to monitor a contractor’s performance in regard to health and safety while they are working and bring any unsafe work practices to the attention of the contractor. Any serious harm accidents must be recorded and reported by the principal.

What is a hazard?

A hazard is anything that is an actual or potential cause of harm. A hazard may be an activity, process, situation or a circumstance. There are two classes of hazards:

1. Hazards
2. Significant hazards

Hazards are those likely to cause harm, where **harm** means illness or injury. **Significant hazards** are likely to cause **serious harm**. Serious harm is classed as anything that causes amputation, loss of consciousness, hospitalisation, serious burns and any temporary or permanent loss of bodily function.

A significant hazard may also cause harm, where the severity will depend on how long or often the person is exposed to the hazard e.g. noise or chemicals. Some forms of harm may not be detected until some time after exposure, such as diseases (e.g. leptospirosis) caused by exposure to animals or hearing loss from use of machinery.

The Act talks about taking **all practicable steps** to control a hazard. This applies to the duties that the employer, employee, self-employed person or person in control of a workplace must fulfil. It means that all reasonable and practical steps must be taken to **eliminate, isolate** or **minimise** a hazard. Whether a step is reasonable takes into account the potential severity of injury that may occur, the probability of an injury occurring and the cost and availability of safeguards.

Hazard identification

The employer, with help from employees, needs to look around the workplace and identify all hazards. Each hazard must be classified as either a hazard or a significant hazard. The law says you must have a systematic approach for dealing with hazards. There are three steps to this:

1. Identify the hazards in your workplace (update this list regularly – think beyond the obvious – involve staff)
2. Identify significant hazards, then work out which need immediate attention and which are of a lesser concern
3. Take action to deal with the hazards – remove or at least reduce their impact.

Once hazards have been identified and classified, steps need to be taken to eliminate, isolate or minimise each significant hazard.

It is also important to set up a Hazard Register to document your findings and to record the measures you have put in place to manage or mitigate these hazards (Templates 1.3.1 & 1.3.2).

Eliminate

Where it is practical, a hazard must be eliminated. This involves removing the hazard or the hazardous work practice from the workplace. For example, this may mean removing the use of a hazardous chemical on the farm.

Isolate

If the hazard cannot be eliminated then it must be isolated. Isolation involves separating the hazard or hazardous work practice from the employee. This can be achieved by guarding machinery or fencing off hazardous areas.

Minimise

If it is impractical to eliminate or isolate the hazard then it must be minimised. This means doing everything else that is practical to make the place of work safe. Minimising a hazard involves providing guidelines for safe use, providing and ensuring the use of protective equipment and clothing, training people in the safe operation of machinery and monitoring the exposure of employees to hazards.

Take some time to walk around the farm and identify hazards (develop a hazard record), then look at ways to eliminate, isolate or minimise them. Remember hazards can be activities too, so take the time to look at how work is being done, observe tasks being performed to identify any hazardous activities or processes. Make sure the information on hazards is recorded, with all significant hazards clearly identified. A copy of this information must be made available to staff so they can update the list of hazards as needed.

The identification of hazards is ongoing, not something that is done once and never changes. Make hazard identification a regular occurrence on the farm.

Stress and fatigue

Farming can be a stressful and dangerous occupation. Recognising this is the first step towards making the farm a safer place for you and your employees. Stress and fatigue are hazards. They increase the risk of accidents and errors occurring on the farm, which can be costly and harmful.

It is important to manage factors that can increase the risk of stress and fatigue. Good rosters will ensure that long hours are kept to a minimum and regular leave is taken. Stress can be managed by:

- Providing appropriate training
- Providing support (including Employee Assistance Programmes)
- Modifying the job to minimise the stressful parts
- Reduce long hours
- Employ more staff
- Use a good roster.

Stress can also arise from changes in an employee's personal situation, so an understanding of what is happening outside of the workplace can also be helpful. Fatigue can be mental or physical and can be caused by a number of things including:

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Excessive or sustained effort (e.g. during calving).

Fatigue can be managed by removing the employee from potential sources of danger until they have had time to recover. Recovery options could include:

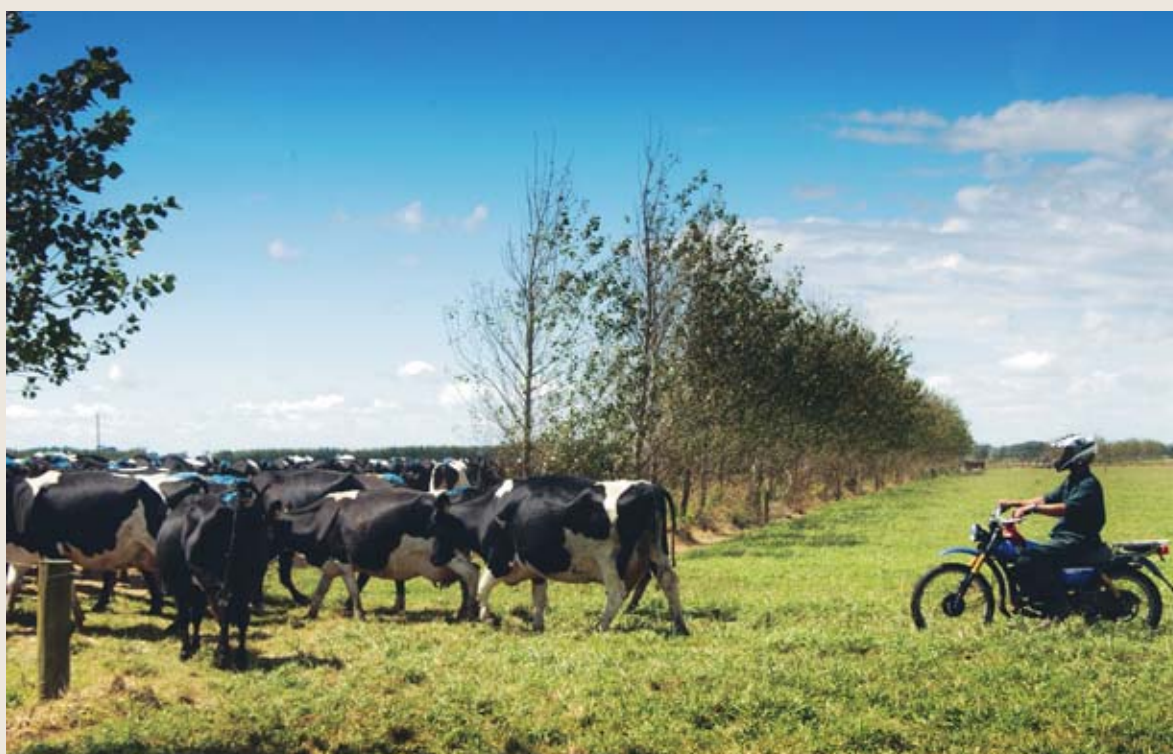
- Sending them home to rest
- Giving them less demanding tasks on the farm until they've recovered
- Developing a plan for recovery that will allow them to manage their fatigue
- Referring them to a doctor for a check-up.

Planning ahead can help reduce the impact of stress and fatigue on your farm business. Managing flashpoints such as calving, by providing a hot meal for staff at the end of the day, or by giving them time off before and after the busy period can be extremely good ways of minimising stress and fatigue.

Training is also important, as the right knowledge and skills to do the job are essential to avoiding stress and harm. Training also demonstrates that you place value in your employees and is likely to help foster trust and a good working environment.

Health and Safety training

- Make sure all staff members know and can identify the hazards on the farm. Employers should spend time with new staff during the orientation process (see Orientation of New Staff Fact Sheet), so that they are familiar with the hazards on the farm and the procedures in place for reporting new hazards and any accidents.
- Evaluate the current skills of everyone on the farm; if someone needs training in a specific area then make sure it is done. Training needs to include correct work methods, limitations of the machinery or process, emergency procedures and the correct use and purpose of safety guards. All employees must be either properly trained in the operation of equipment, experienced in the operation of equipment, or work under supervision.
- Record all training that is given to employees. Informal training by the employer, such as learning how to operate the chainsaw, can be recorded in a diary and signed by the trainer and trainee. Ideally all training should be recorded and attached to the employee's personal file. Information recorded should include the hazard, e.g. chainsaws and be dated and countersigned by both employer and employee. More formal training may provide a certificate to acknowledge the training but it still pays to keep a record of this training.
- An important period of safety training for staff comes during the orientation process, when they should be introduced to the farm's health and safety programme including safety rules, emergency procedures and accident/incident reporting. They should also understand how they can participate in keeping the programme up-to-date.



Record keeping/accident analysis

- Record all accidents that occur in the workplace. Remember that accidents that cause serious harm must be reported to Worksafe NZ as soon as possible after the accident (See Hazard Management Record example and template).
- Analyse any accidents that occur on-farm. This is mandatory under the Act, so whenever there is an accident or a 'near miss' the employer must take all practical steps to determine the cause of the accident, whether it was caused by a significant hazard and if that hazard had already been identified and documented.
- Document emergency procedures for the farm. This is as simple as providing emergency phone numbers, the physical location of the property and location of first aid kit, fire extinguishers and the nearest phone. Put copies of emergency procedures by phones, in the farm dairy and workshop and provide them to all employees.

Employing contractors

- When employing contractors, ask them about their health and safety policies, and their experience in the job they are doing, so you can be certain you are employing safe and competent contractors.
- Provide contractors with information they need on the hazards they may encounter on the farm and ask them to provide everyone who works on the farm with information regarding hazards that may result from the work they are carrying out on the farm. The "principal" (person who has engaged the contractor) has a responsibility to bring any unsafe work practices of the contractor to their attention.
- To help protect yourself, you may wish to have the contractor sign a contractor's agreement. Examples of this can be found on the Department of Labour's website, www.business.govt.nz/worksafe.

Personal protective equipment

- Provide first aid kits and personal protective equipment. Make sure they are kept in good working order. Employers have a duty to provide protective equipment and clothing. Paying an allowance instead of providing the clothing or equipment is not satisfactory, nor can the employer require an employee to provide their own equipment or clothing as a condition of the employment agreement. It is the employer's responsibility to make sure the employee uses and wears protective equipment but the employee also has a responsibility to use and wear the protective equipment provided.
- Look at the safety aspects of equipment prior to purchase.
- Employers should set a good example to their employees. Staff members are less likely to wear personal protective equipment if their employer never uses it.

What are the benefits to me?

There are many direct and indirect costs of having an accident on the farm. Some of those costs include:

- Lost time from work (cost of training and paying someone to relieve)
- Legal and compliance costs
- Travel costs (to hospital, for physiotherapy and after-treatment care)
- Repair of equipment and machinery
- Production changes, milk quality grades
- Poor management decisions
- Stress on you and the rest of the team.
- Prosecution fines and penalties - serious harm accidents can result in a maximum fine of \$500,000 and/or two years in prison.

What do I do next?

- Prepare a Health and Safety manual for the farm. Manuals are available from Federated Farmers and many farm consultants
- Attend a local FarmSafe course. Phone 0800 545 747 for more information
- Walk around the farm with everyone who works there and identify the hazards
- Ensure all employees are familiar with the Health and Safety manual and how to use it
- Review the Health and Safety policy on the farm annually (e.g. a set day each year)
- Think about how the requirements of the Act can help make the farm workplace a safer and better place to work!

Useful references

Emergency Procedures – instructions for farm staff. Forms provided to streamline your emergency procedures on farm. Available free of charge from www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/information-guidance/all-guidance-items/hsno/hsno-guidance-pages/emergency-management

Guidelines for the Provision of Safety, Health and Accommodation in Agriculture, OSH 1996

An Introduction to Employers' Rights and Responsibilities under the Health and Safety in Employment Act, Department of Labour 2003.

Useful websites

www.workandincome.govt.nz

www.acc.co.nz

www.business.govt.nz/worksafe

Useful links

Guidelines for the Provision of Safety, Health and Accommodation in Agriculture:

www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/information-guidance/all-guidance-items/farmers-managing-health-and-safety-a-guide-for-farmers

Guide to the Health and Safety in Employment Act:

www.dol.govt.nz/hs/law/quickguide/index.shtml

Preventing injuries - on the farm: www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injuries/on-the-farm/index.htm

Health and Safety in Employment Act - A Guide to Second Edition revised to include the Health and Safety in Employment Amendment Act 2002: www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1992/0096/latest/versions.aspx

Other Agriculture Publications: www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/#ag

Health and Safety forms (available to download and use): www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/#ag

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1.3.1 Example - Hazard Management

Hazard register. 1: Identify all hazards. 2: Classify as serious/critical and identify whether they can be mitigated, isolated or eliminated. 3: Outline what steps will be in place to manage the risk. 4: Review and update regularly.

| Location: | Identify Hazard | Likelihood Rating | Date: | Hazard or Significant Hazard | Possible Action Eliminate/ Isolate/ Minimise | Potential Harm | Injury Prevention Action | Training or information required? | Reviewed/ comments |
|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|-------|------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| | Quadbike | High | | S | M | Concussion, broken bones, death | Always wear helmet Don't carry passengers Under 16's not to ride quadbikes Regular scheduled maintenance for bikes Don't exceed speed limit of 30kmh | Competency assessment or training complete Emergency Contacts list | 15/10 Went through Worksafe Quad bike safety manual |
| | Ponds | Medium | | S | I, M | Drowning | Ponds fenced off Have two people present when working in and around ponds Use supplied lifejacket when working in and around water | Refer to farm map for location and rating of water hazards Emergency Contacts list | 25/9 |
| | Handling livestock | High | | S | M | Crush injuries, broken bones, back injuries | Keep stock calm Keep an eye on what's going on around you Use your voice so stock know you are there Check the yard before working in it Maintain a safe distance. | Stock handling skills and knowledge of stock working distances and body language. Emergency Contacts list | |
| | Overhead wires | Medium | | S | I, M | Electrocution | Mark paddocks with overhead wires on hazard map Always check when using front end loader that no overhead wires in paddock | Electrocution emergency response procedure | |

1.4 Accommodation

Why this is important

When you provide accommodation to staff you are bound by the same laws as anyone who owns a house and rents it. You need to make sure you are aware of these laws and abide by them.

Employer's responsibilities

There are two main Acts associated with providing accommodation to farm employees:

1. The Residential Tenancies Act 1986
2. The Health and Safety in Employment Act 1995

The Residential Tenancies Act 1986

This Act applies if you are providing staff with a house on your farm – this includes if they are sharing the house with other employees.

The Act requires all tenancy agreements to be in writing and sets out the minimum information that should be included in the agreement. The agreement must include the following minimum information:

- The full names and contact addresses of the landlord and tenant
- The date of the tenancy agreement and the date the tenancy starts (if that is different from the date of the tenancy agreement)
- The address of the rental house
- The addresses for service of the landlord and tenant (that is, the addresses where they can be served with formal documents such as notice to terminate the tenancy or applications to the Tenancy Tribunal)
- Whether the tenant is under 18 years of age
- The amount of any bond
- The rent and the frequency of payments, and the place or bank account where it is to be paid
- Any lawyer's or real estate agent fees payable by the tenant
- Any metered water charges to be paid by the tenant
- A list of any chattels (such as furniture) provided by the landlord
- If the tenancy is for a fixed term, the date on which it ends

Other things may be included that are specific to the particular tenancy, for example:

- How many people are allowed to live in the house or flat
- Whether the tenants may sublet or assign (transfer) the tenancy to anyone else (but does not preclude the tenant from having flatmates or boarders provided that the number of occupants does not exceed any maximum occupancy rate specified in the tenancy agreement)
- Where cars may be parked.

The agreement can provide for other matters, but any term of the agreement that contravenes the Act will be invalid.

Before a tenant moves in, the landlord and tenant need to complete a tenancy agreement, which sets out the key things the landlord and tenant agree to do. The landlord must give the tenant a copy before the tenancy begins.

Giving notice

Providing accommodation to staff is called service tenancy and it has the same rules as renting the house out to people you do not employ with one exception – there is a shorter notice period for vacation of the property if the accommodation is linked to employment. The notice on the service tenancy when employment has been terminated is 14 days, compared to 90 days for a standard residential tenancy. If the accommodation is needed for another employee and no other suitable alternative is available, then this notice can be shortened. It can also be shortened if there is threat of damage to the accommodation.

The employee can only be removed from the accommodation during their employment with the standard 90 days notice, or 42 days if the accommodation is required for a member of the employer's family, in some situations where another employee needs it or if the house has been sold.

Employers must give written notice for the vacation of accommodation, as well as notice for termination of employment. Make sure that the employee's termination letter or letter acknowledging their resignation, notes when notice was given and when the property is to be vacated.

If an employee will not vacate the accommodation, and has been given adequate notice under the Act, then the employer should apply to the Tenancy Tribunal for a possession order.

Apart from the notice period, the nature of the relationship is essentially the same as a 'standard tenancy' - for instance the employer must give 48 hours' notice before conducting an inspection and the employee is expected to keep the premises reasonably clean and tidy.

Payment for accommodation

The IRD requires that a fair market rental is charged for accommodation provided to staff – staff must be charged something for the accommodation you provide. This is often worked into the Total Package Value (TPV) you offer for the role.

To fulfil IRD requirements you can either:

- a) Take the rent out of the person's wages after tax has been paid. Note the provision of accommodation is a taxable benefit so it is liable for PAYE. It is also important that you get written permission from the employee before you can make deductions from wages.
- b) Pay an accommodation allowance which covers the value of the accommodation, within their wages and then deduct the rent back once tax has been paid on the total wages; or,
- c) Pay Fringe Benefit tax on the value of the accommodation.

Options a) and b) are essentially the same, there is just more paperwork in option b). However, option c) is the only method that can be called offering free rental.

The amount of rent paid for accommodation must be clearly written into the employment agreement and the employee must agree in writing to the deduction of the rent from their wages. If they do not agree no deduction can occur.

Bonds

As a landlord you do not have to take a bond. However, if you do you are entitled to ask for up to the equivalent of four weeks' rent as the bond. You must lodge each bond, or any part of a bond, with the Department of Building and Housing within 23 working days of receiving it from the tenant. It is also important for both you and the tenant to complete a bond lodgement form and send this with the bond to the Department of Building and Housing.

Rent in advance

As a landlord you can ask for up to a maximum of two weeks' rent in advance. In doing so you are asking for rent to be paid fortnightly and at the beginning of each fortnightly period that the rent should cover. If you ask the tenant to pay one week's rent in advance, the tenant must pay the rent weekly and at the beginning of each weekly period that the rent should cover. You cannot ask the tenant to pay any more rent before all the rent paid to the landlord is used up, nor can you hold rent from the start of the tenancy to be used at the end of the tenancy.

Rent increases

For most tenancies, the rent cannot be increased within 180 days of the beginning of the tenancy, nor within 180 days of the last rent increase. In addition to a period giving the tenant notice, you must give the tenant at least 60 days' written notice to increase the rent. There is no limit as to how much you may increase the rent by, as long as the rent is not increased excessively above market rate.

Accommodation and sharemilkers

Complications can arise when sharemilkers (as employers) are landlords for properties they do not own. In most instances the sharemilking contract between the farm owner and the sharemilker will have a clause whereby the farm owner has an obligation to ensure that the accommodation is suitable for employees to live in. However, as the employer, the sharemilker is responsible for dealing with any complaints from the employee.

Where the sharemilker's own accommodation is concerned (where it is supplied by the farm owner), the sharemilker is not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act nor is there any obligation to pay a rent.

Health and Safety in Employment Act 1995

The Health and Safety in Employment Act also has regulations relating to accommodation provided to farm employees. These regulations include a basic list of conditions that should apply to all rural staff accommodation. Under these conditions the property must:

- Be maintained in good order and condition
- Contain or have access to suitable toilets, washing facilities and sleeping facilities
- Lighting in all rooms
- Ventilation in all rooms
- Heating facilities
- Refrigeration facilities
- Rubbish disposal facilities
- Furniture.
- Sufficient and wholesome drinking water.

More details

The Department of Building and Housing has an extensive range of details on tenancy agreements, requirements and sorting out problems. The landlord pack has a range of forms and information booklets aimed at helping landlords learn about their rights and responsibilities.

The pack has information about bond, rent records, sorting out problems and more. It also contains helpful resources like the pre-letting checklist, pre-tenancy application form, tenancy agreement and bond lodgment form. See: www.dbh.govt.nz for more details.

The IRD provide details on Fringe Benefit tax and payment of accommodation allowances. See www.ird.govt.nz for more details.

Federated Farmers provides information and advice on specific accommodation issues.

Useful websites

www.dbh.govt.nz or 0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62)

www.fedfarm.org.nz or 0800 FARMING (0800 327 646)

www.ird.govt.nz

Note: This information should not be relied upon in lieu of legal advice. If you require specialised legal advice, you should contact your own lawyer.



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1.5 Job Analysis Part One - Staff Planning

Using a simple job analysis to plan how work will get done

Why this is important

Staff planning is the process of determining the work that has to be completed on the whole farm, deciding how many people it will take to do it and how the work will be divided between those people.

This process feeds back into the farm budget and business plan by way of optimising labour inputs and identifying the skills that need to be hired to meet business goals. This process also has implications for the personal goals of the farm owner if they are the employer. It is perhaps the one chance they will have to assess what they do and don't want to do with their time, and assert their commitment to a change in role or responsibilities.

In managing employees, staff planning helps communicate the work required to a potential employee during recruitment and selection, and is the first step in managing the performance of an employee.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is staff planning?
- How to write a staff plan
- Uses for staff planning
- Staff Planning example
- Staff Planning template

What is staff planning?

Staff planning is the process of deciding what has to be done on the farm and who is going to do it. The process will identify the number and type of jobs, and then give an overview of the responsibilities of each staff member; these are detailed in Job Analysis Part Two as tasks, duties and responsibilities.



How to write a staff plan

Use the following procedure to develop a simple staffing plan:

1. Brainstorm all the major work carried out on the farm and write it up in a list. Include the whole team in the brainstorming process to ensure all ideas are captured. Use the example provided as a starting point and cross off or add tasks to the list so it reflects your farm.
2. Start with the owner column. In the example the owner or primary manager on the farm has taken the opportunity to decide what it is they want to be doing. This is closely linked with the business planning process in terms of managing the work-life balance and meeting lifestyle goals. The owner ticks off the parts of the work load they want to take responsibility for.
3. Divide the remainder of the work between other farm staff by ticking off tasks in one column per person on the farm. This may include unpaid family labour.

Be sure the responsibilities being assigned to each individual role are realistic. In the case of existing employees, this means they must have the skill sets necessary to complete the assigned responsibilities. In the case of a new job, there is more freedom to assign responsibilities as it is possible to go out and recruit someone to fill that role. Be careful to ensure a realistic mix of responsibilities. A further consideration is whether the job can be done in a reasonable number of hours.

Initially it may not be possible to assign all vacant responsibility areas to staff because of lack of skill or experience. This means the manager will have to do them until the appropriate skills can be hired or trained.

Optional extra

To clarify the role, responsibility levels can be added to the work plan. In the column labelled "Responsibility Level", mark in one of the following for each tick against a work task:

"R" "Responsible" ensures the work is carried out

"A" "Assists" in carrying out the required work

| | Owner | Responsibility level | Manager | Responsibility level | Farm Assistant | Responsibility level |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Milking | | | ✓ | R | | |
| Cleaning up after milking | | | | | ✓ | R |
| Milking plant maintenance | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| Feeding out | | | ✓ | R | | |
| Machinery maintenance | ✓ | A | ✓ | R | | |
| Feeding calves | | | | | ✓ | R |
| Recording calvings | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A |
| Administration | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Planning - feed management | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| Planning - financial management | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Planning - work management | ✓ | A | ✓ | R | | |
| Making supplements | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A |
| Etc..... | | | | | | |

Example only - not based on any real situation

What is the difference between reporting lines and responsibility levels?

Reporting lines denote who a person reports to or who is a person's line manager, e.g. Farm Assistant reports to the Farm Manager. Responsibility levels refer to who is responsible for ensuring that a range of tasks and duties is completed.

In the previous example, the Farm Assistant is primarily responsible for cleaning up after milking and therefore must make sure the task is completed. The Farm Manager, through reporting structures, is responsible for making sure that the Farm Assistant is performing the task to the required standard.



Importance of adapting staff planning to suit you and your business

Business Planning

Staff planning links to business planning by optimising staffing levels on a farm and identifying the skills required within the work team to carry out the business plan, thus exercising cost control over wages and salaries.

Splitting work within the team

The completed staffing plan can be shown to all the team and they can use that to indicate areas they would prefer to work in. This will help the manager to better understand their staff and help employees better understand the expectations of their manager. It will also give them a feeling of control over their work and a sense that management is communicating with them, both key motivators for staff. Obviously not all wishes can be satisfied, but it will help to identify what motivates staff.

Wall chart

The staffing plan template can be used by itself on the wall of the farm dairy office to communicate responsibility areas and to provide reminders of what each duty or responsibility area requires.

Orientation processes

The staffing plan can be used as part of the orientation process to help describe where people fit in the business and how they interact to carry out tasks.

Rostering jobs on farm

Use the staffing plan to rotate people through tasks – this increases their experience and skills in a range of areas on-farm. It also has the benefits of keeping their roles interesting and varied. This may also help to identify training requirements or areas of progression.

Restructuring the workforce

The tick box template can be used to experiment with other job structures and to think outside the square in how to manage the work on the farm. For example, a full-time and a two-time worker might be hired rather than two full-time workers. Experimenting with different structures may also highlight opportunities to streamline roles and improve labour efficiency. This use of a staff plan may be particularly useful in situations where there is a shortage of quality applicants for a job. The selection process will identify a mismatch between the applicant's skills and the requirements of the job. At this point the employer may opt to restructure the job to suit the applicants available. Seek the advice of an employment law specialist before radical restructuring involving redundancy occurs.

Identifying future needs

The employer can use the staff planning template to plan how to structure their workforce as they step back from daily hands-on involvement in the farm. This may identify training needs for current staff, or the need to hire new skills to cover the deficit. This is also referred to as succession planning.

Identifying training needs

Where an employer identifies a shortfall in the ability of their staff to carry out a task, either immediately or in the future, this skill shortage can be developed in the workplace through appropriate training.

What are the benefits to me?

Taking time to work through the staff planning process will increase the likelihood of:

- Achieving optimal staffing levels
- Operating successful teams
- Operating successful performance management
- A successful recruitment and selection process
- Retaining staff
- Clearly communicating peoples roles and responsibilities.

What do I do next?

Try using the templates provided to work out a staff plan that will meet personal and business goals. This can then be discussed with all farm staff to see how it matches their current expectations and what they would like to be doing.

Useful references

Human Resources Kit for Dummies, Max Messmer

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1.5.1 Example - Staff Planning

Farm: Old McDonald's

| Responsibility level: Indicate if the person is responsible for the task or will just assist by making an R or an A | Person 1: Farm Owner | Responsibility level | Person 2: Farm Manager | Responsibility level | Person 3: Farm Assistant | Responsibility level | Person 4: | Responsibility level |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Milking | | | | | | | | |
| Milking | | | | R | | A | | |
| Plant hygiene | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| Farm dairy cleanliness | | | | | ✓ | R | | |
| Effluent management | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| Feed Management | | | | | | | | |
| Management policies | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Feed budgeting | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Pasture allocation | | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | |
| Conserve supplement | | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | |
| Feed crops | | | | | | | | |
| Purchase of supplementary feed | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | | | |
| Culling & drying off cows as required | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | A | | |
| Nitrogen programme | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | | | |
| Fertiliser programme | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Regrassing | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | | | |
| Stock | | | | | | | | |
| Stock policies | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Plan & implement animal health programme | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | ✓ | A | | |
| Record animal health treatments | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| Treat cows as required | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| Plan & implement mating programme | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | | | |
| Calf rearing | ✓ | R | | | ✓ | A | | |
| Manage sale of surplus stock | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Maintain stock records | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Asset Management | | | | | | | | |
| Maintenance of all plant & machinery | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Order annual machine check | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Daily checks on motorbikes | | | | | ✓ | R | | |
| Building maintenance | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Fences/gates | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Races/tracks | ✓ | R | | | | | | |

| | Person 1: Farm Owner | Responsibility level | Person 2: Farm Manager | Responsibility level | Person 3: Farm Assistant | Responsibility level | Person 4: | Responsibility level |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Water system | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Weeds | | | ✓ | A | ✓ | R | | |
| Contract management | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Irrigation | | | | | | | | |
| Schedule irrigation | | | | | | | | |
| Shift irrigators | | | | | | | | |
| Financial management | | | | | | | | |
| Budgeting | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Monitor budgets | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Monthly reporting | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Approve purchase orders | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Account payments | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Invoicing | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Liaise with accountant | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| GST returns | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Reporting | | | | | | | | |
| Work recording | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | R | | |
| Monthly reporting | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Staff | | | | | | | | |
| Recruit & select staff | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Plan & allocate work within the team | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Manage staff performance | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Administration | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Relief staff | | | ✓ | R | ✓ | A | | |
| General | | | | | | | | |
| Health & Safety | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | R | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Environmental management & consent compliance | ✓ | R | | | | | | |
| Maintain a tidy workplace | | | ✓ | A | ✓ | R | | |
| Liaise with contractors where necessary | | | ✓ | R | | | | |
| Liaise with farm advisor | | | ✓ | R | | | | |

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1.5.2 Template - Staff Planning

Farm:

| Responsibility level: Indicate if the person is responsible for the task or will just assist by making an R or an A | Person 1: | Responsibility level | Person 2: Farm Manager | Responsibility level | Person 3: | Responsibility level | Person 4: | Responsibility level |
|---|-----------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Milking | | | | | | | | |
| Milking | | | | | | | | |
| Plant hygiene | | | | | | | | |
| Farm dairy cleanliness | | | | | | | | |
| Effluent management | | | | | | | | |
| Feed management | | | | | | | | |
| Management policies | | | | | | | | |
| Feed budgeting | | | | | | | | |
| Pasture allocation | | | | | | | | |
| Conserve supplement | | | | | | | | |
| Feed crops | | | | | | | | |
| Purchase of supplementary feed | | | | | | | | |
| Culling & drying off cows as required | | | | | | | | |
| Nitrogen programme | | | | | | | | |
| Fertiliser programme | | | | | | | | |
| Regrassing | | | | | | | | |
| Stock | | | | | | | | |
| Stock policies | | | | | | | | |
| Plan & implement animal health programme | | | | | | | | |
| Record animal health treatments | | | | | | | | |
| Treat cows as required | | | | | | | | |
| Plan & implement mating programme | | | | | | | | |
| Calf rearing | | | | | | | | |
| Manage sale of surplus stock | | | | | | | | |
| Maintain stock records | | | | | | | | |
| Asset management | | | | | | | | |
| Maintenance of all plant & machinery | | | | | | | | |
| Order annual machine check | | | | | | | | |
| Daily checks on motorbikes | | | | | | | | |
| Building maintenance | | | | | | | | |
| Fences/gates | | | | | | | | |
| Races/tracks | | | | | | | | |

| | Person 1: | Responsibility level | Person 2: | Responsibility level | Person 3: | Responsibility level | Person 4: | Responsibility level |
|---|-----------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Water system | | | | | | | | |
| Weeds | | | | | | | | |
| Contract management | | | | | | | | |
| Irrigation | | | | | | | | |
| Schedule irrigation | | | | | | | | |
| Shift irrigators | | | | | | | | |
| Financial management | | | | | | | | |
| Budgeting | | | | | | | | |
| Monitor budgets | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly reporting | | | | | | | | |
| Approve purchase orders | | | | | | | | |
| Account payments | | | | | | | | |
| Invoicing | | | | | | | | |
| Liaise with accountant | | | | | | | | |
| GST returns | | | | | | | | |
| Reporting | | | | | | | | |
| Work recording | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly reporting | | | | | | | | |
| Staff | | | | | | | | |
| Recruit & select staff | | | | | | | | |
| Plan & allocate work within the team | | | | | | | | |
| Manage staff performance | | | | | | | | |
| Administration | | | | | | | | |
| Relief staff | | | | | | | | |
| General | | | | | | | | |
| Health & safety | | | | | | | | |
| Environmental management & consent compliance | | | | | | | | |
| Maintain a tidy workplace | | | | | | | | |
| Liaise with contractors where necessary | | | | | | | | |
| Liaise with farm advisor | | | | | | | | |

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1.6 Job Analysis Part Two - Analysing Individual Roles

Using job analysis to identify tasks, duties and responsibilities involved in a job and the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform that job

Why this is important

This fact sheet uses the information gathered in the Staff Planning Fact Sheet 1.5, to further define an individual job in the farm system, and the requirements of the person who will fill that role.

Analysing an individual role in more depth will mean that the job can be more clearly explained to a potential employee during recruitment and selection. Research shows that the more clearly a job can be defined, the more likely it is that an employer will select an employee that is suited to the job.

Analysing individual roles is also a great tool for communicating expectations to staff and a good starting point for performance management.

Please note that this part of the staff management toolkit is optional. The Staff Planning Fact Sheet provides an overall picture of staffing on the farm and working through the staff planning process gives enough information to be able to implement other parts of the staff management toolkit.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Where the analysis of individual job roles fits
- How to analyse an individual job role
- Differentiating between an element, task, duty and responsibility area
- Uses for job analysis at an individual level
- Reviewing current job descriptions
- Job Analysis examples
- Job Analysis templates

Where the analysis of individual job roles fits

Once a staffing plan has been completed, the employer will have an outline of each role and the responsibilities of that role. Using a more detailed job analysis expands on each role to look in more detail at the tasks involved and the attributes of the person who will be most suited to that role. This detail can then be used to make up a job description and person specification and is useful in performance management.



How to analyse an individual job role

The process is a systematic study of the tasks, duties and responsibilities that an employee would be required to perform in an individual job and the knowledge, skills and abilities they will require to carry out those duties. This description of the work and person is then used to make a job description and person specification.

To complete a job analysis use the following procedure:

1. Brainstorm all the tasks that the person in the role will have to carry out. This can be done in the following ways:
 - Get the current employee to help in the brainstorm
 - Get the current employee to keep a diary of work tasks
 - Spend time doing the job yourself
 - Use the manager of the position to brainstorm the role.
2. Use a form like the template/example provided and list all the tasks required in the role. Group them into duties and then responsibility areas. To reduce the amount of time it takes, you may only want to list duties or responsibility areas. However, the more detailed you are at this point the better, because it is important for an individual staff member to know what is expected. Personal attributes should be grouped together for use in the Person Specification 1.8.
3. Be sure that the responsibilities being assigned to each individual role are realistic in terms of time requirements and skill level required. This can be done in the following way:

Hours

Pick a week and assign the total time that will be spent on each task or group of tasks during that week. There will be areas that have no time against them because of seasonal issues. If the total hours add up to more than what is considered a reasonable week's work then some of the tasks or duties have to be reallocated to other staff members or reprioritised.

Note: Some form of basic record keeping around allocation of time to different tasks will help to refine time estimation.

Skill level

Assign a skill level required to each task or group of tasks by labelling each with "High", "Medium" or "Low" skill level required. If there is too much variation or too much "High" skill requirement for a junior position or vice versa for a senior role then the mix of tasks will have to be reassigned.



Optional extra

To clarify the role, responsibility levels can be added to the job analysis. In the column labelled "Responsibility Level", mark in one of the following for each tick against a work task:

"R" "Responsible" ensures the work is carried out

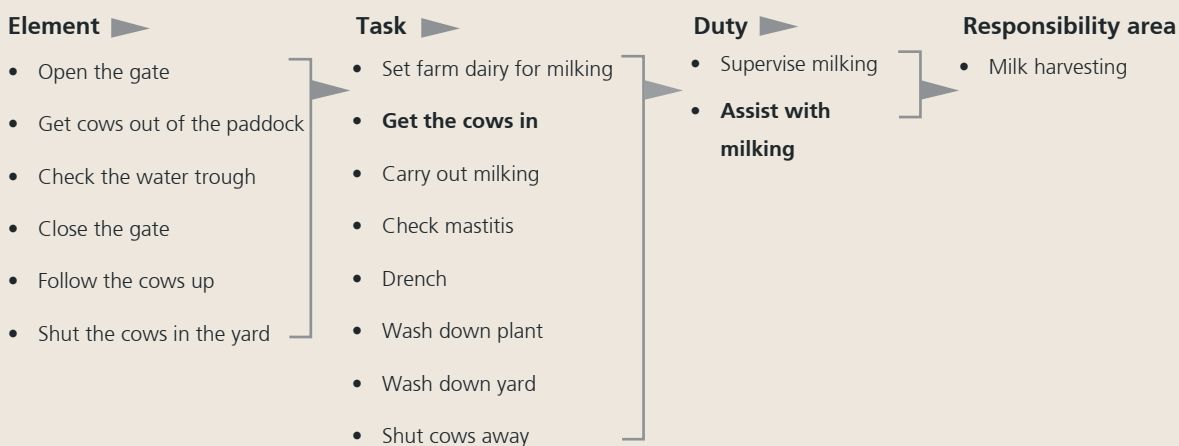
"A" "Assists" in carrying out the required work

| Job Analysis - Farm Assistant | Hours/week | Responsibility Level | Skill Level |
|---|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Assist with Milking | | | |
| Set the farm dairy for milking | 0.5 | A | Low |
| Get the cows in | 3 | R | Low |
| Carry out milking including drenching cows and teat spraying | 27 | A | Low |
| Identify, treat & record mastitis in consultation with farm manager | 0.1 | A | Medium |
| Hose down yards and bail area | 3.0 | R | Low |
| Shut cows away | 1.0 | A | Medium |
| Weed control | | | |
| Control weeds in pasture | 3 | R | Low |
| Etc..... | | | |

Differentiating between an element, task, duty and responsibility area

An element is the most basic component of work carried out on the farm. Elements are then grouped into tasks, which in turn can be grouped together to form duties and duties are grouped together to form responsibility areas.

In the example below the elements listed describe the task of getting the cows in. This is one of a group of tasks that describe the duty of assisting with milking. All the elements, tasks and duties relate to the responsibility area of milk harvesting.



Elements

Elements are the most basic components of work. When going through job analysis some elements will be identified, but they are of limited value because of the high level of detail and should be grouped up into tasks.

Elements are very procedure oriented and are useful in training and managing performance and developing procedure manuals. They should not be used in job descriptions unless it is to further clarify a task for a junior employee.



Tasks

Tasks are groups of elements that describe a part of a job on farm. Job analysis is likely to come up with a list of tasks which should be categorised together as duties.

Like elements, tasks are useful in performance management and coaching because of their high level of description. Tasks can also be used in job descriptions either on their own for junior employees, or to breakdown and further clarify duties or responsibility areas for more senior employees.

Duties

Duties are groups of tasks. Duties are commonly used in job descriptions to describe the work of junior staff or to breakdown and clarify responsibility areas for senior staff.

Responsibility areas

Responsibility areas are groups of duties that describe the different parts of the role. Job analysis is unlikely to identify responsibility areas but an effort should be made to group tasks and duties into responsibility areas so that the process can be used to check that all the responsibilities are covered between staff on farm.

Responsibility areas are used in the job descriptions of managers where it is prohibitive to list all the duties involved. However, it is appropriate to expand and list the duties under some responsibility areas in order to clarify the role.

Uses for job analysis at an individual level

Wall chart

The job analysis tables can be used by themselves on the wall of the farm office to communicate responsibility areas and to provide reminders of what each duty or responsibility area requires.

Procedures manuals

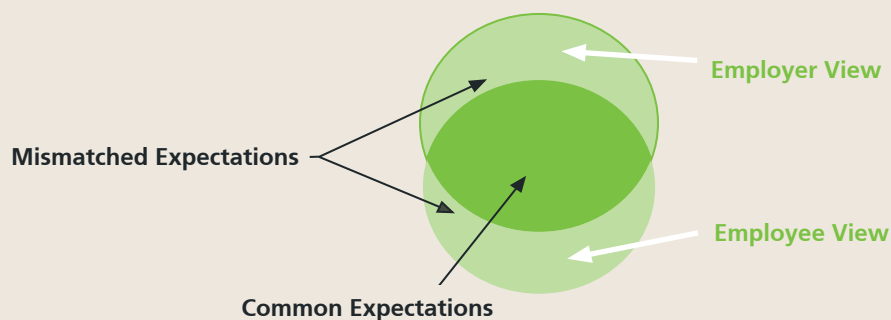
Where job analysis is taken down to the task level this can be easily converted into a procedures manual.

Identifying training needs

Where an employer identifies a shortfall in the ability of their staff to carry out a task either immediately or in the future, this identifies a need to gain the skill. This skill can then be brought into the workplace through appropriate training. Remember too, that for many jobs it is desirable to have a person who can fill about 60% of the role and plan to meet the other 40% with training over time.

Reviewing current job descriptions

It is recognised that generally an employer and employee have a 25% mismatch of their understanding of the responsibilities of a job because the role changes over time as people's confidence grows and they are given more responsibility. Repeating the job analysis process and reviewing the job description on an annual basis can be a valuable tool for managers to better understand their employee's roles. This review can help to motivate staff as managers recognise the employee's growing input into the business. It may also identify a need, such as for employees to be refocused on what is important in the role.



What are the benefits to me?

Taking time to analyse each role will allow a more accurate job description and person specification to be written, enabling more accurate communication of the job content and the desired outcomes to an employee. This will increase the likelihood of:

- Getting the right person into the job
- Getting the job done in line with expectations
- Operating successful performance management
- Retaining staff.

What do I do next?

- Evaluate the necessity of completing a job analysis process with your current staff. Indicators that this is needed are:
 - staff not doing what you expect of them
 - jobs not completed to a satisfactory standard
 - staff confused as to who is responsible for certain tasks
- Complete a job analysis for all positions as vacancies occur and positions are re-advertised.

Useful references

Human Resources Kit for Dummies, Max Messmer

There are a number of rural professionals who specialise in the area of recruitment and selection of farm staff. They will be able to assist in this process or carry out the process on your behalf.



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1.6.1 Example - Job Analysis of Farm Assistant Role

Job Title: Farm Assistant

Person in Position : Jim

| Key | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Responsibility level: Indicate if the person is responsible (R) for the task or will just assist (A) | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
| Skill level: Indicate whether a high (H), medium (M) or low (L) level of skill is required for task | | | |
| Hours required: Indicate how much time would be devoted to this task in a typical day to ascertain if the job is of reasonable size | | | |
| Milking | | | 4.75 |
| Set up plant and yard | A | M | |
| Get cows in | A | M | |
| Check drench | A | M | |
| Check teatspray | A | M | |
| Milking | A | M | |
| Drenching | A | M | |
| Teatspraying | A | L | |
| Identify, treat and record mastitis | A | M | |
| Wash down yards | R | L | |
| Wash down milking plant | R | M | |
| Shut cows away | A | M | |
| Order milking supplies | | | |
| Approve purchase of milking supplies | | | |
| Feed management | | | 0.5 |
| Pasture cover assessment | | | |
| Feed budgeting | | | |
| Pasture allocation | A | H | |
| Identify surplus for silage | A | H | |
| Conserve supplement | A | H | |
| Book contractors | | | |
| Direct contractors | | | |
| Cover stacks | A | | |
| Fence off stacks | A | | |
| Plan feed crops | | | |
| Order supplementary feed | | | |
| Approve purchase of supplementary feed | | | |
| Cull cows as required | | | |
| Dry off cows as required | | | |
| Set up break fences | A | M | |
| Feed out supplement as required | A | M | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Feed management cont... | | | |
| Order nitrogen | | | |
| Apply nitrogen | A | M | |
| Identify paddocks for regrassing | | | |
| Approve regrassing | | | |
| Oversee regrassing process | | | |
| Animal health | | | 0 |
| Plan animal health programme. Issues to consider include: | | | |
| • Calf scours | | | |
| • Rotavirus | | | |
| • BVD | | | |
| • Blackleg | | | |
| • Leptospirosis | | | |
| • Bloat | | | |
| • Milk fever | | | |
| • Parasites eg worm & lice | | | |
| • Lameness | | | |
| Order animal health products | | | |
| Approve administration of drugs | | | |
| Inject metabolic solutions into vein | | | |
| Inject metabolic solutions under skin | A | M | |
| Inject antibiotics | | | |
| Record animal health treatment | A | M | |
| Administer anthelmintic drenches | A | M | |
| Record animal health treatments through in-line dispenser | A | M | |
| Calve cows in difficulty | A | H | |
| Treat lame cows | A | H | |
| Dust pasture with magnesium | A | L | |
| Mating | | | 0 |
| Nominate calving date | | | |
| Plan mating programme | | | |
| Implement mating programme | A | L | |
| Select nominated semen for AI | A | M | |
| Tail paint cows | A | M | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Mating cont.... | | | |
| Identify cows for mating | A | M | |
| Draft out cows for mating | A | M | |
| Assist AI technician | A | M | |
| Record matings | A | M | |
| Order bulls for mating | | | |
| Rotate bulls | | | |
| Plant and machinery maintenance | | | 0.25 |
| Organise scheduled maintenance for all machinery | | | |
| Carry out monthly checks on milking plant | A | M | |
| Order annual machine check | | | |
| Carry out daily checks on motorbikes | R | M | |
| General building maintenance | A | M | |
| Record keeping | | | 0.25 |
| Record daily actions on time sheet | R | L | |
| Record calvings | A | M | |
| Record mating details | A | M | |
| Record mastitis treatments | A | M | |
| Record animal health treatments | A | M | |
| Record stock weights | A | M | |
| Tractor work | | | 0 |
| Carry out checks on tractor before use | A | M | |
| Cultivation | | | |
| Pasture topping | A | M | |
| Pasture spraying | A | M | |
| Feeding out | A | M | |
| Regrassing/undersowing | | | |
| Stock work | | | 0 |
| Carry out all stock work, taking into account animal health guidelines | A | H | |
| Identify calves and mothers | A | M | |
| Separate calved cows from others | A | M | |
| Administer drenches as required | A | M | |
| Weigh stock | | | |
| Move young stock | A | M | |
| Organise off-farm grazing for heifers | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Stock work continued | | | |
| Organise off farm grazing for calves | | | |
| Organise winter grazing for cows | | | |
| Identify culls | | | |
| Organise sales of surplus stock | | | |
| Maintain stock records | A | M | |
| Calf rearing | | | |
| | | | 0 |
| Nominate numbers reared | | | |
| Prepare calf rearing plan | | | |
| Prepare calf rearing facilities | A | L | |
| Order calf feed | | | |
| Feed calves | A | M | |
| Weigh calves | | | |
| Treat calves for scours | A | M | |
| Organise sale of surplus calves as the gate | | | |
| Organise bobby calf collection | | | |
| Place bobby calves in pen ready for collection | A | L | |
| Maintain clean calf gear | R | L | |
| Clean calf sheds | R | L | |
| Irrigation | | | |
| Schedule irrigation | | | |
| Maintain irrigation plant | | | |
| Shift irrigators | | | |
| Financial management | | | |
| Prepare annual budget | | | |
| Prepare cashflow budget | | | |
| Monitor budget against actual income and expenditure | | | |
| Provide monthly expenses | | | |
| Sign off purchase orders | | | |
| Pay accounts | | | |
| Generate invoices of sales | | | |
| Bank payments of invoices | | | |
| Prepare GST returns | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill Level: | Hours Required: |
|---|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Financial management cont... | | | |
| Prepare IRD wage returns | | | |
| Liaise with accountant in preparation of financial accounts | | | |
| Planning | | | |
| Determine and implement farm management policies | | | |
| Determine and implement mating policies | | | |
| Monitor progress against action plans | | | |
| Reporting | | | |
| Complete daily diary of work carried out | R | H | 0.25 |
| Complete monthly report for owner | | | |
| Staff | | | |
| Recruit and select appropriate staff | | | |
| Orient new staff at beginning of employment. Consider: | | | |
| • Health & Safety | | | |
| • Work policies | | | |
| Set appropriate salaries | | | |
| Plan work within the team | | | |
| Update job descriptions for all staff annually | | | |
| Conduct performance reviews | | | |
| Train staff as needed | | | |
| Roster staff time off | | | |
| Maintain health and safety programme | | | |
| Allocate daily work to staff | | | |
| Organise relief staff | A | H | |
| Fill out own timesheet weekly | R | M | |
| Collect timesheets | | | |
| Maintain staff records | | | |
| Complete PAYE returns | | | |
| Farm maintenance | | | |
| Spot spray weeds | A | M | |
| Maintain fences | A | M | |
| Patch holes in races | A | M | |
| Clean wintering pad annually | A | M | |
| Maintain water supply | A | M | |
| Organise hedge cutting | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Nutrient management | | | 0.25 |
| Move effluent irrigator | A | M | |
| Record irrigator movements | | | |
| Carry out soil test | | | |
| Determine fertiliser programme | | | |
| Order fertiliser | | | |
| Apply fertiliser | | | |
| General | | | 0.25 |
| Ensure farm operates within the bounds of the RMA | | | |
| Maintain a tidy workplace | R | M | |
| Liaise with contractors where necessary | | | |
| Liaise with farm advisor | | | |
| Health and Safety | | | 0 |
| Maintain health and safety plan in workplace | | | |
| Identify hazards and report them to coordinator | A | M | |
| Report injuries to coordinator | A | L | |
| Report near misses to coordinator | | | |
| Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) | | | |
| Wear PPE | | | |
| Total | | | 8.5 |

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1.6.2 Example - Job Analysis of a Farm Manager Role

Job Title: General Manager

Person in Position : Margaret

| Key | Responsibility level | Skill level: | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Responsibility level: Indicate if the person is responsible (R) for the task or will just assist (A) Skill level: Indicate whether a high (H), medium (M) or low (L) level of skill is required for task Hours required: Indicate how much time would be devoted to this task in a typical day to ascertain if the job is of reasonable size | | | |
| Milking | | | 4.75 |
| Set up plant and yard | R | M | |
| Get cows in | R | M | |
| Check drench | R | M | |
| Check teatspray | R | M | |
| Milking | R | M | |
| Drenching | R | M | |
| Teatspraying | R | M | |
| Identify, treat and record mastitis | A | M | |
| Wash down yards | R | L | |
| Wash down milking plant | R | M | |
| Shut cows away | R | M | |
| Order milking supplies | R | M | |
| Approve purchase of milking supplies | R | M | |
| Feed management | | | 0.5 |
| Pasture cover assessment | R | H | |
| Feed budgeting | R | H | |
| Pasture allocation | R | H | |
| Identify surplus for silage | R | H | |
| Conserve supplement | R | H | |
| Book contractors | | | |
| Direct contractors | | | |
| Cover stacks | R | M | |
| Fence off stacks | R | M | |
| Plan feed crops | R | H | |
| Order supplementary feed | | | |
| Approve purchase of supplementary feed | | | |
| Cull cows as required | A | M | |
| Dry off cows as required | R | H | |
| Set up break fences | R | M | |
| Feed out supplement as required | R | H | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill Level: | Hours Required: |
|---|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Feed management cont.. | | | 4.75 |
| Order Nitrogen | | | |
| Apply Nitrogen | | | |
| Identify paddocks for regrassing | A | H | |
| Approve regrassing | A | H | |
| Oversee regrassing process | A | H | |
| Animal health | | | 0 |
| Plan animal health programme. Issues to consider include | | | |
| • Calf scours | R | H | |
| • Rotavirus | R | H | |
| • BVD | R | H | |
| • Blackleg | R | H | |
| • Leptospirosis | R | H | |
| • Bloat | R | H | |
| • Milk fever | R | H | |
| • Parasites eg worm & lice | R | H | |
| • Lameness | R | H | |
| Order animal health products | R | H | |
| Approve purchase of animal health products | | | |
| Approve administration of drugs | R | H | |
| Inject metabolic solutions into vein | R | H | |
| Inject metabolic solutions under skin | R | M | |
| Inject antibiotics | R | M | |
| Record animal health treatment | R | M | |
| Administer anthelmintic drenches | R | H | |
| Record animal health treatments through in-line dispenser | R | M | |
| Calve cows in difficulty | R | H | |
| Treat lame cows | R | H | |
| Dust pasture with magnesium | R | M | |
| Mating | | | 0 |
| Nominate calving date | A | M | |
| Plan mating programme | A | M | |
| Implement mating programme | R | H | |
| Select nominated semen for AI | A | M | |
| Tail paint cows | R | M | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Mating cont.. | | | |
| Identify cows for mating | R | H | |
| Draft out cows for mating | R | M | |
| Assist AI technician | R | M | |
| Record matings | R | M | |
| Order bulls for mating | | | |
| Rotate bulls | R | M | |
| Plant and machinery maintenance | | | 0 |
| Organise scheduled maintenance for all machinery | | | |
| Carry out monthly checks on milking plant | | | |
| Order annual machine check | | | |
| Carry out daily checks on motorbikes | | | |
| General building maintenance | | | |
| Record keeping | | | 0.5 |
| Record daily actions on time sheet | R | M | |
| Record calvings | R | M | |
| Record mating details | R | M | |
| Record mastitis treatments | R | M | |
| Record animal health treatments | R | M | |
| Record stock weights | R | M | |
| Tractor work | | | 0.5 |
| Carry out checks on tractor before use | R | M | |
| Cultivation | R | H | |
| Pasture topping | R | M | |
| Pasture spraying | R | M | |
| Feeding out | R | M | |
| Regrassing/undersowing | A | M | |
| Stock work | | | 0.5 |
| Carry out all stock work, taking into account animal health guidelines | R | H | |
| Identify calves and mothers | R | M | |
| Separate calved cows from others | R | M | |
| Administer drenches as required | R | M | |
| Weigh stock | R | M | |
| Move young stock | R | M | |
| Organise off-farm grazing for heifers | A | M | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Stock work cont... | | | |
| Organise off-farm grazing for calves | A | M | |
| Organise winter grazing for cows | A | M | |
| Identify culls | A | M | |
| Organise sales of surplus stock | A | M | |
| Maintain stock records | R | M | |
| Calf rearing | | | |
| Nominate numbers reared | | | |
| Prepare calf rearing plan | | | |
| Prepare calf rearing facilities | A | L | |
| Order calf feed | | | |
| Feed calves | A | M | |
| Weigh calves | | | |
| Treat calves for scours | A | M | |
| Organise sale of surplus calves as the gate | | | |
| Organise bobby calf collection | | | |
| Place bobby calves in pen ready for collection | A | L | |
| Maintain clean calf gear | R | L | |
| Clean calf sheds | R | L | |
| Irrigation | | | |
| Schedule irrigation | | | |
| Maintain irrigation plant | | | |
| Shift irrigators | | | |
| Financial management | | | |
| Prepare annual budget | | | |
| Prepare cashflow budget | | | |
| Monitor budget against actual income and expenditure | | | |
| Provide monthly expenses | | | |
| Sign off purchase orders | | | |
| Pay accounts | | | |
| Generate invoices of sales | | | |
| Bank payments of invoices | | | |
| Prepare GST returns | | | |
| Prepare IRD wage returns | | | |
| Liaise with accountant in preparation of financial accounts | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Planning | | | 0.25 |
| Determine and implement farm management policies | R | M | |
| Determine and implement mating policies | A | M | |
| Monitor progress against action plans | R | H | |
| Reporting | | | 0.25 |
| Complete daily diary of work carried out | R | M | |
| Complete monthly report for owner | R | H | |
| Staff | | | |
| Recruit and select appropriate staff | R | H | |
| Orient new staff at beginning of employment. Consider: | R | H | |
| • Health & Safety | R | H | |
| • Work policies | R | H | |
| Set appropriate salaries | A | M | |
| Plan work within the team | R | H | |
| Update job descriptions for all staff annually | R | H | |
| Conduct performance reviews | R | H | |
| Train staff as needed | R | H | |
| Roster staff time off | R | M | |
| Maintain health and safety programme | R | H | |
| Allocate daily work to staff | R | H | |
| Organise relief staff | A | H | |
| Fill out own timesheet weekly | R | M | |
| Collect timesheets | R | M | |
| Maintain staff records | | | |
| Complete PAYE returns | | | |
| Farm maintenance | | | 0.5 |
| Spot spray weeds | R | M | |
| Maintain fences | R | M | |
| Patch holes in races | R | M | |
| Clean wintering pad annually | R | M | |
| Maintain water supply | R | M | |
| Organise hedge cutting | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Nutrient management | | | 0.25 |
| Move effluent irrigator | R | M | |
| Record irrigator movements | R | M | |
| Carry out soil test | A | M | |
| Determine fertiliser programme | A | M | |
| Order fertiliser | A | | |
| Apply fertiliser | A | | |
| General | | | 0.25 |
| Ensure farm operates within the bounds of the RMA | A | H | |
| Maintain a tidy workplace | A | M | |
| Liaise with contractors where necessary | A | M | |
| Liaise with farm advisor | A | M | |
| Health and Safety | | | 0.25 |
| Maintain health and safety plan in workplace | R | H | |
| Identify hazards and report them to coordinator | R | H | |
| Report injuries to coordinator | R | M | |
| Report near misses to coordinator | | | |
| Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) | R | M | |
| Wear PPE | | | |
| Total | | | 9 |

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1.6.3 Template - Job Analysis for Individual Roles

Job Title:

Person in Position :

| Key | Responsibility level | Skill level: | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Responsibility level: Indicate if the person is responsible (R) for the task or will just assist (A) Skill level: Indicate whether a high (H), medium (M) or low (L) level of skill is required for task Hours required: Indicate how much time would be devoted to this task in a typical day to ascertain if the job is of reasonable size | | | |
| Milking | | | |
| Set up plant and yard | | | |
| Get cows in | | | |
| Check drench | | | |
| Check teatspray | | | |
| Milking | | | |
| Drenching | | | |
| Teatspraying | | | |
| Identify, treat and record mastitis | | | |
| Wash down yards | | | |
| Wash down milking plant | | | |
| Shut cows away | | | |
| Order milking supplies | | | |
| Approve purchase of milking supplies | | | |
| Feed management | | | |
| Pasture cover assessment | | | |
| Feed budgeting | | | |
| Pasture allocation | | | |
| Identify surplus for silage | | | |
| Conserve supplement | | | |
| Book contractors | | | |
| Direct contractors | | | |
| Cover stacks | | | |
| Fence off stacks | | | |
| Plan feed crops | | | |
| Order supplementary feed | | | |
| Approve purchase of supplementary feed | | | |
| Cull cows as required | | | |
| Dry off cows as required | | | |
| Set up break fences | | | |
| Feed out supplement as required | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill Level: | Hours Required: |
|---|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Feed management cont.. | | | |
| Order Nitrogen | | | |
| Apply Nitrogen | | | |
| Identify paddocks for regrassing | | | |
| Approve regrassing | | | |
| Oversee regrassing process | | | |
| Animal health | | | |
| Plan animal health programme. Issues to consider include: | | | |
| • Calf scours | | | |
| • Rotavirus | | | |
| • BVD | | | |
| • Blackleg | | | |
| • Leptospirosis | | | |
| • Bloat | | | |
| • Milk fever | | | |
| • Parasites eg worm & lice | | | |
| • Lameness | | | |
| Order animal health products | | | |
| Approve purchase of animal health products | | | |
| Approve administration of drugs | | | |
| Inject metabolic solutions into vein | | | |
| Inject metabolic solutions under skin | | | |
| Inject antibiotics | | | |
| Record animal health treatment | | | |
| Administer anthelmintic drenches | | | |
| Record animal health treatments through in-line dispenser | | | |
| Calve cows in difficulty | | | |
| Treat lame cows | | | |
| Dust pasture with magnesium | | | |
| Mating | | | |
| Nominate calving date | | | |
| Plan mating programme | | | |
| Implement mating programme | | | |
| Select nominated semen for AI | | | |
| Tail paint cows | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|--|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Mating cont.. | | | |
| Identify cows for mating | | | |
| Draft out cows for mating | | | |
| Assist AI technician | | | |
| Record matings | | | |
| Order bulls for mating | | | |
| Rotate bulls | | | |
| Plant and machinery maintenance | | | |
| Organise scheduled maintenance for all machinery | | | |
| Carry out monthly checks on milking plant | | | |
| Order annual machine check | | | |
| Carry out daily checks on motorbikes | | | |
| General building maintenance | | | |
| Record keeping | | | |
| Record daily actions on time sheet | | | |
| Record calvings | | | |
| Record mating details | | | |
| Record mastitis treatments | | | |
| Record animal health treatments | | | |
| Record stock weights | | | |
| Tractor work | | | |
| Carry out checks on tractor before use | | | |
| Cultivation | | | |
| Pasture topping | | | |
| Pasture spraying | | | |
| Feeding out | | | |
| Regrassing/undersowing | | | |
| Stock work | | | |
| Carry out all stock work, taking into account animal health guidelines | | | |
| Identify calves and mothers | | | |
| Separate calved cows from others | | | |
| Administer drenches as required | | | |
| Weigh stock | | | |
| Move young stock | | | |
| Organise off-farm grazing for heifers | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Stock work cont... | | | |
| Organise off-farm grazing for calves | | | |
| Organise winter grazing for cows | | | |
| Identify culls | | | |
| Organise sales of surplus stock | | | |
| Maintain stock records | | | |
| Calf rearing | | | |
| Nominate numbers reared | | | |
| Prepare calf rearing plan | | | |
| Prepare calf rearing facilities | | | |
| Order calf feed | | | |
| Feed calves | | | |
| Weigh calves | | | |
| Treat calves for scours | | | |
| Organise sale of surplus calves as the gate | | | |
| Organise bobby calf collection | | | |
| Place bobby calves in pen ready for collection | | | |
| Maintain clean calf gear | | | |
| Clean calf sheds | | | |
| Irrigation | | | |
| Schedule irrigation | | | |
| Maintain irrigation plant | | | |
| Shift irrigators | | | |
| Financial management | | | |
| Prepare annual budget | | | |
| Prepare cashflow budget | | | |
| Monitor budget against actual income and expenditure | | | |
| Provide monthly expenses | | | |
| Sign off purchase orders | | | |
| Pay accounts | | | |
| Generate invoices of sales | | | |
| Bank payments of invoices | | | |
| Prepare GST returns | | | |
| Prepare IRD wage returns | | | |
| Liaise with accountant in preparation of financial accounts | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Planning | | | |
| Determine and implement farm management policies | | | |
| Determine and implement mating policies | | | |
| Monitor progress against action plans | | | |
| Reporting | | | |
| Complete daily diary of work carried out | | | |
| Complete monthly report for owner | | | |
| Staff | | | |
| Recruit and select appropriate staff | | | |
| Orient new staff at beginning of employment. Consider | | | |
| Health & Safety | | | |
| Work policies | | | |
| Set appropriate salaries | | | |
| Plan work within the team | | | |
| Update job descriptions for all staff annually | | | |
| Conduct performance reviews | | | |
| Train staff as needed | | | |
| Roster staff time off | | | |
| Maintain health and safety programme | | | |
| Allocate daily work to staff | | | |
| Organise relief staff | | | |
| Fill out own timesheet weekly | | | |
| Collect timesheets | | | |
| Maintain staff records | | | |
| Complete PAYE returns | | | |
| Farm maintenance | | | |
| Spot spray weeds | | | |
| Maintain fences | | | |
| Patch holes in races | | | |
| Clean wintering pad annually | | | |
| Maintain water supply | | | |
| Organise hedge cutting | | | |

| | Responsibility level | Skill level | Hours required |
|---|----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Nutrient management | | | |
| Move effluent irrigator | | | |
| Record irrigator movements | | | |
| Carry out soil test | | | |
| Determine fertiliser programme | | | |
| Order fertiliser | | | |
| Apply fertiliser | | | |
| General | | | |
| Ensure farm operates within the bounds of the RMA | | | |
| Maintain a tidy workplace | | | |
| Liaise with contractors where necessary | | | |
| Liaise with farm advisor | | | |
| Health and Safety | | | |
| Maintain health and safety plan in workplace | | | |
| Identify hazards and report them to coordinator | | | |
| Report injuries to coordinator | | | |
| Report near misses to coordinator | | | |
| Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) | | | |
| Wear PPE | | | |
| Total | | | |

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1.7 Job Descriptions

Communicating responsibilities, duties and tasks to employees

Why this is important

Under the Employment Relations Act (2000) ERA, every employer must provide the employee with an outline of the duties to be performed. A job description therefore enables the employer to fulfil this legal obligation.

It is important to clearly communicate to potential and current employees the tasks, duties and responsibilities their job encompasses and the standard to which the work must be completed. The advantages of providing a job description include:

- More appropriate applicants for a job
- Knowing what is expected of them is likely to help employees perform well
- Employees are easier to manage, resulting in less stress
- Employees tend to be more contented, because they are able to choose a job that suits them.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is a job description?
- Uses of a job description
- How to write a job description
- How the job description links to performance management
- Job Description examples
- Job Description template

What is a job description?

The job description is a summary of the key responsibilities identified in the job analysis. Its aim is to communicate to applicants and existing staff members, as clearly as possible, the expectations of the employer in the job. The job description is not going to be exact, but should cover all main points and any differences to other similar jobs.

A job description links to the employment process as illustrated in the diagram below.



Uses of a job description

Job descriptions are a means of communicating the requirements of the role to job applicants and existing staff. A job description should be given to applicants prior to an interview, or during the interview at the latest. This is important because it gives applicants the opportunity to decide for themselves if they are really suited to the job being offered. This self-selection helps ensure a more successful employment outcome. The job description is also used in the ongoing management of employees.



A job description can also be useful for:

- Writing job advertisements
- Developing competency-based interview questions
- Orientating the new employee to the job
- Identifying performance objectives and training requirements
- Terminating employment.

How to write a job description

There are many different ways to write a job description, provided the outcome allows quality communication between employer and employee. For this reason there are no “stock standard” job descriptions, because every role is different depending on the level of responsibilities. The good news is that they don’t have to be perfect to have value as a communication tool in employment relationships.

The basis for drawing up a job description is a job analysis (see Job Analysis 1.5 & 1.6 Fact Sheets) where the job is broken down into tasks, duties and responsibilities that the potential employee will need to be able to perform to carry out the role effectively. A job description is a factual statement that covers the following:

- Job title
- Purpose of the job
- Reporting lines
- Tasks, duties and responsibility areas
- Performance standards.

Including performance standards in a job description is a good idea (see Performance Management Fact Sheet 4.1), but the starting point of performance management is to write the job description itself.

Some people prefer to separate the job description from performance issues and have separate performance management documentation. The advantage of communicating performance standards in the job description is that it helps to further clarify expectations to the applicant. However, to help give the employee ownership of the performance objectives, they should be discussed and negotiated (particularly for higher level positions) once the employee is on board.

A suggested example job description template is outlined below. The first part is self-explanatory and the section on responsibility areas is explained further below.

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Job title: | e.g. Herd Manager |
| Strategic business focus: | This should be a short statement reflecting farm goals. The required accountabilities will in part reflect this focus. For example: "We operate a values-based team that emphasises fairness, trust, mutual respect, teamwork and continuous improvement. Our goal is to produce 1,000 kgMS/ha in a self-contained grass only system from 350 cows. This will allow us to expand our business to the target of 500 cows by June 2009." |
| Purpose of position: | A three-to-four sentence summary of the role. For example: "To manage the feeding and milking of the herd in consultation with the Farm Manager, to carry out farm maintenance and to deputise for the Farm Manager in their absence." |
| Reporting lines: | Who does the person report to and who reports to them? For example: "This position reports to the Farm Manager. The position has no reports but is responsible for relief milking staff when working with them." |
| Hours of work: | It is good practice to break this down on a seasonal basis. For example: Calving - 1 August to 1 October: 60 hours/week Mating - 1 October to 1 January: 55 hours/week Balance of milking season: 50 hours/week Dry season: 35 hours/week |
| Special requirements: | Any unique requirements of the position should be detailed here. Examples: boarding another employee, providing a motorbike or attending a specialist course. |

Responsibility areas, tasks and duties: (see below)

| Accountabilities | 'Responsible' or 'Assist' | Performance Measure |
|---|---|---|
| Accountabilities are the duties and responsibilities of the person in the job | Are they responsible for ensuring the work is carried out, or do they assist in carrying out the required work. | How does the person know they have been successful? |

Completing responsibility areas, tasks and duties:

- List seven to ten duties or responsibilities as identified in the job analysis that will be key to success in the role. Each duty or responsibility may be expanded to improve understanding of the role (see Job Analysis 1.5 & 1.6 Fact Sheets). For example it is dangerous to assume that everyone in the dairy industry knows what is meant by "doing a farm walk". For one person it may mean just having a look to see what's going on, while for another it will mean assessing pasture cover and completing a feed budget, so it is necessary to clarify what is meant in the accountability area.

More or less detail?

The level of detail to include in a job description is often debated. Job descriptions need to be comprehensive to have value in communicating expectations to an employee.

For a junior position a higher level of detail can be provided, as they will not have as many responsibilities so tasks or duties can be listed which are quite detailed.

Duty: Assist with milking

| Accountabilities | 'Responsible' or 'Assist' | Performance Measure |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set the farm dairy for milking | R | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get the cows in | R | Cows are allowed to walk at own speed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out milking, including drenching cows and teat spraying | A | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, treat and record mastitis in consultation with Farm Manager | A | Records completed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hose down yards and bail area | R | Bail and yards receive an 'A' on the dairy inspection |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shut cows away | R | |

For a more senior person less breakdown of each responsibility is required, although key points should still be expanded where appropriate such as in the example below.

Responsibility area: Milk harvesting

| Accountabilities | 'Responsible' or 'Assist' | Performance measure |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with staff, create a milking roster so that they get 3 days off in every 14 including 2 weekend days | R | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise and support milking staff | R | Staff contented with support as evidenced by staff satisfaction survey |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be on-call to assist with plant or machinery breakdowns on rostered days off | A | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain milking equipment and farm dairy surrounds as per maintenance schedule | R | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 100% finest milk quality | R | 100% finest milk quality certificate achieved |

How a job description links to performance management

Job descriptions fit into the start of the performance management process because they are the first step in describing expectations to employees, whether or not they have performance measures in them. Because of this job descriptions should be reviewed annually with all staff.

Bear in mind that the job description deals with responsibilities, duties and tasks. There may be other measures stemming from the person specification (see Person Specification Fact Sheet 1.8) regarding attitudes and behaviours, which need to be incorporated in the performance management system.

What are the benefits to me?

Communicating the content of the job and the desired outcomes to an employee:

- Clarifies the employer's expectations of the job to employees
- Leads to better relationships between employers and employees
- Is the first step in managing employee performance.

What do I do next?

- Think about completing a job description with current staff. Indicators that this is needed are:
 - staff not doing what you expect of them
 - jobs not completed to a satisfactory standard
 - staff are confused as to who is responsible for certain tasks
- Remember, having a job description is a legal requirement as well as best practice
- Complete a job description for all positions as vacancies occur and the position is re-advertised
- Review existing job descriptions on an annual basis to ensure they reflect expectations or changes in responsibility.

Useful references

There are a number of rural professionals who specialise in the area of recruitment and selection of farm staff. They will be able to assist in this process or carry out the process on your behalf.

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1.7.1 Job Description – Farm Assistant

This job description is generic and, in general terms, should outline most of what you would expect from this role. To ensure your job description accurately reflects the requirements of this role in your business you can:

- Delete statements that don't reflect what is required
- Write in statements for things that you need done that aren't included
- Use the DairyNZ HR Toolkit template or dairynz.co.nz/people to write your own job description reflecting what you require from the role in your farming business.

| | | |
|----------|---------|------|
| Employee | Manager | Date |
|----------|---------|------|

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Job title | Farm Assistant |
| Purpose of position | Assists with the day-to-day tasks on farm, including feeding, milk harvesting, animal health, effluent, and repairs and maintenance requires supervision |
| Reporting lines | Reports to farm manager/farm owner |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Milk production – feeding. Assist with the feeding of stock as directed by farm manager or according to the requirements outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including: Feeding out and setting up break fences | Fences put up in correct place and in the correct way. Check power is working and fence is live. No cows break out. Check cows will have water | |
| | Feed out as per instructions so wastage is minimised and all cows will have access to feed | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|--|---|---------------------|
| Implementation of an effective weed control programme | No weeds to reach flowering stage, minimal weeds visible on farm | |
| Assisting with farm walks to collect pasture growth information | Farm walk completed as agreed with farm manager, accurate pasture information collected | |
| Assisting with any pasture renovation programme Assisting with any crop establishment programme | Carry out instructions when assisting with pasture renovation or crop establishment | |
| Applying fertiliser as per Nutrient Management Programme | Fertiliser applied to the correct areas at the correct rates. All paperwork completed | |
| Implementing irrigation requirements | Irrigation system operated in an efficient way, minimising water wastage | |
| Assisting with conservation of feed | | |
| Milk production – milk harvesting. Assist with milking as directed by the farm manager or according to the requirements outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including: | | |
| Arriving on time to set up equipment | Dairy is always set up before cows arrive | |
| Arriving on time to get the cows in | Cows always arrive on time to dairy, having walked at their own pace | |
| Carrying out milking and teat spraying | Milking is completed to standards required, including all cows are milked appropriately, marked cows dealt with as per farm manager instructions or Farm Systems Manual requirements. All cows are teat sprayed before they leave the dairy | |
| Hosing down yards and bail area on the completion of milking | The dairy, including bails and yard are cleaned as instructed | |
| Cleaning and maintaining the farm dairy, plant and equipment, to the standard outlined by the farm manager or the Farm System Manual | Dairy plant and equipment is cleaned and maintained according to instructions | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Shutting away the cows | Cows are always shut away after milking and checked to ensure they have water | |
| Milk production – milk quality. Assist farm to achieve continuous grade-free seasons, by: | | |
| Helping to ensure only milk of the finest quality is presented for collection | Dairy procedures are always followed so only milk of the finest quality is presented for collection | |
| Contributing to dairy hygiene and achievement of milk quality | Any incident that may mean milk could be contaminated is reported to farm manager immediately | |
| Assisting with maintaining hygiene and cleanliness standards in and around the dairy | All dairy hygiene requirements and standards are met | |
| Assisting with dairy company documentation as required | Assisting in keeping dairy company documentation up-to-date | |
| Stock management – animal health and welfare. Assisting with the management of the animals on farm as directed by farm manager or according to the requirement outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including: | | |
| Identifying and assisting with treatment of mastitis in cows | Unwell animals are identified and treated quickly following farm protocols | |
| Identifying and assisting with treatment of lameness in cows | All unwell animals are reported to farm manager | |
| Identifying other animal health problems and reporting these immediately to the farm manager | Stay alert for signs of unwell animals at all times, including when passing animals in the paddock, getting cows in for milking, etc. | |
| Reporting any incidences of bloat or suspected bloat immediately to farm manager | All stock are handled in a quiet and calm way | |
| Moving and handling animals in an acceptable way at all times | | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Stock management – seasonal management requirements. Assist with all seasonal requirements as directed by farm manager or outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including: | | |
| Assisting with all calving requirements | Stock are managed as outlined by the farm manager or the Farm Systems Manual, management is appropriate for the time of year | |
| Assisting with all mating requirements | | |
| Assisting with all wintering requirements | | |
| Reporting any instances that require further action | | |
| Stock management – other stock management requirements. Assist with all stock management as directed by farm manager or outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including: | | |
| Assisting with calf rearing as required | Healthy calves are reared that meet target weights | |
| Assisting with management of young stock as required | Young stock are well grown animals to be proud of | |
| Assisting with the management of dry stock, including bulls as required | Dry stock are well looked after and are fit for purpose, e.g. bulls are a good weight prior to mating | |
| Reporting any instances that require further action | | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Stock management – recording. Responsible for maintaining accurate information in the Yellow Notebook and ensuring it up to date at all times. | | |
| Where required, keeping records of all mastitis treatments given and ensuring animals are marked according to the Farm Systems Manual | Yellow notebook is always readable and contains up to date, accurate information | |
| Recording other treatments as required | All animal treatments are recorded at the time as required. All treated animals are clearly marked as per the farm policy | |
| Observing and recording cows in season | | |
| Observing and recording cows calved | | |
| Recording any other associated information as per Farm Systems Manual or as instructed by farm manager | Recording information as per Farm Systems Manual or as instructed by farm manager | |
| Environmental management. Assist with all environmental compliance as directed by farm manager or outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including | | |
| Knowing all the effluent and nutrient management systems for the farm | Knows the farm effluent system and can identify any common problems with the system | |
| Ensuring effluent is managed as per the instructions, including all recording requirements | Observant of the effluent system and report to farm manager if anything is not operating as it should | |
| Ensuring all environmental restrictions are adhered to | Any issues or potential issues are quickly identified and communicated to the farm manager | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|--|---------------------|
| Knowing the Regional Council compliance requirements | Actions or inactions are such that you do not cause any breaches of the farm environmental requirements | |
| Team responsibilities. Contribute to an effective team working environment, including: | | |
| Effectively communicate with farm manager and other employees as required | Contribute to the team, letting others know information that may be useful or important | |
| Act as effective team member, including communicating effectively with entire team | Help out others in the team if needed | |
| Support relief staff in their duties in the absence of the farm manager | Help to create a fun, supportive environment to work in | |
| Committed to learning new skills and attending appropriate training as agreed with farm manager | Have a good attitude to learning new things and using this knowledge | |
| Health and safety. Comply with all health and safety requirements as directed by farm manager or outlined in the Health and Safety Manual, including | | |
| Complying with the requirements of the Health and Safety in Employment legislation | Understand and meet obligations as required by the Health and Safety in Employment legislation | |
| Complying with farm health and safety policies and procedures, including the wearing of all personal protective equipment | All farm health and safety policies are complied with, including wearing of helmets and other personal protective equipment | |
| Notifying farm manager of new hazards as identified | All new hazards are identified quickly and the farm manager is notified as soon as possible. If possible isolate new hazards until the farm manager can eliminate or minimise them | |
| Notifying the farm manager of any accident or near miss, accident, (injury or non-injury) and completing an Accident Report | All accidents or near miss accidents are reported to the farm manager and the appropriate paper work is completed | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Maintain a tidy workplace. Look after the farm equipment and environment as directed by the farm manager or outlined in the Farm Systems Manual, including: | | |
| Putting tools and equipment away where they belong as soon as practical after finishing with them | All tools and equipment are where they belong unless they are being used | |
| Disposing of rubbish appropriately | There is no rubbish lying around anywhere on farm (including at the accommodation) | |
| Storing machinery away in the correct place | Machinery is kept in its correct place | |
| Maintaining the grounds around the dairy and tanker track | The grounds around the dairy and tanker track are kept tidy and presentable at all times | |
| Ensuring accommodation, garden and section areas are maintained in a tidy, well presented state | Accommodation and surrounds are tidy | |
| Completing general farm maintenance and farm development work as directed, notifying farm manager of breakages/breakdowns immediately | Farm maintenance is completed as required | |
| Maintaining quad bike/farm bike and/or any other vehicle or tools provided according to schedule, notifying farm manager of breakages/breakdowns | All breakages are reported immediately Farm vehicles are well maintained according to the schedule | |
| Complete all other tasks - as may be reasonably and lawfully requested by farm manager, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on other grazing farms • Managing winter grazing | Other tasks are completed in a timely way to the standards required | |

Job Description – Farm Manager

This job description is generic and, in general terms, should outline most of what you would expect from this role. To ensure your job description accurately reflects the requirements of this role in your business you can:

- Delete statements that don't reflect what is required
- Write in statements for things that you need done that aren't included
- Use the DairyNZ HR Toolkit template or dairynz.co.nz/people to write your own job description reflecting what you require from the role in your farming business.

| | | |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Employee | Manager | Date |
| Job title | Farm Manager | |
| Purpose of position | Responsible for achieving both production and financial goals. Recruits, trains and manages staff to assist in achieving goals and maintain the farm. Sets budget in consultation with owner and is responsible for achieving budget. Reports regularly to the owners. Requires minimal input from farm owner/s. | |
| Reporting lines | Reports to Farm Owner | |
| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
| Business Management. Responsible for operating farm within agreed budget and financial objectives including | | |
| Responsible for the implementation of the Financial Budget and the Strategic Plan for the farm | Farm targets are achieved as identified in the strategic plan Operational business risks are identified early and mitigated Involved in the development of the annual farm budget and then manage within the budgeted parameters | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|---|---------------------|
| | <p>Farm owner receives all invoices before the 15th of each month</p> <p>Progress against budget is monitored, trends or variances reported to farm owner monthly</p> <p>No un-budgeted expenditure without prior approval</p> | |
| <p>Staff management: Operate the farm conducive to maintaining a team of quality staff, who are productive, happy and enhance the farm's reputation as an employer, including:</p> | <p>Staff are included and involved in the business so they understand the farm targets, their role in achieving these targets and they are encouraged to contribute when developing the day to day management plan</p> <p>Regular staff meetings occur, using an agenda and resulting in actions</p> <p>Staff rosters are fair and ensure staff work acceptable hours, time-sheets are kept to confirm hours staff are working</p> <p>Performances appraisals are completed quarterly with all staff (including part-time staff)</p> <p>Staff vacancies are filled within 6 weeks of any resignation (or as agreed with farm owner)</p> <p>Unplanned turnover is minimised, as is the impact of staff issues and conflict</p> <p>All farm Worksafe requirements are met</p> <p>All new staff have a structured orientation</p> <p>Training and development needs are identified for all staff and steps taken to meet these</p> <p>Staff are managed in a way that meets legal requirements</p> | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|--|---|---------------------|
| <p>Production management: Collect and use information to ensure farm targets are met , including:</p> <p>Responsible for achieving the farm production targets by ensuring information is collected and used to manage herd feeding, maximising milk production, protecting pasture quality and avoiding pasture damage</p> | <p>Target milk production met</p> <p>Day to day production per cow is monitored against targets, results are communicated to farm owner</p> <p>Pasture cover is accurately measured in a timely way, data is analysed and used to make herd feeding decisions</p> <p>Spring rotation planner and other feed planning tools used for assisting decision making</p> <p>Any surplus/deficit is managed in a proactive way, any feed conservation requirements agreed with farm owner</p> <p>All grazing residuals throughout the season meet with agreed farm targets</p> <p>Source required supplements as agreed</p> <p>Feed quality is maximised through appropriate use of inputs, including; nitrogen, irrigation, crops, other supplements as agreed with farm owner</p> | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Stock management – animal health and welfare. Responsible for the management of animal health and welfare on farm, including:</p> <p>Death rates are minimised and are less than targets</p> <p>Planning requirements are completed prior to calving, mating and winter</p> <p>Plans are implemented and monitored</p> <p>Farm targets for calving, mating and wintering are met</p> <p>Animal health issues are minimised by proactive identification and treatment of stock</p> <p>All stock are managed and handled in a way that protects the welfare of the animals</p> <p>Animal health strategies are agreed with the farm owner before being implemented</p> <p>Stock records are up to date so accurate reconciliations can be completed at any time</p> | | <p>Responsible for managing all stock associated with the farm business to the highest level</p> |
| <p>Stock management – calf rearing. Manage calf rearing so farm targets are met, including:</p> <p>Calves kept for rearing are fed colostrum, tagged correctly, recorded and delivered to calf rearing facility within the first 24 hours</p> <p>Heifer calves are reared so target weights are met before they leave the property</p> <p>Heifer progress is monitored post weaning, the reintroduction of in-calf heifers is managed to ensure quality replacement heifers are produced at 24 months</p> <p>Gate sale bobby calves are four days old, above minimum specified weights, free of inhibitory substances</p> | | <p>Objective is to rear calves to the target weight so only quality young stock re-enter the herd</p> |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|--|--|---------------------|
| <p>Milk production. Responsible for meeting targets, including:</p> <p>Objective is only top quality product leaves the farm gate. Achieved through continuous grade free seasons according to farm targets</p> | <p>Only milk of the finest quality is presented for collection</p> <p>Dairy operated at optimum efficiency and stress free for people and animals</p> <p>Cows are milked appropriately, marked cows dealt with as per Farm Operations Manual requirements. All cows are teat sprayed before they leave the dairy</p> <p>Dairy plant and equipment is clean and maintained to a high standard</p> <p>Faults are identified quickly and action is taken to fix these</p> <p>Compliance with annual Agriquality inspection, dairy company requirements followed</p> | |
| <p>Record keeping. Responsible for overseeing all farm records, including:</p> <p>Maintain all farm records in an accurate and timely manner</p> | <p>Herd records accurate and up to date (including calving and mating details)</p> <p>Animal Health Traceability Records accurate and up to date (including all treatments)</p> | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|--|--|---------------------|
| <p>(cont'd)</p> <p>Maintain all farm records in an accurate and timely manner</p> | <p>Resource Management Act requirements are met (effluent disposal and water consent)</p> <p>Staff leave is recorded (including annual leave, public holidays, sick leave, bereavement leave and scheduled days off)</p> <p>Weekly and monthly reports are completed accurately and on time</p> <p>All monitoring and associated paperwork required to comply with TB legal requirements must be correctly completed</p> | |
| <p>Asset management. Responsible for ensuring asset management as per Farm Policy, including:</p> | | |
| <p>Manage the farm infrastructure and maintain farm assets</p> | <p>Crop and pasture establishment is completed in a timely manner as agreed</p> <p>No weeds reach flowering stage</p> <p>All areas of the property are tidy and well presented</p> <p>All accommodation, garden and section areas are maintained in a tidy, well presented state.</p> | |

| Responsibility area/tasks | Performance measure (what does good look like?) | Additional comments |
|---|---|---------------------|
| <p>Natural resource management. Responsible for managing natural resources, including:</p> <p>Ensure environmental requirements are met as outlined in the Farm Operations Manual</p> | <p>Effluent is managed within the requirements of the farm Resource Consent conditions at all times</p> <p>There is an effluent management plan for the farm</p> <p>Staff are trained in the correct operation of the effluent system</p> <p>Fertiliser is applied accord to the fertiliser plan in a timely way, all applications are recorded</p> | |
| <p>Health and safety. Ensure the farm promotes a safe work environment, including:</p> <p>Comply with all health and safety requirements as outlined in the Health and Safety Manual</p> | <p>Health and safety in employment legislation is complied with</p> <p>People on farm are kept safe</p> <p>Farm owner notified of new hazards, these are eliminated, minimised or isolated as appropriate</p> <p>Farm owner notified of accidents or near miss accidents (injury or non-injury), accident reports are completed</p> | |

1.8 Person Specification

What knowledge, skills and abilities does a person require for the job?

Why this is important

It is important to clearly identify what sort of person is best suited to the role you have created, so that during the recruitment and selection process you will have a greater chance of objectively choosing the best applicant for your job. The person specification also allows an employer to identify values and traits that are important to themselves, and will therefore have an impact on creating a harmonious and effective working environment.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is a person specification?
- Why is a person specification valuable?
- How to write a person specification
- Characteristics to be considered
- Linking a person specification to performance management
- Person specification examples
- Person specification template

What is a person specification?

A person specification analyses the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the tasks, duties and responsibilities identified in the job description. It is used to objectively measure the suitability of a job applicant during the recruitment and selection process (see Recruitment and Selection Fact Sheet 2.1).

The person specification is usually intended for those carrying out the selection process and is not disclosed to applicants, although in some cases, where part of the specification is crucial to the role, it may be appropriate to disclose this.

A person specification links into the employment process as illustrated in the diagram below.



Why is a person specification valuable?

A person specification helps:

- Identify the knowledge, skills and abilities required to do the job
- Provide objectivity in the selection process
- In writing advertisements
- Form the basis for subjective performance measures.

How to write a person specification

There are many ways to write a person specification, provided the outcome identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required. The analysis process may identify many criteria to be included, otherwise the following process can be used:

1. Brainstorm all the characteristics of the person who would be most suited to fill the job available and divide them into essential and preferred characteristics. These are discussed below in more detail.
2. As with the job analysis, involve others in clarifying requirements:
 - Get the current employee to help in the brainstorming
 - Spend time doing the job yourself
 - Use the manager of the position to brainstorm the role.
3. Compile a person specification using the template at the end of this fact sheet or make your own.

| Characteristic | Essential | Preferred |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Physical | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to lift 50kg calves |
| Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year milking experience • Identifying, treating and recording mastitis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year on 500 cow (min) farm |
| Attitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On time • Positive attitude • Gives things a go | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows initiative |
| Qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full and current driver's license | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCA (Level 2) • Heavy traffic licence |
| Fit with team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness • Flexibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with a team |
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy to board with owner | |
| Etc... | | |

Essential versus preferred characteristics

Because it is unlikely any one person will entirely meet your specification, it is useful to differentiate between preferred and essential characteristics. A good question to ask is "Can this be taught?", and "How much will it cost?" If a skill can be taught at a reasonable cost then it is likely to be preferred rather than essential.

Other characteristics may also become preferred, rather than essential, if it is practicable to rearrange work methods. The example above, of being able to lift calves, may be overcome by having a loading race the calves can walk up onto the bobby trailer.

Characteristics to be considered

There is a wide range of characteristics that may determine a person's suitability for a position. When writing the specification and considering characteristics, be open to change to avoid overlooking a good employee who doesn't quite fit the mould.

Attitude

Attitude is relatively difficult to measure, but it is still an important quality in an employee. A good idea is to ask previous employers about the applicant's enthusiasm, their punctuality, general outlook on life, whether they are a positive or negative person, etc. The interviewer's 'gut feel' during the interview is also valuable.

Remember, attitude is not about whether the applicant laughs at your jokes!

Fit with the team

How well is the applicant likely to fit in with the existing team in terms of attitude, habits and cleanliness? For example, have they worked in a team before and are they happy to take instructions?

Farming philosophies

Is the applicant a cow or machinery-oriented person? Do they believe in high or low-input farming and will that influence the way they work?

Initiative

Can they identify work that needs to be carried out and do it without prompting?

Flexibility

How routine is the role? Would they be the sort of person who could manage changes in their daily work routine? Would they need to be able to cope with a lot of change, or is it a role with a lot of routine work?

Time management

Does the role require the person to time-manage effectively?

Communication skills

Consider the level of written and oral reporting required.

Experience

What sort of work history should the person demonstrate? Is experience necessary at all or can the tasks be taught easily?

Qualifications

What, if any, qualifications are required to carry out the role?

Physical abilities

The job may have some physical demands that mean a certain level of fitness or strength is required. On this basis you may ask about health but otherwise it is discrimination (see Legal Responsibilities Fact Sheet 1.1).

Other considerations

There may be special requirements that don't fit into other headings: for example, the ability to travel away from home.

Discrimination in the person specification

The specification must not include anything that is not related to the job performance, as this is considered discrimination. For this reason personal characteristics such as marital status, gender, age, ethnicity or personality that cannot reasonably be expected to predict success in the job must not be included in a person specification.

Linking a person specification to performance management

A person specification is one place where an employer is likely to highlight some of the values of the organisation. These values should be turned into performance measures and included in performance objectives (see Performance Management Fact Sheet). For example, the ability to work in a team is hard to measure objectively but may be one of the most important issues in terms of farm profitability.

Budget

When going through the person specification it pays to keep the budget in mind, as this will influence the type of person employed. For example, there is no point in creating a person specification asking for feed budgeting skills and people management experience if there is only \$25,000 in the budget for salary.

What are the benefits to me?

The benefits of preparing a person specification are:

- A better understanding of the role and the person required to fill it
- A tool that can help in drafting advertisements
- A tool that can help select the best person for the job
- The employee has clarity around work that needs to be done.

What do I do next?

- Make person specifications for the job roles on the farm
- Use person specifications when recruiting and selecting staff.

Useful references

There are a number of rural professionals who specialise in the area of recruitment and selection of farm staff. They will be able to assist in this process or carry out the process on your behalf.



This fact sheet is part of DairyNZ's HR Toolkit - a guide to the fundamentals in establishing successful employment relationships. To access the full HR Toolkit please visit the DairyNZ website at www.dairynz.co.nz

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1.8.1 Example - Person Specification for a Farm Assistant

| Characteristic | Essential | Preferred |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Physical | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically fit Good health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to lift heavy objects Below 6ft tall (Low milk line) |
| Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calf rearing Calving cows Ability to identify mastitis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six months' previous dairy farming experience Tractor driving Feeding out Knowledge of operation of milking machinery Knowledge of milk quality management Knowledge of safe machinery operation Stock handling skills |
| Attitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On time Positive Honest Strong work ethic Committed to role Punctual Give everything a try | |
| Qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Certificate level maths Valid, full driver's licence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Certificate in Agriculture |
| Fit with team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to work in a team Tidy around house High level of personal hygiene Can communicate with a wide range of people Able to accept differences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will socialise with team |
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepared to travel and live away from home ten nights per year Prepared to share accommodation | |

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1.8.2 Example - Person Specification for Farm Manager

| Characteristic | Essential | Preferred |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Physical | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically fit Good health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to lift heavy objects Below 6ft tall (Low milk line) |
| Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One season previous farm management experience, including control over pasture allocation, machinery maintenance and milk quality Shows ability to think through and solve problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous staff management experience Experience of high stocking rate, all grass feeding systems Monthly oral and written reporting to owners experience |
| Attitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On time Positive Honest Strong work ethic Committed to role Give everything a try Punctual Committed to helping others succeed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals to progress through the dairy industry to ownership |
| Qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Diploma in Agribusiness Management, Production Management and Financial Management modules Valid, full driver's licence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diploma Agriculture, or higher AI technician |
| Fit with team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to work in a team Tidy around house High level of personal hygiene Can communicate with a wide range of people Able to accept differences Skilled in interpersonal relationships and negotiation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will socialise with team |
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepared to travel and live away from home ten nights per year | |

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1.8.3 Template - Person Specification

| Characteristic | Essential | Preferred |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

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2.1 Recruitment and Selection

Ensuring quality applicants apply for the job and selecting the best for the role

Why this is important

Having good people in a team gives a competitive advantage to a business. Employing the right person for the role will positively influence the performance and productivity of the work team as a whole. Selecting the wrong person can result in lower performance, higher operating costs, reduced morale and increased turnover among other staff members.

To improve the likelihood of getting good people on a team attract applicants through a well thought out recruitment process and then find the best person for the role using sound selection techniques.

The recruitment and selection process also provides a window into a business for job seekers. Having a professional approach to these processes reflects positively on the farm business.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Preparation required to be successful
- The recruitment process
- The selection process
- Examples
- Templates

Preparation required to be successful

Before recruiting and selecting a new staff member, an employer should complete a job analysis, job description and person specification. These documents will help to fully clarify the role as the employer sees it. A clear description is important so it can be communicated to the potential employee. When an employee knows what is expected of them they can assess whether or not the position is right for them.

Knowing what is expected allows the employer to select staff much more objectively, reducing the risk of failure in the selection process. Recruitment and selection is also important in performance management, as illustrated below, because performance expectations are shared at the start.



Aim of recruitment and selection

Recruitment:

To ensure that a pool of suitably experienced and qualified people apply for the job.

Selection:

To identify one candidate who is likely to perform better in the position than the others. This combines aspects of the person's knowledge skills and experience as well as their place in the culture of an established team. This is a two-way process and the applicant is also trying to establish for themselves if the role and the team meets their own needs.

The recruitment process

The recruitment process involves:

- Advertising the role
- Selling the job to potential applicants.

Advertising the job

Advertising is the shop window that attracts a potential applicant to find out more about the job. It should provide enough information to make the job sound appealing and encourage a potential applicant to take action. Advertising is also a way of enabling potential applicants to self-select into the role or to self-select out of the role by recognising they do, or don't have the necessary skills and/or experience. Care must be taken not to put too many barriers in the way of application.

Types of advertising

Traditionally, advertising has been done through the local newspaper or the dairy company newsletter. Other forms of advertising may include:

- Word of mouth through friends and associates
- Referrals from other team members
- Direct approaches to a potential applicant
- Job sections on websites such as www.fencepost.com or www.trademe.co.nz
- Internet job search sites
- Signs on notice boards at local businesses (supermarkets, farm supply stores etc)
- Agencies such as Work and Income or Student Job Search
- Local school or club newsletters
- Print advertising in industry publications
- Listing with farm consultants or an agricultural employment agency.

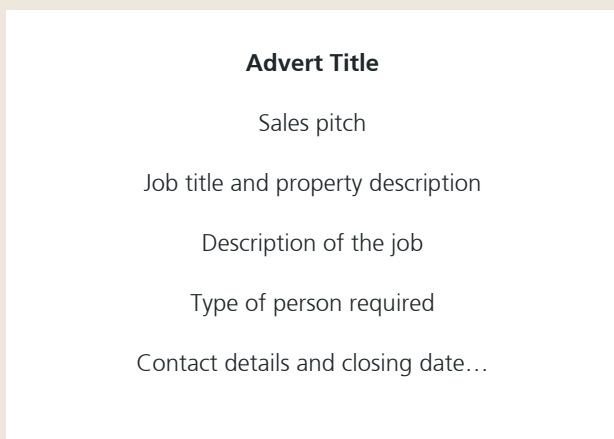
Writing an advertisement

Newspaper advertising is the most common form of recruitment, therefore this fact sheet will focus on that process.

Components of a good advertisement

There is clear evidence that qualified applicants are less likely to reply to vaguely worded or ill-defined advertisements, whereas unsuitable applicants are more likely to apply.

A common advertising format is as follows:



Title

The advert title may either be the job title or an eye-catching phrase. Other eye-catchers such as graphics or pictures (your farm logo) may also be added.

Job title and property description

The job title and property description tell the applicant what the position is and provides a context for the role by describing the location, size and facilities available on the farm.

Description of the job

This section describes the appropriate responsibility areas, tasks or duties for the role. This can be taken almost directly from the job description previously constructed (See Job Description Fact Sheet 1.7). The more clearly you can explain the requirements of the job the better, as this will allow applicants to self-select to a greater degree.

Realistic job previews: While selling the job is important, it can be a good sales ploy to point out any particular difficulties of the job, giving the applicant a more realistic idea about what the job entails. This should only be used where a direct compensation has been built into the package. As an example, a small shed of 25 rows may be offset by only having to do one milking per day.

Type of person required

In the person specification you may have identified some special characteristics, knowledge, skills or experience required in the person who fills the role. Any that are critical to your business should be detailed in this section. However, be careful to avoid any characteristics that do not directly affect performance of the role, as this is discrimination.

Selling the job

Before an effective sales pitch can be designed, the employer should:

- Review the terms and conditions for the role (see Employment Agreement 1.2 and Remuneration 4.7 Fact Sheets)
- Check the farm budget
- Prepare an information pack if one is to be sent out.

Sales points

Advertising should sell the job by highlighting the opportunities the role provides. These opportunities may include:

- Learning and growth opportunities (professional and personal development)
- The team on the farm
- Quality of accommodation.
- Training provided
- Recreational opportunities
- Proximity to town
- Time off
- Leave provisions
- Level of salary
- Success stories of previous employees
- Farm facilities/infrastructure.

Employers should be careful not to oversell the role because if they can't come through on promises made, staff will be disappointed. It is also illegal under the Fair Trading Act.

In all cases adverts should avoid overused words, such as "progressive", "self-starter" and "motivated". They are used with such frequency that they have lost their meaning and have become space fillers.

Employer CV

When people apply for a job the employee may provide you with a CV outlining their vision, values, strengths and weaknesses, work history and references for you to check their story out.

Providing them with a CV on you and the farm can aid the recruitment process by providing potential employees with details of you, the farm system and how they will fit in. The CV could be emailed or sent out to potential employees with a copy of the job description. In turn, helping potential employees self-select whether they would suit the job, long before you have to go through the interview and selection process.

An employer CV doesn't need to be exhaustive. Have a think about the key information you could let potential employees know or ask other staff members what they would have like to have known.

What could you include?

- Key contact details
- Basic farm details (size number of cows etc)
- Details of your history as an employer
- The type of training, skills and experience you have as an employer
- Details about what past employees have gone on to do
- Referees from both current and past employees.

(see *Employer CV Example and Template 2.1.12 & 2.1.13*).

Information packs

As part of the sales pitch, employers sometimes send out information packs to people making enquiries. Information packs are designed to provide more detail about a job than can be included in an advertisement, as well as help to sell the job. A pack may contain things like a job description, a copy of your employer CV, performance checklist and description of farm policy as well as more detail on the sales pitches.

The one issue surrounding distribution of information packs is timing. They need to be with the applicant immediately to keep the process rolling and therefore must be ready in advance. Using e-mail to distribute this information can help speed up the process.

Contact details and closing dates

In this section of an advert it is important to tell the potential applicant what they should do to apply for the job. This should include a phone number for phone replies and/or an address where applications can be sent.

It may also be useful to provide your email address. If you provide your email address as a point of contact for details on the job and applications, be prepared to check your emails regularly and to respond promptly. Have an electronic copy of your application form available to send out to people when they enquire and follow acknowledgement protocol in the same way you would if they had applied by phone or in written form.

Putting your name on the advert is also a good move as it shows you are proud to be advertising the role and have nothing to hide. It's also a lot easier for an applicant to ring and ask for a person.

An indication of when the position closes to applications is also a good idea as it creates a sense of urgency by indicating the timeframe for making a decision.

Phone or written replies?

Written replies can be in a number of formats. The most common being the completion of an application form or the preparation of a CV.

Preparation of a CV can be a barrier to people applying for the job. Compilation is time consuming, and especially for lower level jobs, can put people off applying. This can be overcome to some extent by using an application form which requires set questions to be answered (see Employment Application Form Example 2.1.1).

Preparing an application form and getting each applicant to complete it at the start of the recruitment process has many benefits:

- The same information is supplied by each applicant, making comparison easier
- It allows you to ask questions you are not comfortable asking people face-to-face
- People filling them out must declare they are doing so honestly
- It can be a means to testing if applicants can read and write.

Providing a phone number is the quickest way to get in touch with job applicants. However, this requires a higher level of organisation on behalf of the employer. A template with phone interview questions should be kept handy to the phone so all applicants can be asked the same questions. It may also be a barrier to potential applicants if they can never get in touch with the advertiser. To avoid this, employers should indicate times for applicants to call and make sure they are ready to answer the phone. An answerphone also helps avoid this problem.

A formal record of application is desirable and should cover off information such as referees and work history to provide evidence in case of misrepresentation of fact by a job applicant. This information may be gathered by way of CV, application form or employer notes.

Size

Double column advertisements with borders stand out better than single column run-on advertisements and are more likely to attract responses.

Cost

Advertising in the newspaper is the normal approach for many farm positions. Following the above guidelines will be more expensive than may have historically been the case. However, remember that taking time to screen out unsuitable applicants is an expense, as is having to re-advertise if there are no suitable applicants.

Acknowledging applicants

Where CVs are requested, it is polite to acknowledge their receipt with an email, letter or a phone call (see the Acknowledging Receipt of CV Example 2.1.2).

The selection process

The selection process has the following components:

- Setting the selection criteria and selection techniques
- Initial screening of applicants
- First interview
- Reference checking
- Second interview
- Job offer.



Setting selection criteria and selection techniques

Selection criteria are the set of competencies or measures used to rank candidates. These measures should cover eight to ten of the most important requirements identified in the job description and person specification (see Job Descriptions 1.7 and Person Specification 1.8 Fact Sheets).

Example: If an employee will be required to carry out feed budgeting, their skill in this area would be one of the selection criteria. Ability to work in a team may be another example.

Applicants are rated against the selection criteria during the interview process. The selection criteria can be weighted depending on importance and the rating of the applicant multiplied by the weighting gives the applicant's score for those selection criteria (see CV Screening Template 2.1.3).

Selection techniques

Selection techniques such as interview questions and tasks are designed around each of the eight to ten selection criteria so each candidate can be thoroughly tested for competency in that area. Ideally an applicant's competency should be tested in more than one way.

Example: For the feed budgeting example one test may be to get the applicant to carry out a feed budget (a practical work test) and the second test may be a discussion around how the results of the budget would be applied on farm (a structured interview).

Selection techniques may include the following:

CVs

A Curriculum Vitae is only useful in selecting a short list. After short listing, the information supplied in the CV should be treated as information that needs to be proved in other ways.

Structured interviews

Structured interviews ask all candidates the same questions and set the same tasks. This ensures that the same information is gathered from all candidates and allows for a more objective comparison between applicants.

Practical work tests

Practical work tests ask an employee to demonstrate their competence. An example may be inviting an applicant to assist in a milking or complete a feed budget.

Reference checks

Reference checks help to establish how a candidate has performed in the past. Both written and verbal references can be falsified, so information gained should be double-checked in another way.

Role play

Role play puts a person in a situation and asks them to act out how they would deal with it. This technique is especially useful to assess interpersonal and team skills.

Personality tests

Personality tests are good for understanding people and how they can be managed, but they are not good predictors of how a person will perform. If the job is described appropriately and the selection criteria are appropriate, the 'right' personality for the job is likely to be selected anyway.

Initial screening of applicants

Following successful recruitment, the aim of the screening process should be to cut the list of applicants to three or four people to be interviewed.

Screening should be done on the basis of the experience level and skills the applicant demonstrates through the CV or phone conversation, and how they match up with the selection criteria for the job. If there are a number of similar applications you may wish to make a phone call to their referees. Remember, under the Privacy Act, you can only contact nominated referees (see Phone Screening Questionnaire Example 2.1.4).

Once a shortlist has been made it is polite to let the other applicants know they will not be required for an interview (see Interview Rejection Example 2.1.5).

Notifying applicants of an interview

The applicants selected for an interview should be phoned to ensure they are still interested in the job and then offered an interview. This phone call should ideally be followed up in writing with details of the time, place and expected activities to be carried out at the interview and the expected duration so the applicant can plan their day.

Interviewing

One or two interviews?

Some thought should be given to whether or not a second interview stage will be used. If a second interview is to be used the objective of the first interview is to identify two to three people to move through to the next stage. This allows for shorter interviews. If there will not be a second, sufficient time must be allowed to conduct the interview and give the candidate a full tour of the farm and accommodation.

Accommodation and the farm dairy should be shown on the first interview as they are often deciding points for a candidate.

Who should be involved in the interview?

Using two people to conduct the interview is a good idea as they will both take different points from it. Make sure roles of the interviewers are clearly defined. Where possible, the direct manager of the job applicant should be involved. The same people should do all interviews to get a consistent picture.

When should interviews be carried out?

Ideally all interviews should be carried out on the same day to enable good comparison. This will mean the diary has to be cleared.

Where should interviews be carried out?

Choose a suitable room for your interview where you and the applicant can sit comfortably and you can take notes. Be aware of environmental factors e.g noise from farm which may be distracting during the interview.

Carrying out the interview

Introduction

Before the interview, make the applicant feel comfortable with general conversation. During this time you may find out about issues that are not relevant to their performance of the job. This information must not be used in making a decision as it may be regarded as discrimination (see Legal Responsibilities Fact Sheet 1.1).

During the interview

During the interview, inform the candidate that you will be making notes and then do it – don't rely on your memory. In making notes, distinguish between facts and your impression of the candidate. Facts about attitude and ability are far more important when making a decision than whether or not you like the person. Make judgements as interviewers immediately after the interview. Above all, let the candidate do the talking.



Questioning

Two of the most common approaches to interview questions are behavioural and situational styles. However, don't forget that you should also be testing competence by methods other than questioning alone (see Interview Questions Example 2.1.7).

Behavioural

Behavioural questioning relies on the premise that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. Therefore questions are structured to ask a candidate to provide an example from their past behaviour where they have demonstrated a particular competency.

For example: Please describe two examples of things you have done that best illustrate your teamwork skills.

Situational

Situational interviewing relies on the premise that future job performance can be predicted from the stated intentions and goals of the applicant. Questions are structured to give the applicant a theoretical situation and ask them how they would proceed. The problem with this type of questioning is that applicants may know their theory, but be poor at putting it into practice.

For example: You have been asked to do a mastitis check on the herd and treat any infected cows. How would you go about it?

At the end of the interview

Inform the candidate what the process will be from this point and when you are hoping to get back to them. Check if they are genuinely interested in the job but under no circumstances offer them the job at this point. Once the candidate has left, mark them immediately so that their score is not clouded by time.

Reference checking

Reference checking aims to confirm what the applicant has stated in their CV and/or told you during the interview. You should make up a standard set of questions to ask each person's referee as well as question the referee about detail or unclear points from the interview. Once again, remember that you can only contact nominated referees.

Selecting the right person

The right person for the job may not be the person you like the most or the one with the best qualifications. It should be the person who most closely matches your selection criteria. Following interviews and reference checking you should have plenty of objective information from which to make a decision. Candidates will have a range of skills, personalities and philosophies that may make it difficult to decide on the right person. This is where the information gathered in your notes is critical.

If there is nobody that matches your criteria closely enough you may decide to re-advertise, or you may elect to go back to the job description and alter the role to suit one of the candidates (see Job Description Fact Sheet 1.7). Be sure to consider how this will affect the overall staffing plan (see Staff Planning Fact Sheet 1.5).

Making a job offer

Call the successful candidate and offer them the job. If they accept, ask them to meet with you as soon as possible to look over an agreement. The proposed agreement should be gone through with the candidate word for word, to make sure it is clearly understood and expectations are spelled out. DO NOT ask the applicant to sign at this point because they MUST be allowed time to get advice and negotiate the terms of the agreement. Indications are that a week may be a suitable length of time. Do not pressure them into signing.

At this point, inform other candidates of their position. They may be second in line and you want to keep talking to them in case the favoured candidate backs out. It may take up to a week to get to a final decision so it is important to keep them informed, especially if the intended appointee withdraws their application.

It is professional to advise both the successful and unsuccessful applicants of the outcome in writing (see the Post-Interview Rejection 2.1.11 and Formal Job Offer 2.1.10 Examples).

It is also a legal requirement to provide a job offer in writing.

Timeliness

As a result of most farm positions being advertised at a similar time of the year, job seekers are continually entering and leaving the job market as they find a new position. This makes timing pivotal, and the whole process needs to be completed reasonably quickly. The person running the process needs to make sure they are well organised and books time in their diary to ensure each step is completed on time.

Standardise the process

If you have a standardised process for recruitment and selection it is less costly to replicate, especially in terms of time. You will also become more proficient with it and more professional.



What are the benefits to me?

The benefits of a rigorous recruitment and selection process include:

- Better matching of jobs and people
- A better pool of applicants to select from
- Obtaining objective information allowing informed selection
- More likelihood of getting the right person for the job.

What do I do next?

- Review the job description and person specifications for your roles
- Ensure you are providing enough information to job applicants in your advertisements
- Identify the most important characteristics (selection criteria) for your position
- Design some questions and tests around those selection criteria
- Streamline the process to minimise the time span required
- Standardise the process so it can be easily repeated
- Make sure the process is carried out in a professional, courteous and timely manner.

Useful references

Selecting and training good staff, Kevin Chapman

Successful Interviewing, Mo Shapiro

Human Resources Kit for Dummies, Max Messmer

There are a number of rural professionals who specialise in the area of recruitment and selection of farm staff. They will be able to assist in this process or carry out the process on your behalf.

Useful links

Guide to Hiring for Employers: www.dol.govt.nz/er/starting/howtohireguide/index.asp

Staff Recruitment and Selection: www.dol.govt.nz/er/workable/recruiting/index.asp

This fact sheet is part of DairyNZ's HR Toolkit - a guide to the fundamentals in establishing successful employment relationships. To access the full HR Toolkit please visit the DairyNZ website at www.dairynz.co.nz

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2.1.1 Example - Employment Application Form

Note: This application form template can be removed from this book, copied and sent to potential employees for completion or alternatively applicants can fill this out when arriving for their first interview.

Use this template for each applicant. Additional copies can be found on dairynz.co.nz/people

This information is collected for the purpose of assessing your suitability for employment. Applicants must complete this form personally, answer all questions, and sign the declaration. All applicants have the right to access personal information and to request any correction necessary to ensure its accuracy. The Employment Application Form and your CV will be retained for 12 months then may be destroyed unless you request your CV to be returned to you.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Role applied for: | |
| Name | |
| Address | |
| Phone number | |
| Mobile number | |
| Email address | |

Personal information

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Do you have any criminal convictions or court action pending? | yes / no |
| If yes, please detail... we may check this against: www.police.govt.nz/service/vetting/ | |
| Do you have permanent residency in New Zealand? | yes / no |
| If not, are you legally entitled to work in New Zealand? | yes / no |
| Do you give us permission to carry out a police check? | yes / no |
| Applicant's signature | |
| Do you have a valid driver licence? | yes / no class: |

References

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Prospective employer's name | |
|-----------------------------|--|

Please provide the names and contact details of three work related referees.

In providing references I consent to the above named employer seeking verbal or written information on a confidential basis about me from my referees. I authorise the information sought to be released by them to the above named employer for the purposes of assessing my suitability for this role. I understand that the information to be received by the above named employer is supplied in confidence as evaluative material and will not be disclosed to me.

Referees

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Phone number | |
| Nature of relationship | |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Phone number | |
| Nature of relationship | |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Phone number | |
| Nature of relationship | |

Employment history

Please provide the following information about the last three positions you have worked in.

| | | |
|-------------------------|------|----|
| Employer name | | |
| Role | | |
| Key responsibilities | | |
| Dates employed | from | to |
| Reason you left the job | | |

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Employer name | |
| Role | |
| Key responsibilities | |
| Dates employed | from _____ to _____ |
| Reason you left the job | |

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Employer name | |
| Role | |
| Key responsibilities | |
| Dates employed | from _____ to _____ |
| Reason you left the job | |

Education

| | |
|--|--|
| What is your highest formal qualification? (e.g. NCEA level, AgITO, Diploma, Degree) | |
| Please list any other relevant qualifications you have | |

Health

| | |
|---|----------|
| Have you had an injury or do you have a medical condition caused by gradual process, disease or infection (for example hearing loss, sensitivity to chemicals, occupational overuse or repetitive strain injuries, stress or depression), which the tasks of this job may aggravate or contribute to? | yes / no |
| If yes, please detail: | |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Do you have any health or physical condition which may affect your ability to effectively carry out the functions and responsibilities of the position you have applied for? | yes / no |
| If yes, please detail: | |

| | |
|---|----------|
| I agree to attend a medical practitioner if requested by the above named employer | yes / no |
|---|----------|

| | |
|--|----------|
| I agree to undergo a drugs test if requested by the above named employer | yes / no |
|--|----------|

Declaration

Ideclare that the answers to the questions in this application are true and correct. I understand that if any of the information is proved to be false or misleading or any relevant information is left out on this form or any other supporting documents, e.g. CV, then this may lead to my application being rejected or if appointed to a role, then I may be instantly dismissed.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|------|--|
| Applicant's signature | | Date | |
|-----------------------|--|------|--|

To be completed by employer:

| | |
|-----------|----------|
| Interview | yes / no |
|-----------|----------|

2.1.2 Example - Acknowledging Receipt of CV

Business name

Manager's name

Business address

Candidate's name

Candidate's address

Date

Dear Candidate's Name

Thank you for taking the time to submit your CV in application for the position of Assistant Manager of our 1,000 cow farm at Dunsandel.

We are planning to make a decision regarding which applicants we will interview by Friday 20th February.

We will let you know shortly after this if your application has been progressed to the interview stage.

Kind regards,

Employer/Manager signature

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| Questions | Notes | Rating scale |
|--|-------|--|
| <p>Qualifications</p> <p>Outline the qualifications you have</p> <p>Are you involved in any training at present?</p> | | <p>1 Poor</p> <p>3 Average</p> <p>5 Good</p> |
| <p>What looking for</p> <p>What are you looking for in a new role?</p> <p>What areas would you like to develop or improve in?</p> | | <p>1 Poor</p> <p>3 Average</p> <p>5 Good</p> |

Note: Remember to tell the applicant about the job you are offering, details of the recruitment process including timing and answer any questions they have.

2.1.5 Example - Interview Rejection

Business name
Manager's name
Business address

Candidate's name
Candidate's address

Date

Dear Candidate's Name,

Last week we evaluated all the applications we received for the position of Assistant Manager at our 1,000 cow Dunsandel farm.

It was tough to decide on the select group chosen for an interview, because we received so many good resumes.

Unfortunately, we weren't able to offer you an interview. However, we encourage you to apply for other positions as they become available in the future.

Thank you for your interest in our position and best wishes in your job search.

Kind regards,

Employer/Manager signature

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2.1.6 Example - Invitation to an Interview

Business name
Manager's name
Business address

Candidate's name
Candidate's address

Date

Dear Candidate's Name,

Last week we evaluated all the applications we received for the position of Assistant Manager on our 1,000 cow farm at Dunsandel.

It was tough to decide on the select group that was eventually chosen for an interview, because we received so many good applications.

You were one of those selected for an interview. We'd like to find out more about the skills you would bring to the job. Ideally, we'd like to meet with you on April 10 at 2pm, provided that time works for you. Give us a call at (03) 555-1212 to confirm the time and get directions.

As part of the interview we would like to see some of your practical skills. Please come prepared with suitable clothing and footwear.

I look forward to meeting you. You can expect to be here about 90 minutes total, with a short tour of the farm followed by the interview.

Kind regards,

Employer/Manager signature

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2.1.7 Example - Interview Questions

Select appropriate questions from the following to use during the interview. Remember that the questions or tasks used in the interview need to test the ability of the candidate in the identified selection criteria, and some questions may not be applicable for the role you are interviewing for. Pick the most important to you and the role - remember you only have a limited time for the interview. Limit the number of questions.

Introduction

- Why have you applied for this position?
- What skills and personal attributes do you possess that make you the ideal person for this role?
- Tell me a bit about yourself/your hobbies and interests
- Can you tell me a bit about your present position and the farm that you are on?
- How did you get involved in farming?
- Why did you become a farmer?

Education

- What is the highest level of formal education you have?
- What other courses have you done?
- How are you applying your training in your current position?
- What's the next thing you have to learn/would like to learn about?

Motivators

- Imagine it's six months after you've been in this job. What parts of the job do you imagine will make you glad you came to work here?
- What does the day look like on those mornings you get up and say to yourself "I can hardly wait to go to work today..."
- The next morning you say to yourself "I really don't want to go to work." Why do you say that?
- If you were independently wealthy and didn't have to work, what would make you want to go to work? What would it be about the work, the company, the people or anything else that would be so appealing that money didn't matter?

Assess self-evaluation skills

- In your career, describe your biggest success? What made it so?
- In your career, what's the one thing if you had to do it over again, that you would do differently? Why? What would you do?
- What's your greatest strength and why?
- Then – what is your Achilles heel or your weakness?

Milking

- We all have bad days sometimes. Can you tell me about a time when the milking process did not go well? What happened?
 - What did you do in that situation?
 - Looking back, how do you think you handled the situation?
 - Is there anything that you would change next time?
- Can you tell me about a time when there was a breakdown with the milking machinery in your present job? What happened?
 - How did you know what the problem was?
 - How was it fixed?
- What would you do if you had a thermoduric alert? How about a bacto alert?

Animal health

- Tell me how you monitor animal health in your present job?
- Tell me about the way you identified and managed mastitis in your last role?
 - What improvement, if any, could you make to this system?
- Have you ever treated cows with milk fever? Tell me how you do it.
- How much magnesium should you feed to newly calved cows?
- What in your experience causes bloat?

Stockmanship

- Our farm runs a herd of 450 cows. What experience have you had managing a herd this size?
- What do you think are the most important factors to ensure maximum efficiency and health of the herd? (Ask questions about animal health)
- Animals don't always do what we want them to do. Can you tell me about a time when this last happened to you?
 - What did you do?
 - How did it all work out?

Mating

- Have you ever been responsible for identifying cows in heat?
 - How did you do this?
 - How successful were you?
- What are the indications a cow is in standing heat?
- How would you go about achieving a high submission rate in the first round of mating?
- How would you manage a tail painting programme?

Pasture management

- In your current job, who is responsible for soil and herbage tests? In what way is that information used, and by whom?
- When feed budgeting, how much do you allow to feed dry cows in winter?
- What growth rates would you allow in June and July for your current farm?
- What are the costs of purchased feed at present?
 - How much supplement would you feed at this time of the year?

Administration

- Part of this role will require you to maintain accurate records. You will also be expected to report to the manager any exceptional circumstances, problems and your recommended solutions. Describe the more complex types of records you have had to maintain in the past.
- What sort of information have you had to provide on a regular basis?
- How did you go about organising yourself to make sure this information was accurate, completed on time and met your manager's needs?

Numeracy

- If the farm is 150ha and has 450 cows requiring 18kgDM/c/d, what is the daily requirement per hectare?
- If the grass is growing at 70kgDM/ha/d and cow requirements are 50kgDM/ha/d, what proportion of the farm should be shut away for silage?
- The percentage of phosphate in DAP is 20%. How many kilograms per hectare will you need to apply to give 75kg/ha of phosphate?
- Teat spray is to be diluted at 9:1. How many litres of teat spray concentrate will you have to use to make up a 25 litre mixture?
- You are wanting to feed 18kgDM/cow to a herd of 500 cows. Paddocks have a pre-grazing cover of 3,000kgDM/ha. You want to leave a residual of 1,700kgDM/ha. What area will the herd need? How many square metres per cow is this?

Self management

- Describe a situation you have been in where you have had to work independently, juggling your personal demands with those of others without any day-to-day supervision.
- What techniques have you developed to make sure you achieve the results expected of you by your manager?
- When faced with a number of conflicting and equally urgent demands, how do you decide what to do first?
- Describe how you decide what work needs to be done in your present job. How do you decide what order to do it in?

Decision making ability

- Tell us about an important decision that you have made recently
 - What was the decision you had to make?
 - What processes did you go through to make your decision?
 - What alternatives did you consider?
 - Do you think that you made the right decision? Why/why not?

Communication

(Make notes here on the effectiveness of the applicant's communication during interview)

- How would you describe the way you communicate?
 - Why do you prefer to communicate this way?
- What types of people do you have most difficulty communicating with, and why?

Influence

- We have all been in the situation where what we believe is best is different from what our manager or peers want, or what has been standard operating procedure in the past. Can you think of a situation like this that you have faced?
 - How did you handle it?
 - How did they react?
 - What was the outcome?
- Describe a project you implemented. What did you do well and what would you like to have improved on?

Initiative

- Have you tended to drive things yourself? Or do you prefer to provide support, advice and processes to enable others to do things?
 - How have you gone about this?

Working relationships

- Please describe your ideal manager. Why do you like this type of manager?
- Who did you like working for least and why?
- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with your employer. How did you handle it?

Health and safety

- Almost everyone has had an accident (or a near miss) while operating machinery at some time. Can you recall such an incident that happened to you? Describe the situation fully
 - What did you do?
 - How did it end up?
 - Could things have been done better?
- What safety precautions do you use when using chemicals?

Staff management

- Think of a time when you had to direct staff to accomplish a relatively complex task. Describe the task and the situation
 - How did you go about giving the task to your staff member?
 - Did the staff member follow your instructions properly?
 - Did the task get done to your satisfaction?
 - How could it have been done better?
- Most people have difficulty with another person working on the farm at one time or another. Tell me about the most difficult situation involving another person that you have had to deal with. Describe the situation fully
 - How did you attempt to resolve this situation?
 - What happened in the end?
- What is the key to getting the best out of people?
- What types of people do you enjoy supervising?
- How do you develop teamwork?
- Tell me about a time when a staff member was really annoying you and how you dealt with it?
- What are the things that annoy you most about staff?

Remuneration

- What do you expect to earn in a position like this?
- How much do you earn now?

Lifestyle

- Do you have any medical conditions that may interfere with your ability to carry out this role effectively? If so, what are they?
- What do you do when you're not working? (Watch out for things that may compete)
- What social or community roles do you have?

Concluding comments/questions

- May we contact your referees?
- When are you available to start work?
- Detail contract and conditions
- Let them know your timeframe for getting back to them and when you anticipate the start date to be
- Check if applicant has any questions or other comments in support of their application

(Note the questions they asked)

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2.1.8 Template - Interview

Applicant's Name:

Position:

| Skills-based questions | Weighting | Rating | Total | Notes |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|
| | | | | |
| Personality-based questions | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Questions they asked | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total | | | | |
| Ranking | | | | |

Weighting Factors: 3 = Critical, 2 = Important, 1 = Helpful

Rating Factors: 3 = Expert, 2 = Average, 1 = Poor, 0 = No Evidence

Ranking: 1 = Top of list ect.

Adapted from "Managing Your Team" AgITO 2002

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2.1.9 Template - Reference Checking Questionnaire

This template provides you with a guideline for developing questions to ask when checking an applicant's references. Please note that these are a guide only, some questions will not be applicable or appropriate. It is recommended you use this template to develop your own questions.

Candidate:

Potential role:

Date:

Person contacted:

Position:

Location:

Bus Tel:

Home Tel:

Relationship to applicant:

Did _____ work for you from _____ to _____
Yes No

If "No" provide detail:

What was _____ 's job role?

Who did _____ report to?

What were _____ 's general duties/responsibilities?

Which of these were carried out - supervised?
 - unsupervised?

Have you seen _____ 's current resume? Let me read to you what it says were his/her duties and accomplishments at your organisation.

Is this an honest account of _____ 's work with you?
Yes No

If "No" provide detail:

Why did _____ leave your business?

What do you feel are _____ 's strong points on the job? What characteristics do you most admire about him/her?

What is _____ 's cleanliness/tidiness like? 1 2 3 4 5
Poor Excellent

What are _____ 's stockmanship skills like? **1** **2** **3** **4** **5**
 Poor Excellent

What are _____ 's machinery skills like? **1** **2** **3** **4** **5**
 Poor Excellent

Did _____ supervise other people? How many? How effectively? Can he/she create a team environment?

What are _____ 's weaknesses? What are the areas you think _____ could work on to improve? Why?

How would you rate _____ 's overall job performance on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being high) compared with others you observed in a similar capacity?

How well does _____ relate to other people? Which employees does he/she work best with, supervisors/peers/subordinates? Which doesn't he/she work well with?

How well does _____ work as part of a team? **1** **2** **3** **4** **5**
 Poor Excellent

How did _____ 's last job performance review go? What strengths were cited?

What recommended improvement areas were noted?

What do you feel were _____ 's major accomplishments while working for you? What changed as a result of his/her involvement in your team?

Was _____ always on time?

Did _____ take much sick leave?

What changes did you observe in _____ while he/she was working for you?

Is _____ in the right job/career? How far do you think he/she can go?

What made you feel frustrated while _____ worked with you?

How did _____ handle himself/herself in times of conflict? e.g. when they disagreed with you on a point?

If _____ asked you, what would be the one thing that would most improve the way they perform on the job? What specific advice would you give them?

What is the best way to work with _____ to quickly maximise his/her talents and effectiveness for the business?

Would employ _____ again? Why/why not?
Yes No

Other references

What other people know _____ and would be worthwhile talking to?

Name:

Title:

Location:

Telephone:

Relationship to applicant/relevance:

NB: Before contacting these people as referees, make sure you gain permission from the candidate.

Overall

Excellent Good Some reservation Poor

Comments/Summary:

Points to follow up with applicant:

Keep this checklist throughout the recruitment and selection process to justify decisions.

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2.1.10 Example - Formal Job Offer

Business name
Manager's name
Business address

Candidate's name
Candidate's address

Date

Dear Candidate's Name,

Welcome to our farm. I'm happy you accepted the job last week when we talked on the phone.

This letter reiterates the verbal employment offer for the position of Assistant Manager on our 1,000 cow Dunsandel farm.

As discussed, the annual salary will be \$XX,000 (*or list hourly wage*). The three bedroom house you toured will be provided for you and your immediate family's accommodation. In addition, you will be entitled to one beast and reasonable household milk requirements during the season.

Time off will be every second weekend and you will be allowed four weeks of annual leave each year, and up to five days' sick leave.

These terms and conditions are restated in the attached employment agreement. Please take time to read this agreement and take advice on its content. However, as you will appreciate, time is of the essence and we would appreciate a signed copy of the agreement returned as soon as possible.

Your start date as discussed will be May 15, 2009. Your first 30 days include a structured orientation programme focusing on the management processes in place here and performance standards expected. An interim performance review will be conducted at 90 days, and a more formal review at 6 months.

On your first day of work, please bring with you a deposit slip for your bank account and your IRD number.

We are looking forward to having you on the staff here and believe you will be a great addition to the team.

Welcome to the team!

Kind regards,

Employer/Manager signature

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2.1.11 Example - Post Interview Rejection

Business name
Manager's name
Business address

Candidate's name
Candidate's address

Date

Dear Candidate's Name,

It was good to meet you in the interview held recently for the Assistant Manager position on our 1,000 cow property at Dunsandel.

If was difficult to choose from such a high calibre of candidates and we have decided to offer the job to one of the other candidates.

We would like to encourage you to keep your eyes out for future openings on our farm as they become available. In the meantime, we wish you the best of luck in your job search and your future endeavours.

Kind regards,

Employer/Manager signature

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2.1.12 Example - Employer CV

Contact details

Name: Joe B Farmer

Phone: 07 123 4567

Position: Farm manager

Address: 214 Smith Road, Central Plateau

Email: jbloggs@xtra.co.nz

Property details

Farm Business Name: Bloggs Farm Ltd

Size: 200 hectares

Cows: 600 Crossbred

Shed type: 50-aside herringbone

Location: Central Plateau

Job on offer (Name the position that is on offer) Herd manager

Staffing (Describe the current number of staff, positions and if applicable the way the roles interact within the farm business)

4 FTEs - Farm Manager, Herd Manager, 2 Farm Assistants

My history as an employer

Length: 10 years. 6 years as a mechanic (business manager) and 4 years as a manager on dairy farm (current role)

Training: AgITO Certificate in Rural Staff Management

Skills/experience: 10 years managing at least 2 staff

What I'm offering as an employer

(Provide detail on the types of opportunities, experiences and support you are offering)

- Opportunity to progress in responsibility level on farm
- Primary ITO training
- Staff management experience

Past employees' paths (Give a description of what types of roles past employees have moved on to)

Last herd manager progressing to 2IC on a 900 cow farm

Referees (Include their name, position, length of employment, contact details, when they worked for you)

Past employees:

Mike Adams: Farm Assistant Employed for 4 years Ph. 03 456 7812

Current employees:

Sam Smith Farm Assistant Employed for 2 years Ph. 07 843 5762

Kim Jones Farm Assistant Employed for 2 years Ph. 07 843 5777

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2.1.13 Template - Employer CV

Contact details

Name: _____ **Address:** _____
Phone: _____ **Email:** _____
Position: _____

Property details

Farm Business Name: _____ **Size:** _____
Cows: _____ **Shed type:** _____
Location: _____

Job on offer (Name the position that is on offer)

Staffing (Describe the current number of staff, positions and if applicable the way the roles interact within the farm business)

My history as an employer

Length: _____
Training: _____
Skills/experience: _____

What I'm offering as an employer (Provide detail on the types of opportunities, experiences and support you are offering)

Past employees' paths (Give a description of what types of roles past employees have moved on to)

Referees (Include their name, position, length of employment, contact details, when they worked for you)

Past employees:

Current employees:

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2.2 Migrant Staff

Why is this important?

Migrant staff are becoming a more prominent part of the New Zealand dairy industry labour force. When considering employing someone from overseas it is important to consider whether they are the best fit for your team and most importantly whether you are prepared to provide that little bit extra to make working and living on your farm easier for them. It takes effort and money to recruit from overseas, so you want them to stay with you for a while.

As an employer there are simple things you can do to make the transition easier, both for the migrant and for the rest of your team. Providing support, time and help to encourage the migrant and their family to feel welcome can increase their productivity and help retention.

Once you have decided to employ from overseas, there are many rules and regulations set out by the government as to who you can employ and how you go about it. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that a migrant is eligible to work in New Zealand. More information can be found on the Employer Hub on the Immigration New Zealand's website www.immigration.govt.nz

Rules and regulations are constantly changing with regard to employing immigrant staff. It is important that you contact the Immigration New Zealand to find out what you need to do, when you have to do it and what sort of employees are eligible for work permits in NZ.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Types of migrants
- Welcoming migrants
- Settling new migrants

Types of migrants

When someone from overseas is coming to work for you, it is important to differentiate between migrants who are coming to New Zealand on a temporary work visa and those who are coming to New Zealand permanently. Most migrants working in the New Zealand Dairy Industry are on a temporary work visa.

Being clear about expectations – what you expect and what the migrant worker expects – is important at the stage when you select staff from offshore. Providing good information about your farm and what you expect reduces the risk of failure in the selection process. Recruitment and selection is also an important part of performance management and ensures that expectations are shared at the start.

Welcoming migrants

Moving to a new country is a huge adjustment, even for people who already speak English. For a migrant to settle easily into their new workplace and their new life depends on whether their expectations are met and whether their family settles in. Doing as much as you can to manage an employee's expectations of life and work in New Zealand can help them avoid surprises and settle successfully.

Every employer has responsibilities to their staff, but when you employ someone who is coming to New Zealand as a new resident, there are some extra considerations. These considerations are in addition to the legal employment requirements (all migrant workers are covered by these legal requirements) and the best practice recruitment and selection processes recommended in other sections of this toolkit,

You'll be the first point of contact and possibly the first person a new migrant will get to know. You can help to make their transition into Kiwi life a great deal easier by using some of the tips in this section.

Settling new migrants

Most migrants go through a settlement process - from the excitement of leaving home and starting work in New Zealand to feeling frustrated or dissatisfied once that excitement wears off and the practicalities set in. Settling new migrants into your working environment and the local community is a critical success factor for a smooth transition into work, and a happy employee. Use the following ideas as a guide to help you provide assistance for people assimilating into their new surroundings.

Before they start

- Make sure the new migrant's expectations of living and working in New Zealand match what you will be supplying. Be honest and helpful from the start
- Include the migrant's partner in the discussions at the interview stage
- Let your migrant know what their standard of living will be, what the accommodation is like, and what the work they will be doing
- Provide information on the local area, climate, maps and things to do
- Discuss what personal possessions, clothes, and household goods they will need and be clear about what you will provide
- Explain the cost of living in New Zealand, and how we use money in New Zealand (banking, eftpos, currency, and exchange rates).
- Provide information on customs declarations – what you can and can't bring into New Zealand, including plant and animal materials, firearms and drugs
- Give information about New Zealand regulations on bringing pets into the country
- Inform them about electrical and telecommunications equipment, laptops and mobile phones, and check whether these will be useable in New Zealand
- Check that they bring all the documents you need to see – for example CV, birth certificate, international driver's licence, medical records - in their hand luggage.

Preparing yourself

- Find out about their country of origin - their culture, language, religion and recent history so that you have a better understanding of their background
- Different cultures value different things and this might affect how migrants prefer to be managed as well as how they think and act in the workplace. For example:
 - Some cultures prefer to be left to get on with the job, whereas as others like to be told exactly what to do.
 - Some cultures are very formal and might find it difficult to speak freely to the boss.
- Settlement Support New Zealand can give useful advice about different cultures and about settling in New Zealand (see useful links at the end of this section).
- The Employment Relations Service of the Department of Labour produce fact sheets on topics that your migrant workers need to know about – such as holidays, employment agreements, pay, parental leave, workplace safety etc.

The following suggestions could be very useful for your new employee

- If your new employee is not a native English speaker, contact a local language school and ask for hints and tips about communicating with them
- Talk to your current staff. Are they accepting of the new team member? Remember there will be differences in the way they do things. Make sure staff are aware of this and are ready to learn
- Plan to pick them up from the airport.
- Provide some warm and waterproof clothing for when migrants first arrive, especially if they are coming from a hot country.
- Show migrants around their accommodation and show them how to use heating, electrical appliances and other equipment that they may not be used to.
- Give migrants some time to settle in before they start work. It will give them time to familiarise themselves with their new home, sort out paperwork, and buy any essential items.

Once they arrive

Work orientation

- Buddy migrants up with an existing member of staff. A buddy can help the new employee learn how the farm operates and be someone to contact if they have questions. This will also help build teamwork
- Make sure your buddy or mentor is prepared for the role
- Make sure that you have both completed all the necessary paperwork for the immigration process
- Be explicit about workplace policies. New Zealanders tend to expect people to show initiative, but in some cultures this is frowned upon. Set up Policy Manuals and run through them with the new staff member
- Show them how to use farm machinery like the ATV, they may not have had much experience and will need more extensive training in health and safety issues
- Work through the orientation process and checklist
- Talk clearly, and slowly, and explain any new terms
- Take time to make sure your new staff member understands what you have said.
 - A simple way to do this is ask a confirmatory question after you have explained something - "What are you going to do next?"
 - Be patient. You might need to repeat yourself a number of times because much of this information will be new for them
 - Try using pictures and diagrams to explain things.
- Set a time to catch up and review how things are going. Include work and non-work related aspects in this discussion.

Social/community

- Help set up a bank account and get an IRD number
- Help your new migrant to organise getting a NZ driver's licence. Tell them about road safety driving in New Zealand.
- Organise a farm BBQ to introduce everyone and their families, or hold an international night where everybody brings their national dish
- Support and encourage social interaction – introduce them to the neighbours, take them along to discussion groups or the local Young Farmers Club meeting
- Provide support for their partners and families to interact socially too.

Local information and customs

- Provide a tour around the local area. Show your new migrant how to get into town, where the post office, supermarket, and doctors are located.
- Remember to explain some of our strange Kiwi ways and peculiar colloquial ways of speaking, and encourage your migrant to ask questions if they're puzzled!
- Advise them about local schools, sports clubs etc.

As with all staff management, communication is essential. Be open and honest and foster an environment where all staff feel comfortable approaching you with questions or suggestions.

What do I do next?

- If you are considering employing staff from overseas, prepare yourself:
 - Talk to the Department of Immigration regarding your obligations as an employer and things you can do to make their transition smoother
 - Get in touch with Settlement Support New Zealand (see details below in useful links) who will be able to refer you to additional information and assistance.

Useful links

- Settlement Support New Zealand (SSNZ) is located in 18 regional centres throughout New Zealand. SSNZ specialises in supporting new migrants and their employers. SSNZ can provide helpful information on living and working in your region and put you or your migrant worker in contact with other support networks and training facilities: Visit the settlement hub on the Immigration New Zealand website www.immigration.govt.nz or call 0800 SSNZ4U (0800 776 048).
- Employment Relations Service of the Department of Labour can assist with any general queries on employment relations, pay, holidays, and health and safety. Visit www.dol.govt.nz or call 0800 20 90 20
- Immigration New Zealand can answer queries about organising visas. Visit www.immigration.govt.nz or call freephone 0508 55 88 55

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2.3 Job Selection for Farm Staff

A guide to getting the right job

Why this is important

If you have goals and want to succeed in the dairy industry, then getting the right job is critical. A good job will help to gain the knowledge and skills you need to progress in the industry.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Deciding what sort of job you want
- Ideas to help you get the job you want
- Applying for jobs
- How to handle a job offer
- Dealing with being turned down
- Building a personal reputation

Deciding what sort of job you want

Goals

To decide what sort of job you want, take the time to write down some of your goals for the future. These will help you clarify what you want out of a job.

Ask yourself:

- If I am successful in achieving what I want out of life, what will my life look like?
- What do I want to have achieved in 5 year's time?
- What skills do I currently have?
- What skills do I want to gain from a new position?
- Where will these skills take me in the future?
- What do I need a job to provide for me?

SWOT analysis

Do a SWOT analysis; Write down all your **Strengths** and **Weaknesses**, then what you think are your **Opportunities**, and what the **Threats** are to achieving what you want. You may want to ask a friend, employer or mentor to help you do this.

Other questions

Some other questions you might like to ask yourself include:

- What skills do you think it is important for your employer to have?
- Are there any non-negotiable points or boundaries that you must keep in mind when applying for jobs? For example, do you have to be within a certain distance to a town due to your partner's work commitments?

With your SWOT analysis done and goals written, you can now work out what sort of job will meet your needs.

Ideas to help you get the job you want

Mentors

Having a mentor can help you get the job you want.

A mentor is someone you can use as a sounding board for ideas and who will give you guidance. Mentors will challenge you, support you and provide you with new skills that you can use.

When choosing a mentor, consider people who are family friends, past employers, or other people that you know who can provide you with what you need. Having the right person as your mentor can be of great benefit to you, so choose that person wisely.

Opportunities

Look around to see what opportunities are available and what would suit you. Talk to people that might be able to help you get the job you want; many jobs are only advertised through word of mouth.

If you are comfortable with the idea, try approaching people who you think you would like to work for. They may not have a job available at the time, but they may have later or they may be able to put you onto someone who does. Doing this also tells people that you are motivated and enthusiastic about learning and working in the industry.

Professionalism

Be professional in your attitude to job seeking.

Make sure you are on time and meet any close-off dates for sending information or replying to phone messages; if you are late in these circumstances it doesn't say much about your time management abilities. Prepare yourself for interviews by practicing with someone, so you are confident talking about yourself in front of other people.

What are employers looking for?

Every employer is different, but most employers value some basic characteristics in their employees:

- Honesty
- Reliability
- Ability to take initiative
- Good communicators
- Enthusiasm
- People who take an interest in their business
- Those who take pride in their work
- Positive people.

Applying for jobs

Self-promotion is important. Spend time preparing your CV. Often you will find standard CV formats in your word processing programme on your computer, or ask a few friends if you can see theirs to get an idea of what looks good. Ideally a CV should be typed; if you don't have a computer ask a friend, or even consider paying someone to do it for you.

Write down some questions about the job to ask potential employers, either when you speak to them on the phone, or at the job interview. Having these questions prepared will make you feel confident and it will also give a good impression to the potential employer.

For the interview, make sure you dress smartly but practically, this will help give you confidence. Don't be afraid to ask "stupid" questions; it was once said that the only stupid question is the question not asked.

Reference checking your future employer

Potential employers will ask if they can contact the people you have as referees so they can ask questions about your past employment and find out more about you. Make sure the people you give as referees know that you are applying for a job and that they might be telephoned.

You can also ask your potential employer if you can ring some people and find out a little more about them. You may like to speak to the employee who is leaving the job, other previous employees, neighbours or other people who have had a close association with the potential employer. Remember to prepare questions prior to talking to these people and that it pays to talk to more than one person in case you talk to someone who has an unusual view of the person.

Professional employers

Make sure that the people you are considering working for are professional employers. Professional employers should have the following:

- Employment agreements, with full job descriptions
- A Health and Safety Policy on farm
- A Policy and Operations Manual
- A system for performance management
- Suitable remuneration for the job, with adequate time off.

How to handle a job offer

This is where all your work and preparation finally pays off. You may even have several offers at the same time, so you need to handle this responsibly.

If you are interested in taking the job, you will need to sit down with your potential employer and talk about the terms of the offer. The Employment Relations Act states you must be allowed time to seek advice on the agreement. This means you will be given a couple of days to take the agreement and talk it over with someone. Ask your mentor, solicitor or an experienced friend to help with this.

You may then need to negotiate parts of the agreement such as training, any part-time work for your partner, time off, remuneration or other points. The agreement can then be signed when both parties agree.

Dealing with being turned down

Try to remain positive and not become discouraged when you are turned down for jobs.

It is a good idea to get feedback from interviews. If you miss out on a job, ask them why, and what could you have done better or differently. You may ask for this feedback when they ring to notify you that you have been unsuccessful. Often people find it easier to give this sort of feedback in a letter, so give people that option if they seem uncomfortable.

Remember that if you are not doing something well when applying for jobs then you need to fix it, and you won't know what you are doing wrong unless you ask for feedback.

Building a personal reputation

Some people in the dairy industry are well known even though many people have not met them. Why are these people well known? They have built a reputation or good image; they have done things to become known and their name has then been linked with this.

Personal reputations can be both good and bad; you need to build yourself a good one. A good reputation may lead to you being offered jobs before you start looking!

How do you build a good personal reputation?

- Be professional in all that you do
- Have good time management skills, good communication skills and be responsible
- Be good at your job and work at developing your skills and knowledge
- Treat other people as you would like to be treated yourself
- When you are working and talking to people, show your enthusiasm and motivation, as this can be as important as your skill level
- All of these skills and attributes will create the basis of good personal reputation.

What are the benefits to me?

Selecting the right job as an employee has the following benefits:

- A more enjoyable employment relationship
- Better opportunities to progress
- Achieving your goals more quickly.

Useful references

Managing Your Team, A guide to good employment practices, Agriculture ITO.

Job Interviews for Dummies, Joyce Lain Kennedy.

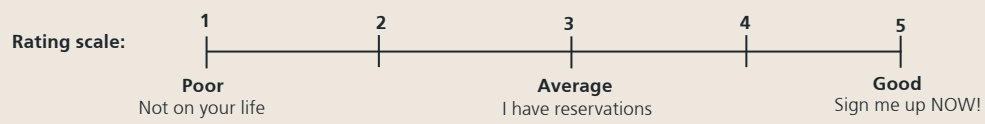
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2.3.1 Template - Employer Screening

| Employer details | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Employer name: | |
| Position title | |
| Contact phone number | |
| Location | |
| Farm area | |
| Cow numbers | |
| Referee 1: (name & phone no) | |
| Referee 2: (name & phone no) | |
| Selection criteria | |
| Agreement available | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Job description available | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Health & safety policies available | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Employer personality (rate 1 to 5) | |
| Accommodation (rate 1 to 5) | |
| Distance to town (km) | |
| Local school (rate 1 to 5) | |
| Hours of work | |
| Salary (\$) | |
| Overall impression | |
| | |



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3.1 Orientation of New Staff

Getting people off to the right start

Why this is important

An orientation process will help staff settle into their new job so there will be fewer mistakes made, which in turn will cost employers less money.

Orientation processes are also useful for:

- Setting the tone and expectations for the employment relationship
- Helping employees feel at ease in their new job, as changing jobs can be very stressful.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is included in an orientation process?
- How to put together an orientation process for the farm
- Orientation check list example

What is included in an orientation process?

An orientation process is a structured introduction to a new job.

All new employees, when they start in a new job, have a lot to learn about the farm they are working on. Using a formal orientation process will speed up the process of getting to know the farm so all staff can start the job with less downtime and be more effective. Staff will be more comfortable in their job earlier, and this contributes to job satisfaction.

Typically, an orientation process will involve a manual and face-to-face interaction between the employer and employee. This interaction may consist of three or four meetings, beginning anywhere from a few weeks before the employee is due to start work, to a few weeks into the job.

The process can include anything that is important to the business, but it is likely to cover the following areas:

- **Administration** - collection of all necessary information needed by both the employer and employee.
- **Business overview** - including farm goals, production targets, farm policies, farm map and names of all staff involved in the business.
- **Roles and responsibilities** - of people in the business.
- **Culture** - information on the culture the business is aiming for, such as all employees are to treat each other with respect. The farm policy manual will contain information on farm rules such as smoking, applying for leave and health and safety requirements (see Health and Safety Fact Sheet 1.3 and Policy Manual Example 3.2.5).
- **Key operations** - an overview of the key operations of the farm and how the operations manual is used on the farm.
- **Activities and recreational opportunities in the area** - information on social and recreational opportunities in the area for staff such as Young Farmers Club or the local sports club details.

How long should this process take?

An orientation process will occur over time; it is likely that it will start before the employee actually begins work, and may continue for several weeks, maybe months. The process on each farm will differ as well.

During the process employers may identify training needs in their employee, as well as the standard operations on the farm that the employee will need training in (see Training and Development 4.8 and Systems Manuals 3.2 Fact Sheets).

Prepare a checklist of everything that is to be covered, estimate the time it will take and keep a record of what has been done (see the Orientation Check List Example 3.1.1).

How to put together an orientation process

The first step is to plan what needs to be covered in this process and how it will be covered. Think about all the things that would be good to know about a farm on the first day. Try asking existing employees what they would like to know when they first start a new job.

If employing staff for the first time, a neighbour or someone who is not too familiar with the farm may be able to provide some thoughts on what should be included in the process. Think about what there is on the farm that is different from other farms.

Once all the information is collected it is time to put it all together. Most of the information will be in a written form so the employee can have a copy of it, even though a lot of the process will involve one-on-one discussion. Documenting the process will enable all employees to be treated in a standard way and will prove if information was, or was not, given to employees in the event of a dispute.

During this process the employer may include some of the following ideas:

- Prior to the commencement of employment a meeting to sort out bank account numbers for wages deposits, takeover of the accommodation provided, power and phone connections
- Meeting all the other staff on the farm
- Meeting the neighbours, farm owner, vet, farm consultant and other people involved in the business
- Discuss the employee's goals and your goals for the farm and how they can be meshed together
- Taking the new employee for a full in-depth tour of the farm. This may include looking at things in relation to the farm map such as hazard areas, location of taps on water lines and other areas of special interest on the farm
- Identifying training needs and setting up a schedule for when this training will be done
- A team-building exercise to help encourage friendship and teamwork amongst everyone that works on the farm
- The opportunity, a few weeks into the job, to catch up and go over any outstanding questions.

Remember that people only take in so much in one go, so it is better to have several short meetings rather than one or two long ones.

The orientation process is closely linked with systems manuals. As part of the orientation process the employer may take the employee through a series of sessions where they look at the systems manual in detail and the employer provides any training needed.

What are the benefits to me?

Having staff confident and knowledgeable in the farm within the first few weeks of starting work is valuable. The orientation process will help achieve this. All staff will have the same start in their new job and everyone will have the same knowledge of the farm.

What do I do next?

- Plan some time to set up an orientation process
- Talk to current staff members or other people about what should be included in an orientation process
- Think about having a folder containing all the information that will be given to new employees
- Document the process that new employees will go through so everyone gets the same opportunity and information
- Ask for the employee's feedback at the end of the process to enable improvements to be made for the future.



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3.1.1 Example - Orientation Checklist

| | |
|------|--|
| Name | |
| Date | |

Before the employee starts

| Task/activity | Complete |
|--|----------|
| Employment agreement and job description signed and filed Copy of each to employee | |
| Introduction to the area/community (include local contacts such as doctors, schools, community groups etc) | |
| Introduction to the farm business | |
| Prepare accommodation and other resources (PPE, tools, vehicles etc) | |
| Prepare employee file | |
| Gather appropriate documentation for completion on first day | |

First day

| Task/activity | Complete |
|--|----------|
| Complete personal details form | |
| Complete appropriate documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax IR330 • Health and Safety Manual acknowledgement • Inspect accommodation, complete Property Inspection Checklist • • | |

| Task/activity | Complete |
|--|----------|
| <p>First introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who works on the farm? • Who is responsible for what? • Where they fit into the team • Who they report to • Lines of reporting • Responsibility areas • • | |
| <p>Farm layout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazards • Important features • Farm map • Location of tools, important items, etc • • | |
| <p>Emergency contacts: who, when and how to contact them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who they report to • Other staff • Neighbours • Suppliers, vet, farm consultant • • | |

| Task/activity | Complete |
|---|----------|
| <p>Employment terms and conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours of work • Timekeeping – recording policy/procedure • Pay system – when, how much, frequency, method • Breaks – breakfast and lunch times etc. • Rosters – where kept, how to request changes, frequency of updating • • | |
| <p>Health and safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour of farm identifying hazards • Introduction to health and safety policies (ATV, use of protective equipment, reporting procedures etc.) • Accident reporting procedure • Emergency procedures • Location of first aid kits • Fire safety equipment • Issue personal protective equipment (PPE) • Complete the Health and Safety acknowledgment • • | |
| <p>Issue and discuss key parts of Farm Policy Manual including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct • Leave policy and procedures (including how to apply) • Communication (team meetings etc.) • Smoking • Alcohol and drugs • Dress standards • • | |

Within first two (2) weeks discuss the following

| Task/activity | Complete |
|--|----------|
| <p>Position expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job description • Expected standards • Check understanding of employment and job description terms • | |
| <p>The business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals/targets – production and business • Values and culture • Other key people involved, e.g. shareholders, consultants • | |
| <p>Health and safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Manual containing rules and policies | |
| <p>Rules and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline • Expected behaviour and conduct • Grievances and complaints • • | |
| <p>Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance planning and review • Talk about probation/trial period specifications (if applicable) • • | |
| <p>Training and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-job skills/knowledge • Off-job courses • Career development | |

3.2 System Manuals

Using manuals to ensure things are done the correct way

Why this is important

Often knowledge is found only in the heads of people who perform jobs. Writing things down is a way to make sure that all people on the farm have the ability to know how to do a job – even if it is not normally part of their workload.

As farms have become larger and more complex, the 'boss' can no longer be there to watch everything and give knowledge on how the job is supposed to be carried out. To minimise mistakes and help employees it is important that systems and processes are identified and recorded.

Many farm businesses have undertaken this challenge by compiling a farm manual.

Manuals have value in that they:

- Ensure that new workers learn how things are done on a particular farm
- Ensure that tasks are completed consistently
- Ensure new employees understand farm policy
- Help new employees become fully operational more quickly
- Are an insurance policy against disaster if a key worker on a property becomes unable to do their job through illness or accident. They assist another person to walk onto the farm and keep it going smoothly.

Manuals can be an important tool for successful business growth because they make things easier when the manager is not able to watch over the daily operations of the business.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What makes a successful manual?
- Types of manuals
 - Operations
 - Farm policies
- The human side of manuals
- Policy and operations manuals examples

What makes a successful manual?

A successful manual is:

- Simple and easy to use
- Short enough so that it does get read and used
- Has a good index so it is easy to find the required information
- A living document that is reviewed regularly so it is accurate and relevant to current practices on the farm.

Types of manuals

Manuals on farm can be developed and used in a variety of ways. Separate manuals that cover operational information and policy information is one way, or you can combine both. When developing your farm manuals it is best to assess your business and your team structure and decide which would best meet your needs. However, it is important to remember the key attributes of a successful manual (listed previously) to make sure the manual will be a functional part of your farm system, not just another door stop!

We have identified two main types of manual that may be useful, and ideas for what can be included in each manual are listed below.

Operations manuals

Operations manuals are developed to become part of the communication between employer and employee and all team members, in an effort to keep the processes and procedures carried out on farm running smoothly and to ensure that everyone is up to speed with how to carry out operational tasks. They usually include step-by-step instructions on how to do the task.

Developing an operations manual should not be an onerous task. Keep the information in manuals simple and clear, in plain language that everyone will understand, and if possible include photographs or pictures of various stages.

If the information is technical in nature, such as how to safely dismantle and clean the travelling effluent irrigator, base the details in the operations manual on the original instructions from the manufacturer.

The following is a list of ideas of things that can be put into operations manuals:

- The milking process
- The process for cleaning up after milking
- Tractor operation
- Motorbike operation
- Operation of other farm machinery (e.g. feedout wagon, seed drill, loader etc)
- Automatic teat sprayer operation
- Backing gate operation
- Electric fence unit operation
- Farm water supply maintenance
- In-line mineral dispenser operation
- Herd recording processes
- Animal health and welfare procedures
- Calf rearing systems and bobby calf management
- Effluent system.

Maintenance recording

A maintenance manual can be part of an operations manual or can be referred to in the operations manual. Generally, a maintenance manual has a list of regular maintenance tasks that need to be done, with a schedule beside the tasks of when they need to be done. People tick off the maintenance task as they are completed. It can be valuable to have an employee sign their name beside the completed maintenance schedule, as this can ensure greater accountability. Maintenance systems will include a plan for ensuring the work that is identified gets done (see Maintenance Schedule Example and Template 3.2.3 & 3.2.4).

Farm policy manuals

A farm policy manual outlines the farming system and philosophies that are used on a property and are a statement of expectations for behaviour within the farm business team.

Farm policy manuals can cover a wide range of topics or areas. Many of the policies included will relate directly to the implementation of processes on farm such as:

- Feeding policies (including feed monitoring and supplementation, regrassing)
- Weed management
- Fertiliser use
- Mating policy (including CIDR use and induction policies)
- Animal health and welfare.

It is also important to include a number of people-based policies that will have a direct impact on the work environment you provide and the behaviour of those in the team. These include policies such as:

- Code of conduct
- Training
- Personal information policy (outlines the policy on the use and storage of personal information)
- Personal grievances and disputes policy
- Health and Safety
- Leave entitlements
- Support policies
- Sexual harassment
- Cleanliness and hygiene (both on farm and in living quarters)
- Drug and alcohol use policies.

Refer to Policy Manual Example 3.2.5 for ideas on how to target the information.

Developing manuals

Keep the following points in mind when developing your manuals:

- Manuals should be easy to understand
- Involve staff in the development
- Break the development down into manageable sections
- Make them a living document - keep them updated
- Use them as part of your orientation and training processes

- Add photographs and pictures where applicable
- Don't over complicate things
- Keep language simple
- Length does matter – keep it relevant but watch that they are not too long
- Make at least two copies of the manual so that it can be moved around among employees and locations
- Use clear files to insert A4 sheets. This makes it easier to add or discard material. It also offers protection to grubby hands
- Laminate them if you use them frequently
- Keep them in a place everyone has access to.

The human side of manuals

People will still need to be trained effectively when there is a manual system in place. However, a manual will offer staff added support that they can refer to from the moment they are working on their own.

People like to be able to perform a task correctly the first time. Manuals can empower people to achieve better standards and outcomes by describing the steps of a task, without going through the process of learning by trial and error. This is very motivating for employees.

Knowledge sharing

Good leadership in a business will create an environment of shared knowledge where people are strengthened in their work performance through a culture of trust and cooperation.

Reluctance to share knowledge on the part of a competent and knowledgeable worker can be a relatively common thing. Some people do not want to share their knowledge because they feel that if they are the only person who can do the work effectively then they have job security and a sense of importance. Sharing knowledge means that the person who had the knowledge is no longer indispensable, and therefore they may feel that they are of less value to the organisation.

People may also simply forget to share knowledge with people around them, or find it is easier to do the work themselves than make the effort to share the knowledge with another person. For these reasons it is the responsibility of managers and leaders in a business to ensure that good instructions are available to people so they can work effectively. Carrying out tasks correctly means that staff have more confidence, remain motivated and positive, and efficiency is increased.

People and paperwork

Remember that a good manual is simple and functional. It must be organised so that the paperwork is easy to follow and clearly systemised. The efficiency benefits gained from such a manual system outweigh the effort of creating the system.

Benefits to the employer

Writing things down will ensure that your day-to-day business operations could continue without you were you to become sick or unavailable. Writing things down can help you relax when you are away from your business.

Manuals can help an employer pass on the daily operational jobs, that add only around \$10/hour to the business, and allow them to spend more time in the strategic part of their business.

Once an easy-to-follow list has been created stating what to do and how to do it, it becomes easier to hire someone else to do it and free yourself for the higher level tasks.

Other benefits include:

- Confident staff who consistently do their work correctly
- Consistency in staff training
- Increased efficiency
- Increased staff motivation
- Greater accountability of staff.

What do I do next?

- Make a list of tasks that would benefit from being documented on the property
- Ask staff what things would be most useful to them if they were documented
- You may choose to follow the example that is provided to document farm operations and policies
- Try starting with documenting the farm milking process.

Useful references

Best On-Farm Practice Manual, Fonterra

There are rural professionals who have pre-packaged policy and operations manuals available for your replication.

This fact sheet is part of DairyNZ's HR Toolkit - a guide to the fundamentals in establishing successful employment relationships. To access the full HR Toolkit please visit the DairyNZ website at www.dairynz.co.nz

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3.2.1 Example - Operations Manual

Milking Plant Operation

Supply Number 123456

Bob & Janet Farmer



Contents

| | |
|--------|------------------|
| Page 1 | Vat washing |
| Page 2 | To start milking |
| Page 3 | Plant washing |

Vat washing

1. The tanker driver should have put a rinse through the vat.
2. Ensure that:
 - (i) the door seal is removed and placed on the vat floor
 - (ii) the vat door is open
 - (iii) the milk inlet tap is in the upright (that is the milking) position.
3. Place **400ml Starbrite** in the hot drum – this is the drum that is insulated.
4. Adjust the taps so the hot tap to the pump is open and the cold tap to the pump is closed.
5. Push CIP button on the vat console.
6. Brush up the vat outlet pipe to clean the top of this line.

N.B. Ensure you do not come into contact with the discharging cleaning solution.
7. Allow the vat cleaning process to come to an end.
8. Reseal the vat door. Remember that the wide section of the seal faces the outside of the vat. Also remember to close the vat outlet tap and ensure the safety catch is engaged.
9. The vat is now ready to receive milk.
10. When approximately 40-50 cows (one platform round) have been milked, turn the refrigeration unit on at the vat switch board and check that the fridge motor has started.

Note:

Three times a week (eg. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) give the vat an **Alkali Wash**.

For an alkali wash, use **400ml Rapid** in the hot drum at Step 3 and follow with **400ml Starbrite** added to the cold drum.

To start milking

1. Turn on cooler and sprinkler pump taps.
2. Turn on teat-sprayer switch. Pass hand across beam to check that teat-sprayer works. If it doesn't spray, check that the reflector and the sensor are not obstructed and wipe clean if necessary.
3. Turn on
 - (i) the main plant switch
 - (ii) the yellow tap to fill the jetter tub
 - (iii) the platform drive (and set speed)
 - (iv) the backing gate
 - (v) the vat inlet tap.
4. For the first full platform rotation, check you have pulsation in each set of cups.
5. After one rotation, check there is no milk loss in the dairy or vat areas. Check also that the fridge unit is on, and the cows are going to the correct paddock.
6. Turn off the yellow tap when the jetter tub overflows.

Plant washing

Use **ACID** all afternoons and all mornings except Monday and Friday.

Use **ALKALI** on Monday and Friday mornings. The changes for an alkali wash are written in *italics*.

1. At the end of milking, fit the jettors by:
 - (i) folding the initiator activating lever back, and
 - (ii) turning the initiator levers to the manual (left) position and fitting cups into jettors.
2. Stop the platform with bail 43 adjacent to the jettor tub and turn off the platform switch on the operator switchboard.
3. Connect black hoses from the jettor tub to the two camlok fittings under the platform.
4. Switch milklift pump to high speed. The sound of the pumps will change pitch when the receiving cans are pumped out.
5. Introduce water by turning on both valves that the black hoses are connected to. The rinse water can now be sucked out of the jettor tub.
6. After sixty seconds, move vat inlet tap handle from the vat (up) position to the wash (horizontal) position.
7. Move the toggle switch on bail 43 switchboard toward the middle of the platform – this is the wash mode position.
8. Turn off the cooler and sprinkler pumps and then the cooler and sprinkler taps. Walk around the shed to check all initiators are working properly. Turn off teat-sprayer.
9. When the cold rinse is through:
 - (i) turn off the taps under the platform, and
 - (ii) refill the jettor tub by draining the hot water cylinder. Add **750ml Starbrite** from the dispensing unit and drain this into the jettor tub. *For an alkali wash use 750ml Rapid from the dispensing unit.*
10. Change the filter sock and hose out the filter housing.
11. Turn the taps under the platform back on.
12. When the chemical solution has gone through then turn off the jettor taps and turn the toggle switch to the milk production.

13. Following an alkali wash, half fill the jetter tub with the yard hose. *Add 750ml Starbrite and rinse the plant.*

14. Stop the plant. This is done by:
 - (i) putting on earmuffs
 - (ii) removing the rubber bung from the vacuum tank
 - (iii) turning off the plant switch next to the shed light switch in the foyer
 - (iv) pushing the fill button on the hot water cylinder and turning off the hot water cylinder drain tap.

At the end of the plant wash

1. Hose off the filter sock and reassemble.

2. Turn cooler and jetter pump switches to the ON position.

3. Replace the bung in the vacuum tank.

4. Turn off the hose in the dairy that you washed the filter with.

5. Open the jetter taps to drain the jetter line.

6. Release the initiator activating lever so it will move the levers over at the next milking.

7. Remove the cups from the jettors and at the same time move the initiator activating levers to the right.

8. At bail 43 turn the milkpump switch back to the auto position. Close jetter taps under bail 43.

9. Set the gates into the yard for the next milking.

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3.2.3 Example – Maintenance Schedule

| Weekly Tasks | Week Starting: | | Week Starting: | | Week Starting: | | Week Starting: | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------|-----------------------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| | Date Completed | Signed | Date completed | Signed | Date Completed | Signed | Date Completed | Signed |
| Lubricate motorbike chains | | | | | | | | |
| Check motorbike oil levels | | | | | | | | |
| Check tractor fluid levels | | | | | | | | |
| Grease magnesium spreader | | | | | | | | |
| Monthly Tasks | Date Completed | Signed | Monthly Tasks | | | | | |
| Grease platform track | | | Drain compressor tanks | | | | | |
| Check chain tension on backing gate | | | Clean dosatron unit | | | | | |
| Water blast farm dairy | | | Clean fridge fin units | | | | | |
| Grease effluent pumps | | | Grease tractors | | | | | |
| Carry out plant TQM checks | | | Clean motorbike air filters | | | | | |
| Check electric fence earth | | | | | | | | |
| Lubricate pulsators and test | | | | | | | | |

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3.2.5 Example – Farm Policy Manual

Farm name: Ngauruhoe Farms

Property description

This farming operation utilises the following assets to operate the farming business:

- 160ha of flat, sand-based, free draining land
- Land is subdivided into 50 paddocks and water supplied to all paddocks
- The farm has a 50 bail rotary cowshed, centrally located
- The farm is 90% irrigated by centre pivot
- Approximately 600 cows are peak milked.

Farm goals

The primary goals of the farming business are:

- To achieve the best milk production possible within the constraints of the grass grown on the farm
- To control the cost of production to achieve a system that is profitable and sustainable at all payouts
- To minimise the amount of human work required to achieve the production and the profit through allowing the cows to harvest the feed and only making supplements where pasture quality is being seriously compromised
- To allow flexibility for the farm owners to take time away from the farm as needed to meet family obligations and lifestyle goals.

Feeding policy

The farm operates on a policy of maximising grass growth and harvesting feed grown. To achieve this the following happens:

Spring

- Follow the spring rotation planner
- Conserve surplus water when pasture residual is greater than 2000kg DM/ha.

Summer/Autumn

- Grazing round to be at 40 days by 15 February.

Winter

- Grazing round to be at 120 days by 1 June
- 60% of the cows are grazed off-farm for six weeks from 1 June
- Cows on farm are on-off grazed using stand-off pad
- No supplement is purchased
- Calves are grazed off-farm from 1 December and return as in-calf heifers on 30 April, 22 months later.

Culling policy

Culls are identified in the following manner:

- Cows are pregnancy tested 6 weeks after bull removal
- Empty cows are sold as soon as possible after identification
- The number of empties will determine how much culling can be done for other reasons.

Priorities for culling are:

- (i) Somatic cell count
- (ii) Udder
- (iii) Health problems
- (iv) Production
- (v) Age
- (vi) Temperament.

Weed policy

The weed policy is designed to integrate weed control with other jobs to minimise time requirements.

- Weeds are sprayed with a motorbike mounted sprayer
- Weeds are sprayed when cows are brought out of the paddock for each milking by the person getting the cows in, while the cows walk to the shed
- Weeds are sprayed with MCPA from April to October and with Tordon Gold from November to March
- Gloves, goggles, gumboots and overalls are to be worn when mixing and spraying.

Fertiliser policy

The fertiliser programme is designed on the following:

Maintenance fertiliser

- Soil tests and pasture tests are done annually and fertiliser requirements are derived from this
- Recommendations are taken from two companies
- The aim is to achieve a least cost mixture
- Copper, cobalt and selenium are added where pasture tests indicate the need
- No trace elements are used as these are supplied direct to cows.

Nitrogen fertiliser

- Nitrogen is applied behind the cows from calving to mid-December
- Rates are:
 - 50kgN/ha calving until mid-September
 - 30kgN/ha from mid-September until mid-December
- Nitrogen is spread weekly by contractors with applications made to all paddocks grazed since the previous application.

Herd recording policy

- Mating records are kept by the AB technician
- Bull matings are not recorded
- Calving records are recorded in MINDA-Pro, using the Palm Pilot.

Mating policy

Mating is managed in the following way:

- Four weeks prior to the planned start of mating (PSM) tail paint the herd
- One week prior to calving, separate the non-cyclers for vet inspection and CIDRing if required
- Start mating on the 15 October (to calve 20 July)
- AB carried out for 4 weeks
- Jersey bulls used to tail off herd (12 bulls at a ratio of 1:20)
- One third of the bulls rotated weekly
- Bulls removed 23 December, giving 10 week mating period to avoid inductions
- Yearlings are run with Jersey bulls (for easy calving) for 6 weeks, from 10 October.

Animal health policy

This animal health policy has been designed with an emphasis on prevention and avoiding animal suffering.

- Identify causes of lameness or ill health and fix where possible
- Remove cows from herd at first sign of lameness or ill health
- Sick cows to be grazed close to shed with access to water and full allowances of feed (ie. residuals >2,200kgDM/ha) and to be milked once per day
- In all cases, primary assistance is administered by farmers. Vets are used when the outlook is positive and profitable. Where the likelihood of recovery is poor, animals will be destroyed rather than prolong suffering.

Treatments to be administered by farm staff include:

- Worm treatments to calves only up to 15 months
- Lice treatments if required
- 5-in-1 vaccine to calves
- Mastitis treatments including dry cow antibiotics
- Antibiotics for lameness and inflammation
- Milk fever treatments intravenously and subcutaneously.

Calf rearing policy and bobby calf management

The calves reared are the farm's future and all care will be taken to ensure quality stock are raised.

- Approximately 140 heifer calves of the best genetic merit are raised each year
- Bull calves will be sold to rearers
- All surplus female calves will go on the bobby truck
- Calves are left with their mothers for 12 hours to get at least one feed of colostrum from their mothers
- Colostrum will not be supplied to the factory
- All surplus colostrum stored and stirred daily for feeding to calves
- Calves are fed once a day from birth
- Calves will have access to hay and meal from birth.

Smoking and drug policies

- No smoking is permitted in the farm dairy, in other buildings or around fuel supplies on farm. Smoking is permitted in open areas of the farm
- No alcohol is to be consumed during work time. Any staff member suspected to be under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave the property and will be disciplined according to the disciplinary process outlined in their employment agreement
- No illicit drugs are permitted on the property at any time. This will be a reason for instant dismissal. Any staff member suspected to be under the influence of drugs will be asked to leave the property and will be disciplined according to the disciplinary process outlined in their employment agreement.

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4.1 Performance Management

Improving business performance through individuals

Why this is important

Performance management processes are designed to help both the employer and employee in their working relationship. Using performance management processes will:

- Provide a forum for improved communication between employer and employee
- Improve staff work performance and thus business performance
- Help staff understand the goals of the business
- Increase employee job satisfaction and motivation
- Identify staff training needs
- Provide a forum to deal with small problem areas for employers and employees and avoid them becoming large problems
- Assist in a fair and defensible dismissal for employees that under-perform.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is performance management?
- Planning a performance management system
- Why performance management fails
- Establishing performance measures
- How to do a performance appraisal
- Coaching and training for improved performance
- Using performance management to improve retention
- Performance management examples

What is performance management?

Performance management is a tool:

- for ensuring that employees know what is expected of them
- to help them achieve (or exceed) those expectations.

In its broadest sense performance management is a tool that influences almost every part of a job.

Planning a performance management system

Planning a performance management system involves the following steps:

1. Identifying the important components of performance
2. Establishing performance measures
3. The appraisal process
4. Coaching.

Identifying the important components of performance

Accurate measurement of an employee's performance can only occur if it is clear to both the employer and the employee what the job involves. Therefore performance management starts with the employer planning what they want the employee to do and then deciding the standards to which the tasks should be completed. This information is identified in the staff planning process and is then fed into the job description and person specification (see Job Description 1.7 and Person Specification 1.8 Fact Sheets). Selection of the individual should also be based on these criteria. The steps in this process are outlined in the diagram below.



During the performance planning process the employer and the employee must communicate and reach agreement on:

- The objectives of the job
- The standards to be met in the job
- Priorities and timeframes.

Why performance management fails

Before setting up a performance management system it is useful to look at why such systems fail. Primary reasons for failure include:

- Poorly written performance objectives or measures
- Objectives set by employer with no discussion or input from the employee; particularly at management levels
- The employee can't influence performance results
- Unrealistic targets
- Performance objectives may drive the wrong behaviour
- No reward or reason on offer for meeting objectives (not necessarily financial reward).

Getting a performance management system right will take time and should involve input from employees and employers.

Establishing performance measures

All performance targets and measures should be consistent with the expectations as described to the employee in their job description. Therefore, the job description is a good place to start thinking about appropriate measures.

Performance measures can be either objective or subjective measures and the choice of measure will depend on the desired outcome.

What are objective measures?

Objective measures have an easily identified result and require no interpretation. They can include things like:

- Milk grades (number of financial penalties per season)
- Mating results (number of cows submitted for AB in the first three weeks of mating)
- Financial results (EFS/ha)
- Milk production (kilograms of milksolids per ha).

Objective measures are often written using the **SMART** template. This means they should be:

Specific - Is the objective clear?

Measurable - Is there a quantity attached to the objective?

Achievable - Can the objective be achieved?

Realistic - Is it possible to achieve the objective given other pressures?

Time-bound - What date does the objective have to be achieved by?

What are subjective measures?

Subjective measures require a judgement to be made by the appraiser as to what standard of performance has been reached. Subjective measures are used to qualify attitudes and behaviours of the employee where they have a large impact on employee performance.

Areas where subjective measures can be used are:

- Cleanliness
- Stockmanship
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Enthusiasm
- Attitude.

With subjective measures it is vital at the planning stage that all parties agree on the measurements and have a clear understanding of the standards that are required.

How to implement subjective measures

Many employers feel uncomfortable using subjective measures because measurement is a matter of opinion. However, it is possible to use subjective measures accurately and consistently.

An important component of successfully using subjective measures is that the person appraising the employee is knowledgeable of and/or has observed the behaviours concerned. It is also important that the behaviours that constitute good performance be well defined and described to the employee.

For example, a subjective measure could be set up for tidiness. To make it a useful measure that both employer and employee understand, the definition of tidiness needs to be expanded on. In this case the measure of tidiness can be further described by more specific behaviours which have less room for interpretation such as:

- Overalls clean daily
- House lawn mown weekly
- Gates closed
- Tape barriers hung up after use
- Tools returned after use.

In effect, each of these behaviours should be rated to get an overall impression of “tidiness”.

Some tools that can help in rating behaviours include:

Check lists

Checklists and written guidelines such as House Rules or a Code of Conduct provide a set of statements that describe good performance.

For example:

Tidiness *(Tick all statements that the employee performs consistently)*

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Overalls clean daily | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tools returned after use | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gates closed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| House lawn mown weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Barriers hung up after use | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Forced choice statements

Forced choice statements ask the assessor to choose the standard at which the employee is performing. Using this technique, it is preferable to have the same person assessing all employees for consistency purposes. For example:

Tools returned after use *(Tick the statement that most accurately describes employee’s performance)*

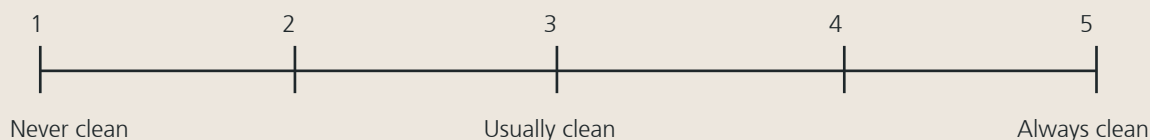
| | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Almost always | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Always | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Ranking systems

Ranking systems also ask the assessor to choose the standard at which the employee is performing. Like forced choice statements, it is preferable to have the same assessor for all staff.

For example:

Overalls clean (Circle the number that most accurately describes the employee's performance)



For examples of complete performance management plans refer to the Performance Appraisal Examples 4.1.1 & 4.1.2.

How to do a performance appraisal

The process of measuring employee performance is called a performance appraisal and this process is the basis of a performance management programme. The formal performance appraisal process should follow this format:

1. The employee rates their own performance independently of the employer
2. The employer rates the employee's performance
3. Employer and employee meet within seven days and aim to agree on a performance rating. Any points of disagreement are noted and the agreed ratings are signed and a copy is given to the employee for their own records
4. Plan the way forward together, including training and coaching required in the future
5. Keep a record of discussion for future reference.

Step 3 of the process is very important as it identifies the opportunities for training and development that will help build on employee performance. It should not focus solely on performance deficits! This opportunity should also be used to discuss the goals and aspirations of the staff member to identify how the job can help to meet their needs for the future. This is very important if staff retention is a goal.

Try to make performance review time something to look forward to – not something to dread! Many employees enjoy the personal attention from the boss.

As a rule of thumb 80% of the performance appraisal will focus on the year ahead and only 20% will focus on what has happened during the past year. By using this ratio, more time is spent on looking forward rather than dwelling on the past. This ratio provides a much more motivating and positive experience for both parties.

Coaching and training for improved performance

Coaching leads on from the performance appraisal process where areas for employee growth or improved performance have been identified. Coaching establishes a game plan as to how growth or improvement in employee performance can be achieved (see Training and Development Fact Sheet 4.8).

Coaching is a less formal version of performance appraisal; identifying development opportunities and performance deficits as they arise, meaning feedback is more immediate. As a result of ongoing coaching, issues that arise in a performance appraisal should never come as a surprise to employer or employee.

Coaching is a relatively simple three step process:

1. Identify need
2. Plan training process
3. Monitor progress.

In many farm situations coaching happens regularly as the employer and employee work together on a daily basis, however the ability to coach staff does not always come naturally and sometimes needs to be formally planned.

Managing non-performance

If an employee is consistently under-performing something needs to be done about it! Research shows that where a manager tolerates non-performance, other high-performing team members are more likely to leave.

Analysing performance shortfalls

Often when performance targets are not met it is difficult to know where the problem lies. Using the performance analysis flow chart overleaf can help isolate the cause of the performance shortfall.

Interpreting the performance analysis flowchart

Is the poor performance a skill deficiency?

Can the person actually do the task that is required? If not, training is required. If yes, why are they not doing it?

Is performance punishing?

Is the employee being punished in some way for performing to a high standard? For example a conscientious staff member who always finishes tasks first may be "punished" by being given extra work to fill in the remaining time available. The solution is to remove the punishment and replace with a reward such as time off for working efficiently.

Is non-performance rewarding?

Is the employee rewarded for under-performing? For example, an employee may turn up late for milking and other staff cover for them and they all leave for breakfast at the same time. The solution in this case is to arrange for a consequence for turning up late such as getting away for breakfast late.

Are obstacles present?

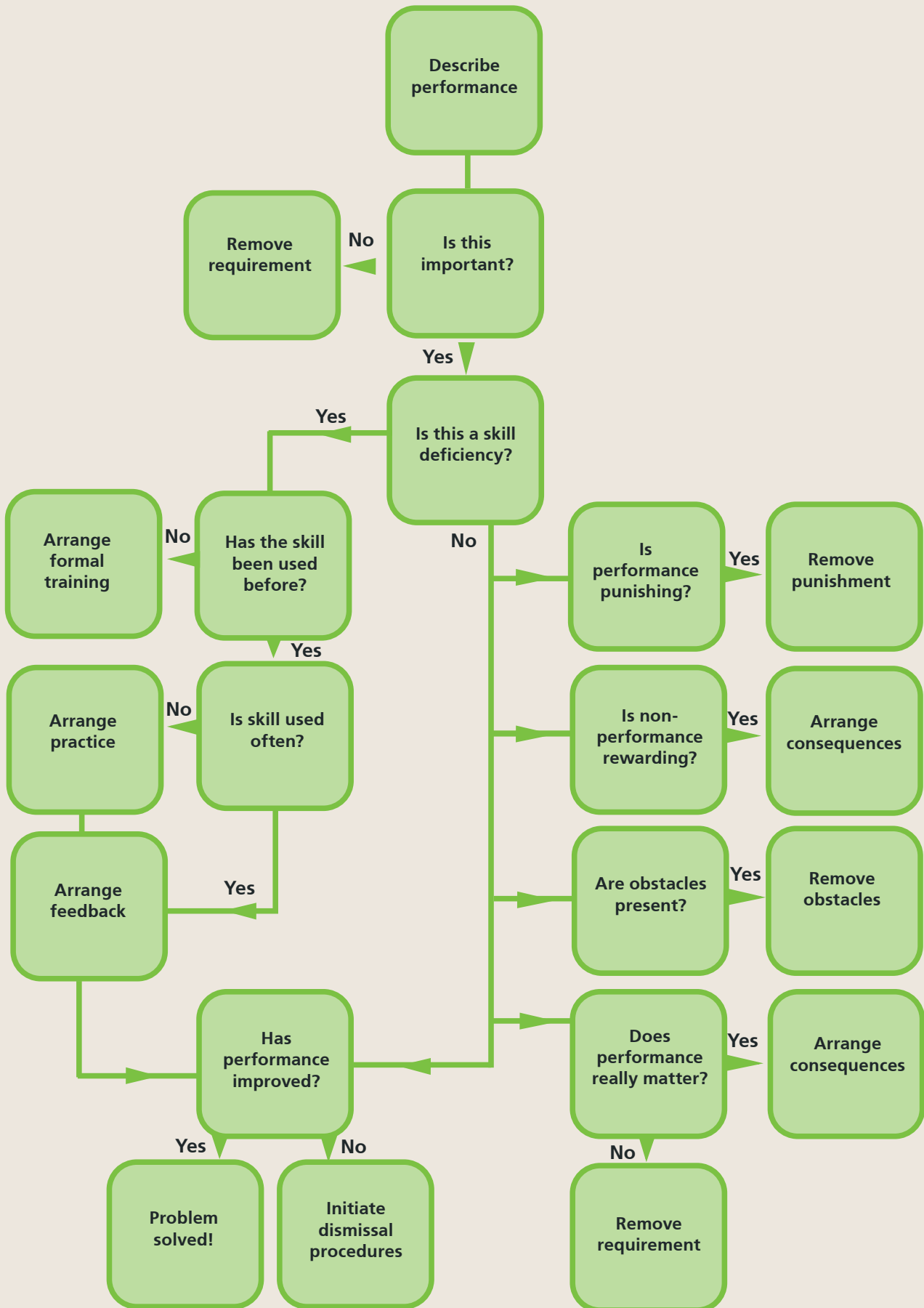
Are there obstacles to staff doing the tasks? For example, is the employee not strong enough to lift gates back into place or are resources limiting, such as tools not being available to perform the task properly.

Does performance really matter?

Sometimes there are no consequences (either positive or negative) for performing well or poorly. The solution is to arrange consequences. If performance doesn't really matter then remove the performance requirement.

If non-performance continues despite fair and reasonable efforts to help the employee raise their performance, then it may be necessary to terminate their employment. This is a difficult decision but one that must be made. Due to the complexity of the process and potential pitfalls it is advisable to consult an employment expert before commencing dismissal procedures.

Performance analysis



Using performance management to improve retention

Formal performance appraisal meetings and coaching sessions can also be used as a chance to talk about the goals and aspirations of the staff member. When an employee is able to work towards their own goals as a part of their employment, this increases job satisfaction for the employee.

Sharing the employee's goals and aspirations will help the employer or manager get an idea of where the staff member is heading. This includes issues such as how long they would like to stay, whether they are happy with their role, and where they see themselves in the future. This can help the employer modify the job to meet the needs of the employee, or to plan for "healthy" staff turnover in a harmonious manner that does not threaten the business operation.

Using performance management to share goals of the employee and goals of the employer can improve the ties between an employer and an employee and have a positive impact on employee retention (for more information on using performance management to improve retention see the Retention Fact Sheet 5.1).

What are the benefits to me?

- Improved employee performance
- Greater accountability from staff for their work
- Identification of staff training needs
- Better relationships in the workplace
- Improved employee motivation, job satisfaction and retention in your business.

What do I do next?

- Do a job analysis of each employee's job
- Write up performance measures for 10-12 key areas of each employee's job
- Discuss and reach agreement about the performance measures with each employee
- Start formally measuring employee performance and start talking!

Useful references

Powerful performance appraisals – How to set expectations and work together to improve performance, Karen McKirchy

Human Resources Kit for Dummies, Max Messmer

Useful links

Problem solving: www.dol.govt.nz/er/starting/relationships/performancemanagement.asp

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4.1.1 Example - Performance Appraisal: Farm Assistant

For full versions of Performance Reviews go to www.dairynz.co.nz/people

| Job title | Farm Assistant | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----|-------------------|-----------------------------|----|-----------------|--|-----------|
| Strategic business focus (A short statement reflecting farm goals) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate an all-grass system Maximise production within seasonal constraints Control the cost of production to achieve a system that is sustainable at all payouts To minimise the amount of work required to achieve the production and profit goals through allowing the cows to harvest the feed and only make supplement where quality is being compromised. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purpose of position (A short summary of the role) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The position of Farm Assistant is designed to assist the General Manager in the day-to-day running of the farm This position has particular responsibility for cleanliness of the farm dairy and general farm tidiness, including weeds From time to time, the Farm Assistant will be required to take charge of daily operations in the absence of the General Manager. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reporting lines (Who does the person report to and who reports to them?) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Farm Assistant reports to the General Manager The Farm Assistant will be required to supervise relief milkers from time to time. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hours of work | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Approx dates & number of weeks</th> <th>Hours/week</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Calving</td> <td>14 July - 31 Aug 7 weeks</td> <td>65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance of milking season</td> <td>1 Sep - 16 May 37 weeks</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dry period</td> <td>17 May - 13 July 8 weeks</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Average:</td> <td>50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Period | Approx dates & number of weeks | Hours/week | Calving | 14 July - 31 Aug 7 weeks | 65 | Balance of milking season | 1 Sep - 16 May 37 weeks | 50 | Dry period | 17 May - 13 July 8 weeks | 35 | Average: | | 50 |
| Period | Approx dates & number of weeks | Hours/week | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Calving | 14 July - 31 Aug 7 weeks | 65 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance of milking season | 1 Sep - 16 May 37 weeks | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dry period | 17 May - 13 July 8 weeks | 35 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Average: | | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special requirements (Any unique requirements of the job) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Responsibility areas/tasks/duties | Level | Performance measure | Employee rating | Employer rating | Agreed rating | Additional comments | |
|---|-------|---|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--|--|
| Milking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up equipment for milking and milk cows on a rostered basis to the standards outlined in the farm policy manual Clean and maintain the farm dairy plant and equipment to the standards outlined in the farm policy manual. | A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports on time for milking Cows consistently milked to required standard | 5 | 4 | 4 | Had to get Jim out of bed for milking about twice a month | |
| | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dairy is consistently maintained to the required standard. | 5 | 5 | 5 | Milking well done Dairy standards maintained well. | |
| | A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mastitis cows are treated correctly Treatments are recorded correctly in farm records. | 3 | 4 | 4 | Jim needs some training and support around mastitis treatment. Does not have confidence in process and therefore needed help from General Manager. | |
| Animal health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and treat mastitis in cows according to the farm policy manual Keep records of all mastitis treatments administered. Identify other animal health problems and report to the General Manager | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Motorbike maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake daily motorbike checks as outlined in the maintenance schedule Undertake monthly motorbike check as outlined in the maintenance schedule | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily motorbike check completed Monthly motorbike check completed. | 4 | 3 | 4 | More care should be taken with daily motorbike checks. | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Weeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake weed control as directed. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No weeds to reach flowering stage. This includes ragwort, nodding thistle, scotch thistle and wingtip thistle. | 3 | 5 | 5 | Jim has been conscientious with weed control. His low self score indicates he has high standards in weed control – but he has met the farm owner's requirements. | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Support of relief staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct and support relief staff in their duties in the absence of the General Manager. | A | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relief staff are happy to return to the property. | 5 | 5 | 5 | Jim is good at getting along with others and creating a harmonious working environment. | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Maintain a tidy workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put tools and equipment away Dispose of rubbish appropriately Store machinery away in the implement shed Waterblast farm buildings annually Maintain the garden in the tanker track. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools and equipment put away Rubbish disposed of Machinery in implement shed Farm buildings waterblasted Tanker track garden maintained | 3 | 3 | 3 | More effort required with tools Farm owner unhappy with rubbish at the back of house Machinery well cared for Waterblasting was rushed and not thorough Tanker garden a bit rough. | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

Level: R = Responsible A = Assists
Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Unacceptable performance

Acceptable performance

Exceptional performance

Training and development required

How can your manager help you to improve your job performance?

- Jim would like to learn how to do feed budgeting

Actions

- Enrol in AgITO Production Management course
- Accompany General Manager on the monthly farm walk
- Prepare a monthly feed budget and check with the General Manager
- Prepare a grazing plan each week and check with the General Manager.

Amendments to be made to job description

What needs to be changed in the job description to more accurately reflect the work carried out in the job?

- Jim to become responsible for calf rearing
- There will be no change to reflect feed budgeting as this is a training exercise.

Any points of disagreement remaining after discussion?

Staff member to complete

Staff member's signature

Manager's signature

Date

Date

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4.1.2 Example - Performance Appraisal: Farm Manager

| Job title | Farm Manager | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----|-------------------|-----------------------------|----|-----------------|--|-----------|
| Strategic business focus (A short statement reflecting farm goals) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve the best milk production possible within the constraints of the seasonal conditions, and therefore the grass grown on farm To control the cost of production to achieve a system that is profitable and sustainable at all payouts To minimise the amount of work required to achieve the production and profit goals through allowing the cows to harvest the feed and only make supplement where quality is being compromised. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Purpose of position (A short summary of the role) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To effect the day-to-day management of Hill Top Farm in consultation with the owner. This includes responsibility for coordinating feeding of stock and directing staff to achieve the goals of the farm. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reporting lines (Who does the person report to and who reports to them?) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Farm Manager reports to the farm owner All other farm staff report to the General Manager. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hours of work | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Approx dates & number of weeks</th> <th>Hours/week</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Calving</td> <td>14 July - 31 Aug 7 weeks</td> <td>65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance of milking season</td> <td>1 Sep - 16 May 37 weeks</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dry period</td> <td>17 May - 13 July 8 weeks</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Average:</td> <td>50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Period | Approx dates & number of weeks | Hours/week | Calving | 14 July - 31 Aug 7 weeks | 65 | Balance of milking season | 1 Sep - 16 May 37 weeks | 50 | Dry period | 17 May - 13 July 8 weeks | 35 | Average: | | 50 |
| Period | Approx dates & number of weeks | Hours/week | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Calving | 14 July - 31 Aug 7 weeks | 65 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance of milking season | 1 Sep - 16 May 37 weeks | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dry period | 17 May - 13 July 8 weeks | 35 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Average: | | 50 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special requirements (Any unique requirements of the job) | Board the Farm Assistant. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Responsibility areas/tasks/duties | Level | Performance measure | Employee rating | Employer rating | Agreed rating | Additional comments |
|--|-------|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--|
| <p>Milking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for the milking process Train, support and supervise milking staff Take responsibility for milk quality management. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve 1,000kgMS/ha Achieve zero financial penalties for milk quality. | 5 | 5 | 5 | <p>Achieved 1,021kgMS/ha – well done</p> <p>No financial penalties incurred.</p> |
| <p>Feed management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan the feeding programme for the season Monitor the feed supply on farm at all times and compare against the season feed plan Manage deviations from the season feed plan in order to meet animal needs and farm profit goals. | R | <p>Achieve pasture cover budgets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - June 1 – 2,300kgDM/ha - Sep 15 – 1,900-2,000kgDM/ha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare monthly feed budget and forward to owner. | 4 4 5 | 3 3 4 | 3 4 4 | <p>Over-feeding prior to June 1 – led to pasture cover of 2,100kgDM/ha at June 1</p> <p>At Sep 5, pasture cover was 1,800kgDM/ha due to poor start.</p> <p>Feed budgets made and followed this season after poor start in winter. Led to good production despite the poor start.</p> |
| <p>Animal health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor animal health status regularly through observation and blood tests Treat all animal health problems that are within your ability Contact a vet for other assistance. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood tests taken July 1 and August 20 Deaths < 2% | 3 4 | 4 4 | 3 4 | <p>Blood tests taken, and results acted upon</p> <p>Deaths were at 3%.</p> |
| <p>Mating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan the mating programme. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% submission to the first round of mating Less than 8% empties. | 3 2 | 4 3 | 3 3 | <p>82% submission to first round of mating</p> <p>13% empties. Disappointing result, but owner believes mating was managed reasonably despite cows being slightly underfed and lameness problems.</p> |
| <p>Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to the farm owner monthly on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - production - milk quality - feed cover - variations from the previous season - repairs and maintenance - supplies required. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly reports received by owner by the last day of each month. | 4 | 4 | 4 | <p>10 monthly reports received on time.</p> <p>Others were slightly late but eventually received.</p> |

| Responsibility areas/tasks/duties | Level | Performance measure | Employee rating | Employer rating | Agreed rating | Additional comments |
|---|-------|---|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--|
| Asset management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water leaks identified and repaired. Assist in control of weeds. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No water leaks on property No weeds to reach flowering stage at any time of year. | 4 3 | 5 5 | 4 5 | Farm maintenance well managed. |
| Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and select staff in consultation with farm owner Plan and allocate work within team Prepare an annual roster for time off and notify owner of relief staff requirements Complete performance review with staff. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full complement of staff on-board throughout the year Roster prepared and displayed on dairy wall and forwarded to owner by June 15 Performance reviews completed and forwarded to owner by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 November - 31 May | 3 4 3 | 3 4 3 | 3 4 3 | Repeated trouble finding relief staff. Farm owner had to fill in twice Roster made, but owner not fully informed of changes Only one performance review completed for staff. |
| General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance among staff with health and safety policies Liaise with contractors where necessary Liaise with farm advisor to set farm policy and seasonal management policies. | R | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero serious harm accidents occur All staff wear protective clothing where appropriate Attend monthly visits with farm advisor and implement agreed strategies. | 5 5 5 | 5 4 5 | 5 4 5 | No accidents on farm Farm staff not wearing chaps when using chainsaw Regular attendance of meetings with advisor. General Manager worked well with the advisor and implemented management decisions that were agreed upon at meetings. |

Key

Level: R = Responsible A = Assists

Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

Unacceptable performance

Acceptable performance

Exceptional performance

Training and development required

How can your manager help you to improve your job performance?

- Request for training in treatment of lame cows
- Request for training in staff recruitment and selection, and performance management.

Amendments to be made to job description

What needs to be changed in the job description to more accurately reflect the work carried out in the job?

Any points of disagreement remaining after discussion?

Staff member to complete

Staff member's signature

Manager's signature

Date

Date

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4.2 Effective Teams

Why this is important

An effective team is an integral part of a well functioning farm. The benefits of having an effective team include:

- Improved employee satisfaction
- Increased motivation
- A positive and enjoyable working environment
- Open lines of communication
- Improved workplace productivity
- Increased staff morale
- Making the best use of people's time and skills
- A safe entity for people to share ideas
- Lower absenteeism
- Lower staff turnover or higher retention of staff.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is an effective team?
- Building team spirit
- Maintaining effective teams
- Effective team meetings
- Regularity of team meetings

What is an effective team?

A team is defined as a group of people who work together to achieve a common goal and objectives. Developing and managing an effective team involves understanding the people that make up the team and working to build on each person's strengths. An effective team has free communication and makes a member feel safe to contribute. They have a strong team culture and foster a sense of belonging for the members. Each member is happy to contribute and will have a sense of ownership for their role and the business as a whole.

Building team spirit

In effective, productive teams members feel that they are valued in what they do, they have a strong sense of team spirit and feel involved in and committed to the objectives and goals of the team. A strong team spirit is a key part of retention. The following is a list of ideas for how to build team spirit:

- Share business goals – both strategic and operational. People who know what they are aiming for and understand why they are doing things have a stronger sense of ownership
- Celebrate success
- Give credit where credit is due

- Be clear on expectations and processes
- Communicate – verbally and in writing through use of whiteboards, diaries or notebooks at the farm dairy
- Follow through on promises and consequences
- Build respect and be respectful
- Involve all team members in decision making
- Promote involvement in making decisions and showing initiative
- Delegate responsibility not chores
- Acknowledge effort even if there hasn't been a success
- Trust your team
- Build a sense of pride in their role, their contribution and the business they are part of
- Celebrate milestones amongst the team – include everything from qualifications gained and new skills mastered through to simple things like people's birthdays
- Be human!

Effective team meetings

Team meetings allow information to be shared efficiently. Everyone present hears the same message (reducing the Chinese whispers effect) and can contribute to decisions made. Team meetings should involve everyone and be communicated as an important part of keeping a team working and allowing contribution from all members. Meetings are a time for sharing knowledge and ideas, reporting, planning, problem-solving and open and safe communication between the team. It's a good time to celebrate success but not the appropriate forum to address performance issues.

It is important to consider the need for a team meeting. Team meetings should not just be held out of habit. Meetings do not need to be long and boring. Use the following hints to make sure your meeting is a success:

- Prepare - have an agenda. Consider a set agenda that gives everyone the opportunity to prepare and contribute
- Think about the location – make sure it is comfortable for everyone and that you can access other information (records etc) if you need to
- Schedule the meeting in as part of the weekly (or monthly) task list – prioritise the meetings and make it clear that everyone is to be present
- Make sure people know when and where they need to be
- Start on time
- Take notes – particularly if allocating responsibility or accountability
- Remember meetings should result in actions, not just be a talkfest
- Circulate minutes
- Make sure only one person speaks at a time
- Everyone is responsible for how the meeting runs – it may be useful to rotate the responsibility of running the meeting so everyone feels involved and gains experience.
- Respect each other's contributions

- Finish on time and don't apologise if you finish early!
- Set rules as a group – they can include things like silence is taken as agreement, address problems not people, focus on what can be done – not what can't, or outline a process for how people are to present their ideas and how the group will decide on things.

Regularity of team meetings

Team meetings can be called when issues arise or they can be scheduled in as part of the team roster. Whichever format you choose, make sure all team members are aware of the process for adding items to the agenda. If meetings are held monthly it is useful to have some set agenda items such as health and safety issues, upcoming activities, or progress reporting on farm goals.

Meetings should be scheduled as often as is needed to monitor the progress being made toward farm goals. As you set the next meeting, consider the time that will be needed for team members to complete assigned tasks and schedule accordingly.

Set agendas

The following is a list of topics you may like to include on a set agenda for team meetings:

- Good news stories
- Training undertaken and/or planned
- Major areas of work coming up on the farm (e.g. supplementary feed making, drying off)
- Time off and leave allocations
- Health and safety issues
- Budgets – planned vs. actual
- Targets for the coming period
- How we are tracking for the long term targets on farm.

What do I do next?

- Think about whether developing a more formal process for team meetings would suit your team - if so set up the team meetings process
- Incorporate ways to increase team spirit into your workplace
- Talk to your staff and discuss opportunities to involve them in more decision making
- Communicate!
- Read through the Retention Strategies 5.1 and Understanding People 6.3 Fact Sheets for more tips on keeping your team working.

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4.3 Manager's Reporting

Using a reporting template to communicate

Why is this important?

As farm sizes and the number of absentee owners increase in the dairy industry, there are a growing numbers of farms that are run by farm managers who have intermittent or infrequent personal contact with farm owners and decision makers.

Effective communication is a critical part of an effective and efficient farm system. The development of a manger's reporting process can be advantageous for communication, particularly when owners and key stakeholders are not directly involved with the day-to-day management on farm.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Why this is important
- What do you report on?
- Using the manager's report
- Timing of reporting
- Manager's report template

What do you report on?

What you include in a manager's report is dependant on the role and responsibility level your manager has, the level of input you have in the business, who will be using the report and the farm system you run.

Ideas on what could be reported include:

- Production update
- Stock details (numbers, condition scores etc)
- Pasture growth rates, quality, pasture covers etc
- Fertilisers
- Supplements
- Milking management
- Irrigation
- Environmental issues
- Business factors (budgets, goals and targets)
- Staff and training
- General (repairs and maintenance, development etc).

Refer to Manger's Report Template 4.3.1 at the end of this section for a draft layout and customise a report that will be meaningful in your situation.

Using the manager's report

Manager's reports can be used in various parts of the business. The first and most obvious is in reporting farming activities and issues to the farm owner, but they can also be useful in communicating with other business partners; farm teams and for record keeping.

Timing of reporting

It is important to consider the time of season when requesting information in a manager's report and it may be necessary to have individual reports for each part of the season (calving, mating, milking, drying off, dry period).

Benefits of reporting

- Clear communication
- Set process for reporting – clearer and more defined supply of information
- Record keeping process set up.

What do I do next?

- Discuss the usefulness of a manager's reporting process with your manager and other key stakeholders
- Set up the key principles of the process – how often will they report, what will they report on, who will receive it
- Customise the template to suit your farm
- Set up a file that keeps each of the reports in one place.



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4.3.1 Template – Manager’s Report

Farm Name:

Date:

Report by:

Contact details:

Summary (Key points from report on target/variations and key happenings)

Production:

Season figures to date:

| Kg MS | Budget | Last year |
|-------------|--------|-----------|
| Month | | |
| Season | | |
| Per cow | | |
| Per hectare | | |

Monthly stock reconciliation:

| | Opening stock numbers | Add purchases | Add births | Less sales | Less deaths | Closing stock numbers |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Mixed age cows | | | | | | |
| R2 Heifers | | | | | | |
| R1 Heifers | | | | | | |
| Other stock | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | |

Stock details

- Cows in milk
- Cows dry
- Cows identified for drying off
- Cows identified for culling
- Animal health, cow condition, replacements, weight gain/loss etc
- Report on stock away grazing
- Expected and actual calving report:

| Week | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Cows calved | | | | | | | | | | |
| Heifers calved | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total number of cows calved | | | | | | | | | | |

- Mating plan.

Pasture report:

- Growth rates, quality, covers, round lengths, soil temperatures

Fertiliser and soils

- What, how much and what paddock

Supplements

- Paddocks for closing up, feeding amounts, supplement on hand

Milking management and farm dairy

- General progress, hygiene issues, any issues

Irrigation/Rainfall

- Which paddocks, when, rates

Environmental Issues

- Stand-off pad use (number of times cows were stood off)
- Effluent application:

| Date | Paddock | Run number | Signature | Comment (e.g. signs of ponding or runoff) |
|------|---------|------------|-----------|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Business

- Goals – report on progress
- Goals for next period
- Foreseen costs
- Budget update (if applicable).

Staff and training

- Details on rosters, leave movements, training undertaken, attach roster is applicable.

General

- Repairs and maintenance issues
- Farm development.

Signature

Date

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4.4 Time Management

Taking time to manage your time

Why this is important?

The saying “so much to do and so little time to do it” shows the importance of time management. We can never slow down or speed up time so we must be able to manage ourselves in relation to time. This will help us achieve all that we need to do in the time that we have.

Most people have the goal of having a better lifestyle; often this means they want to spend less time working. Good management of time allows you to control your own working time, therefore freeing up more time to be spent not working; it allows you to create time to do what you want!

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is time management?
- The most common areas where time management can be improved upon on-farm
- The theory of time management
- How to incorporate time management into everyday life
- Action Planner template

What is time management?

Time management is a skill that people learn and then use in their work and their personal life.

Most people have to continually work on this; it is not something that just happens! To manage time effectively people need to learn how to plan.

Planning for time management

Time management is about thinking ahead, planning what needs to be done, who is going to do it and when it needs to be done. By planning what needs to be done you can then prioritise the tasks that are more important so they get done first. People who can plan well, and manage their time as a result, have a better control over their business.

The most common areas where time management can be improved on farm

There are many areas on the farm that would benefit from an improvement in time management but these are some of the areas where most people could make significant time gains:

- Administration
- Calf rearing
- Rosters (see Rostering Systems Fact Sheet 4.6)
- Spring feeding plan
- Grazing decisions

- Organising contractors
- Reading and up-skilling
- Milking time
- Pasture management
- Weed control.

The theory of time management

It is often said that the difference between a good farmer and a bad farmer is two weeks. Basically good farmers plan their time; they are proactive. The bad farmer tends to be reactive. By planning and prioritising, jobs can be delegated resourcefully and optimum results achieved.

Covey's Time Quadrants

The time quadrant theory contains two main elements – Urgent & Important.

People generally spend time in all of these quadrants at some point but the aim is to spend the majority of time in Quadrant 2 – “Important and Not Urgent”.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Important and Urgent</p> <p><i>“The Procrastinator” - There are many things that fall into Quadrant 1 that we can't control, but many we can. Jobs get put off until they become a crisis – this is often as a result of poor planning.</i></p> | <p>2. Important but Not Urgent</p> <p><i>“The Prioritiser” - The Quadrant of Excellence – where we want to be. To be in this quadrant planning is essential. Living in this quadrant gives you balance, control and high performance.</i></p> |
| <p>3. Not Important but Urgent</p> <p><i>“The Yes-man” - Trying to please everyone and agreeing to do everything. Urgent things become deceptive and you think they are important. Everyone else is happy but you.</i></p> | <p>4. Not Important and Not Urgent</p> <p><i>“The Slacker” - Anything but what needs to be done gets done. Time is wasted on things of little or no value.</i></p> |

New work or life commitments can be classified using these quadrants. Some of the typical jobs that occur on a dairy farm have been fitted into the table below:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Important and Urgent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating metabolic cows • Identifying and rectifying reasons for milk quality grades. | <p>2. Important but Not Urgent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GST and accounts • Paying bills • Monitoring pasture. |
| <p>3. Not Important but Urgent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading your mail everyday • Going into town to get supplies 3 times a week | <p>4. Not Important and Not Urgent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting the farm dairy • Tidying the implement shed. |

The aim of using these quadrants is to prioritise the activities that will drive your business and your life in the desired direction.

How to incorporate time management into every day life

- Plan your time. Sit down annually and set out a seasonal plan. Include major dates such as the start of calving, when mating will start, holidays and when crops should ideally be planted and harvested. Using this seasonal plan throughout the year, allows everyone to clearly see the work requirements for the months and weeks ahead. For example, if calving is only four weeks away calf sheds will need to be made ready now and all metabolic disorder cow treatments brought in. This is proactive, rather than reactive.
 - Use a wall planner for clarity and overview.
 - Get the team involved in the process.
 - Rank 'Things to Do' in order of importance from 1 to 4 in line with Covey's quadrants, and then prioritise them within each quadrant. Those with a high importance get a 1; those with a low importance get 4. Most of the manager's jobs should be ranked as a 1 or 2, and they should be the jobs that are done first (see the Action Planner Template 4.4.1).
- 
- Use technology to your advantage. Using email or fax can reduce time spent getting messages to people. The accountant, banker or rural supplies store can be contacted in this way. Use answer phones, leave clear messages and ask people to reply by leaving a message with their answer or confirmation. Using fax, email and answer phones instead of waiting for person-to-person contact means the request can be made at the caller's convenience and the service supplier can leave a reply message when the requirement is ready.
 - Have a cellphone. This can help efficiency especially when calling the vet or contacting staff. However, cellphones can waste time too, people can make contact more easily, but when they ring it may not be convenient for you. Using walkie talkies, or turning the phone off when necessary, may be good options.
 - If a job is taking up too much time and preventing other projects being done then think about getting someone else to do it. For example, if weed spraying seems to take weeks, get a spraying contractor in to finish it quickly. It is often more important that a job gets done, rather than who does it.
 - Roster time off. If time off is booked into your planner you are more likely to take it.
 - Have a "lost" list and a "to buy" list. When someone on the farm can't find something put it on the lost list; someone else may know where the item is but not realise others think it is lost. Only go to town once a week to buy farm supplies. Get people to plan ahead and write down what they need on the "to buy" list. This will save unnecessary trips into town.
 - Learn to say no. Be more assertive and manage valuable time by saying no to things that don't fit in and will cause you to work in the wrong quadrant.

What are the benefits to me?

- Good time management puts the farmer in control of the business
- Peace-of-mind is attained as work gets done and leisure time is made available
- Prioritising the tasks gives more time for planning and monitoring of the business, allowing the farmer to do more high value work and less of the \$10/hour jobs
- It is a great skill for all on the farm to have. Important jobs get done and working becomes more pleasurable.

What do I do next?

- Look at how time is currently spent; perhaps keeping a diary for a few weeks to analyse where time is being spent.
- Talk to staff and ask them for suggestions on how to improve time management on-farm. Involve them in trying to improve their time management; they will have more ownership of new procedures if they are involved in developing them.
- Get a big wall planner to record everyone's time off. A second planner in the office to record major events and appointments may also be useful. This will help everyone to clearly see any time requirements in advance of the event.
- Record how time is spent then analyse it for possible streamlining.

Useful references

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen R. Covey

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, Sean Covey

The Idiots guide to time management, Jeff Davidson

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4.5 Delegation

Why this is important

Delegation is one of the most important management skills. As an employer you can't do everything that needs to be done. It is critical that you have an effective team that is competent and confident to keep the business running – delegating and building skills helps to foster this type of working environment.

Delegation allows people to grow in the job by enabling them to gain experience to take on higher responsibilities. It also builds trust, contributes to retention, as people build skills, knowledge and responsibility levels, often leading to higher job satisfaction. It is a very helpful aid for succession planning, personal development - and seeking and encouraging promotion.

Effective delegation is crucial for effective succession.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Delegation vs. task allocation
- The steps of successful delegation
- When to delegate
- Delegation hints

Delegation vs. task allocation

It is important to understand the difference between delegation and task allocation. Delegation isn't just a matter of telling someone else what to do. When you delegate you transfer the task, the responsibility and the authority for getting the job done to the expected standard.

Allocating tasks does not instill the same level of empowerment delegation does, but sometimes it is more applicable than delegation (see table below). Careful consideration of whether you are delegating or simply giving someone else a task to do is an important part of successful delegating.

Instructing someone to "Wait to be told" or "Do exactly what I say" or "Follow these instructions precisely" is giving someone instruction not delegation.

| Task allocation | Delegation |
|--|--|
| <i>Follow my instructions...</i> | <i>Please be responsible for...</i> |
| Carry out the pasture walk Then...put up break fences after the 5th post in paddock 21, set gates and races for after tonight's milking. (Instructed what to do, when and how) | Pasture walk the farm to develop the feed wedge so that you can allocate the right paddocks to meet the cows' current feed requirements for the next week. (Responsibility for pasture management and allocation of feed) |

To delegate you need to have provided the person with some freedom to carry out the task. There is a wide range of varying freedom that you can confer on the other person. The more experienced and reliable the other person is, then the more freedom you can give.

The steps of successful delegation

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Define the task - make sure you are clear on what you are delegating. Is it suitable to be delegated – will the person gain knowledge or experience by taking it on, or are you simply reallocating tasks? |
| 2. | Select the individual - What are your reasons for delegating to this person? What are they going to get out of it? What are you going to get out of it? |
| 3. | Assess ability and training needs - Is the person capable of doing the task? Do they understand what needs to be done? If not, you can't delegate – you will need to coach them through the task, providing support and feedback throughout. |
| 4. | Explain the reasons -You must explain why the job or responsibility is being delegated. And why you have delegated it to them? What is its importance and relevance? Where does it fit in the overall scheme of things? |
| 5. | State required results - What must be achieved? How will the task be measured? Make sure they know how you intend to decide that the job is being successfully done. How you will check on progress needs to be discussed and agreed with the other person from the outset. If you don't, they may feel you're interfering or that you do not trust them to complete the task. |
| 6. | Consider resources required - Discuss and agree what is required to get the job done. Consider other people, location, premises, equipment, money, materials, other related activities and services. |
| 7. | Agree deadlines - When must the job be finished? Or if it is ongoing, will there be review dates? Is the task complex? Will it be completed in parts or stages, what are the priorities? You may need to confirm understanding. Clarify understanding by getting feedback from the other person. Ask open-ended questions; get them to reiterate what you have discussed. Do they understand what is required? Are they confident enough to go away and complete the task? |
| 8. | Support and communicate – think about who else needs to know what's going on, and inform them. Do other team members need to be involved? Make sure the person you have delegated to considers this so they can see beyond the issue at hand. Do not leave the person to inform their own peers of their new responsibility, let the team know. |
| 9. | Feedback on results – it is essential to let the person know how they are doing, and whether they have achieved their aims. If they haven't, you must review with them why things did not go to plan, and deal with the problems. Address failures but don't forget to celebrate success! |

Make sure that the team member knows that you want to know if any problems occur, and that you are available for any questions or guidance needed as the work progresses.

When you first start to delegate to someone, you may notice that he or she takes longer than you do to complete tasks. This is because you are an expert in the field and the person to whom you have delegated is still learning.

Be patient: if you have chosen the right person to delegate to, and you have delegated the task correctly, you will find that he or she quickly becomes competent and reliable.

When to delegate

Delegation creates a win-win situation when done appropriately, however that does not mean that you can delegate just anything.

To determine when delegation is most appropriate there are five key questions you need to ask yourself:

1. Is there someone else who has (or can be given) the necessary information or expertise to complete the task? Essentially is this a task that someone else can do, or is it critical that you do it yourself?
2. Does the task provide an opportunity to grow and develop another person's skills?
3. Is this a task that will occur regularly, in a similar form, in the future? Should it become their responsibility?
4. Do you have enough time to delegate the job effectively? Time must be available for adequate training, for questions and answers, for opportunities to check progress, and for rework if that is necessary.
5. Is this a task that I should delegate? Or is it more appropriate that I do it?
6. Do I need to delegate? How busy is my schedule? Could I delegate more to work on my business instead of in it?

If you can answer "yes" to at least some of the above questions, then it could well be worth delegating this task.

You also need to consider timelines/deadlines. How much time is there available to do the task? Is there time to redo the task if it's not done properly the first time? What are the consequences of not completing the task on time?

Delegation hints

- When delegating it is important to keep the process transparent
- Make sure everyone is clear on what is required of them – provide detail on what, who, when by, how it impacts on other tasks etc (see the example on the DairyNZ website www.dairynz.co.nz/smarternotharder)
- Set up a board somewhere all staff can easily see it (see the example on the DairyNZ website www.dairynz.co.nz/smarternotharder)
- Update it regularly
- Involve staff in the decision of who is responsible for what
- Relate delegation back to people's training and development plans
- Have a team catch up once a week to work out what needs to be done, how things are progressing and to reschedule or schedule new responsibilities and tasks.

(Refer to the Staff Planning 1.5 Job Analysis 1.6 and Time Management 4.4 Fact Sheets for more information)

What are the benefits to me?

At first, delegation can feel like more hassle than it's worth, however by delegating effectively, you can hugely expand the amount of work that you can deliver.

Delegating allows you to:

- Increase motivation
- Increase efficiency
- Develop skills for both the team and individuals
- Better distribute work throughout your team.

What do I do next?

- Step back from the everyday tasks and identify where delegation could be beneficial for both you and staff
- Look through your staff training plans and identify areas that people have expressed an interest in improving in – are there opportunities to delegate?
- Develop a process and involve staff in getting it up and running.

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4.6 Rostering Systems

Planning the workload and the work breaks

Why this is important

Time off is very important to farm employees and ensures they are refreshed for the time that they are on the job. Rosters are as important for farms with one staff member as they are for farms with large numbers of employees. A roster allows people to plan their time off and get more value from the break.

Planned rosters indicate that a farm system is organised and efficiently run. They also help employees form a picture of what the reality of daily life on a farm will look like and therefore help clarify the employer's expectations of the employee.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is a roster?
- What makes a roster successful?
- How to make a roster
- How far in advance should a roster be planned?
- Things to consider when making rosters

What is a roster?

A roster is a list or a plan that shows when people who work on a farm will be on duty. Rosters are typically used for two purposes:

- To schedule time off for staff and employers
- To schedule work tasks for individual staff members.

Keeping a record of rosters is also an effective means of maintaining records of holidays taken and time off for staff.

What makes a roster successful?

Rosters can be made in many different ways. While some farming businesses use very formal rosters, such as a computer-generated spreadsheet roster, other farms operate equally efficiently on less formal rosters, such as notes made on a year planner.

The key to the success of a roster lies in the planning and organisation that has gone into developing it and the commitment of management to making the roster work. Employees need to know that the roster is fair and that management will stick to the roster except in extenuating circumstances.

Good rosters are simple, easy to follow and also have flexibility in them so that they work to support the people involved in the business. This means that they provide a guide as to how the work will get done on the farm, but they are not set in concrete.

Rosters plan the work that everyone knows is going to happen. However on dairy farms there are often unplanned tasks that crop up each day. A successful roster will incorporate a plan to manage the unplanned tasks likely to arise from time to time. For example the roster may plan for one person to have flexibility in their workload so that they can cover unplanned events.

Making a roster to allocate time off

Allocating time off involves using a year planner to ensure that staff have regular breaks, plus their entitlements to statutory holidays and annual leave. There are 11 statutory holidays in a year and farm employees are entitled to four weeks' annual leave per year (for more information on leave entitlements for employees (see Legal Responsibilities Fact Sheet 1.1).

Many farms are breaking away from the traditional weekend-based time off and using other combinations of time off. Some examples of commonly used systems are:

- 6 days on, 2 days off
- 5 days on, 3 days off
- 11 days on, 3 days off
- 9 days on, 3 days off
- 11 days on, 3 days off, 6 days on, 1 day off
- A combination of several of the above.

Making a roster to allocate work

The basis of a roster that allocates work is the staff planning process outlined in the Staff Planning Fact Sheet 1.5).

When using the staff planning process to develop rosters it is useful to break the farming year into work or seasonal periods. For example:

- Calving period
- Mating period
- Summer period
- Dry period.

Start with only one work period at a time and plan how the tasks that need to be done in that work period will be allocated.

How far in advance should a roster be planned?

It is a matter of personal preference as to how far in advance a roster is planned. However, it is important for staff to be able to plan what they will do in their time off and a longer roster will help them do this. This means that it is better to plan the roster too much in advance rather than too little.

Most employers or managers have planned well in advance how they intend to run their farm. This means that it is possible to make the roster for a whole year well before the year starts and in this way help give the employee a clear picture as to what time off they can expect and when they can expect it.

Planning a year in advance makes it possible to ensure, at the start of the season, that statutory holidays and annual leave can be covered by other staff. This means that the employer knows the work will still get done and the employee knows they will get their fair allocation of time off.

Changes to the roster can easily be made once the initial plan is in place.

Things to consider when making rosters:

- Personal circumstances of employees
- Personal preferences of employees. For example do they prefer weekends or weekdays off? Does it matter to them?
- Age of employees, as this may affect how much time off they need and when they would prefer to have it
- Amount of pay and responsibility level of employee
- The availability of relief milkers and part time staff
- The farm system and associated work requirements of the system. For example moving irrigation, or feeding out to stock
- The employer or manager's requirements for time off.

Types of rosters

Rosters may be written in many different ways. The following is a list of ideas for rosters:

- Use a year planner pinned to the farm dairy wall
- Write it on a calendar
- Use a whiteboard in the farm dairy
- Write it by hand (or draw it) on a piece of paper
- Use a computer spreadsheet.

Other tips

- Use coloured pens to highlight people and/or duties and time off
- Supply employees with a fax machine while they are in your employment and fax the roster to them. This ensures they receive the exact same roster as the employer has and is also efficient and easy
- Photocopy rosters to ensure everyone has an up-to-date copy at home.

What are the benefits to me?

Well-planned rosters will help employers manage the workload on farm, making the farm run efficiently. Rosters also help to keep staff happy.

What do I do next?

- Work through the staff planning process outlined in the Staff Planning Fact Sheet
- Plan time off for all staff for at least three months in advance
- Talk to staff about their preferences for time off.

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4.7 Remuneration Strategies

Why this is important

Cash and non-cash rewards for work need to be fair for both an employee and employer for an employment relationship to remain strong and effective. Fair pay is a prerequisite to good work performance.

This fact sheet will cover

How to determine fair remuneration

- Salary or wages?
- Time sheets and recording
- Making remuneration transparent
- Incentives and bonuses
- Time recording templates

How to determine fair remuneration

Remuneration rates must be at least the current minimum wage rate (see the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment - Labour Inspectorate www.dol.govt.nz for the latest rates). However, paying the minimum wage is not likely to attract the best applicants to a job.

When determining what to pay employees remember that remuneration is influenced by:

- The knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the job (see Job Analysis Fact Sheet 1.6)
- The value of the job to the business (see Job Analysis Fact Sheet 1.6)
- The physical demands of the job
- The amount of training or experience required
- The working conditions associated with the job
- The amount of responsibility associated with the job
- Current market rates as a result of the supply and demand for labour.

Job sizing

Job sizing is about determining the value of a job compared to other jobs on other farms and to similar jobs in the outside labour market. Unfortunately this sort of information can be hard to find as people do not readily share wage or salary details.

When looking to other farming operations to get an idea of the wages to pay remember to compare like jobs. For example a "herd manager" role can vary hugely from one farm to another. In some situations the herd manager may simply be responsible for milking and moving stock. In others a herd manager may be responsible for all aspects of the farm management including having some financial responsibilities.

Be sure to clarify what the employee will be doing and also clarify what the comparison employee is doing before making any judgements about pay. It can be useful to get an idea of wages paid in other industries for a similar level of work, but once again be sure the job carries a similar level of responsibility and skill.

For information about current market wage and salary rates refer to the Federated Farmers remuneration survey.

Salary or wages?

Salary is an annual remuneration package that is usually paid in even amounts at various intervals over the year – for example a salary may be divided into 26 equal payments and paid fortnightly. Salaries are usually paid in the same amount when a person is on annual leave.

Wages refers to payments that are made to an employee on an hourly basis. This means that employees and employers keep track of the number of hours worked and the employee is directly remunerated for those hours.

- There has been an increase in the number of farms opting to pay hourly wages over the past two to three years
- Hourly rates often work well for people because employees can see more clearly that they are being fairly paid for the hours they have worked and therefore they do not begrudge working long hours
- In some cases employees may push to work long hours because they know it will mean more money in their pockets.

The down side of hourly rates is situations where an employee may extend the amount of time it takes to do the job, in order to be paid more. Alternatively, an employee may choose to work longer hours than they safely should, in order to get more money. Both situations will require monitoring.

Time sheets and recording

Time sheets

Time sheets need to be kept where people are paid an hourly rate. However, it is also good practice to keep time sheets where a person is paid by salary. This will help ensure minimum wages are being met. Time sheets can also be used to check that employees are not working excessive hours.

Time sheets can also be used to help an employer decide if it is best to get a permanent employee to do a job or to contract the job out, if it is significantly more effective. For example, time sheets may highlight that an employer is spending a large amount of money on staff to control weeds and that this job is more cost-effectively achieved by bringing in a contract weed sprayer.

They are also useful for tracking the total hours worked to ensure people are not working excessive hours; understanding where time is spent vs. where it was expected to be spent. This provides the opportunity to identify areas for training and for identifying areas where new processes or infrastructure could be introduced to your system.

Recording

All remuneration must be recorded in a wages and salary book. Help in setting up recording systems can be found from the following sources:

- The Inland Revenue Department has a number of pamphlets available to employers to help farmers set up recording systems that will meet the legal responsibilities of an employer. The “Guide to GST and PAYE for Dairy Farmers” (IR 252) is a good place to start
- Inland Revenue also has a free advisory service available to farmers. Advisory officers will come to the employer’s house and help set up their cashbook and all wages and salary record systems. These people are employed by IRD to help employers and are a service well worth using.



See the *Individual and Group Time and Task Recording Sheet Templates 4.7.2, 4.7.3.*

Making remuneration transparent

Remuneration can become complicated in the dairy industry when there are several parts to the remuneration package. For example people frequently have housing or livestock as part of their remuneration package. It is important to employers and employees that they understand exactly what value the remuneration package holds, otherwise perks and bonuses associated with working on a dairy farm can go unrecognised and unappreciated.

For this reason it is useful to talk in terms of total package values (TPV) when working with remuneration. Total package value is the total value of the remuneration package when all components are taken into consideration.

Example:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Cash salary | \$32,000 |
| House value (\$150/week) | \$7,800 |
| Meat (1 cattle beast/year) | \$900 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total package value | \$40,700 |

Most non-dairy farming businesses quote their remuneration in this way, so adopting this technique as common practice will help avoid underselling the true value of a job in the dairy industry and contribute to recognition of the dairy industry as a worthwhile career option.

Using TPV will also help employers meet their legal obligations in terms of taxing employees correctly for perks and bonuses associated with their remuneration package.

Non-cash options for remuneration

Employers may choose to provide some of these non-cash rewards to their employees:

- Accommodation
- Milk
- Meat
- Firewood
- Power
- Phone rental
- Mobile phone
- Farming papers.

All of these non-cash rewards are taxable and will incur fringe benefit tax (FBT) if not incorporated into remuneration and taxed with PAYE. Talk to an accountant to be sure of the tax implications of these bonuses, or refer to the booklets referenced at the end of this fact sheet.

Note: Where a house is provided to an employee in conjunction with their employment the Residential Tenancy Act must be considered through the use of a service tenancy agreement (for more information on this refer to the Legal Responsibilities 1.1 and Accommodation 1.4 Fact Sheets or contact the Federated Farmers).

Annual increases

It is not necessary to always give an employee an annual increase in their salary or wage. Employers must consider the value the position brings to the farm and either give the remuneration package an upper limit, or consider adding other responsibilities, to increase the value of the employee, before offering a wage increase. Employers should also consider the current market for wages.

Incentives and bonuses

Incentives are usually part of the employment agreement and work best for management staff who have control over the performance of the farm.

Bonuses are one-off payments that are unexpected, generally come “out of the blue” to reward staff and do not need to be financial.

For incentives and bonuses to work effectively, they need to be carefully managed to ensure they are driving the right behaviour and do not adversely impact another area of the work performance. For example a bull-rearing incentive may compromise the quality of heifer rearing, as heifer and bull calves are in direct competition for feed and care.

Some people enjoy having incentives in the remuneration package while others do not. Incentives will only work if an employee views it as achievable and fair, so consultation with the employee is essential to make an incentive system work.

When using incentives and bonuses it is important to differentiate between rewarding behaviour that is meeting the normal standards that are required by the job, or a behaviour that is exceptional performance. A fair wage should be paid for a fair job, before starting with incentives and bonuses.

Incentive and bonus systems can be difficult to make effective. A poorly implemented incentive can work as a disincentive and cause frustration and disgruntlement for both the employer and the employee. It is recommended employers stay away from incentives and bonuses unless they have advice or experience.

Profit sharing

Profit sharing is a strategy used to help retain quality staff in the farming business. Some farmers allow staff to buy into a percentage of the business (e.g. 10% of the cows) and then share the profit according to the investment each person has in the business. Generally the employee buys into a larger portion of the business over time, until an agreed upper limit is reached.

Profit sharing can work as an effective incentive for top work performance because of the direct benefits of good farm performance to the employee.

It is recommended that legal advice be sought and a sound business plan put in place, before embarking on a profit sharing venture.

Other notes regarding remuneration

Remember that all employees have the right to be paid in cash unless other arrangements have been agreed upon. Employers are not allowed to deduct money from an employee’s wages without their written permission.

Useful references

Inland Revenue Department help:

The First Time Employers Guide (IR333).

The Guide to GST and PAYE obligations for Dairy Farmers (IR 252).

Phone (0800) 377 772 for further information including access to the free advisory service.

Remuneration Survey and Fact Sheets, The Federated Farmers of New Zealand phone (0800) 327 646 (members only).

4.7.1 Template – Multiweek-Individual Time Recording Form

| DAY | TIME WORKED | | HOURS WORKED | TOTAL HOURS WORKED | COMMENTS |
|--|-------------|--------|--------------|--------------------|----------|
| | START | FINISH | | | |
| Monday | | | | | |
| Tuesday | | | | | |
| Wednesday | | | | | |
| Thursday | | | | | |
| Friday | | | | | |
| Saturday | | | | | |
| Sunday | | | | | |
| TOTAL WEEKLY HOURS | | | | | |
| Codes: If not at work please enter one of the following codes: Annual Leave: AL Sick Leave: SL Bereavement Leave: BL Statutory Holiday: SH Rostered Time Off: RTO | | | | | |

Employee's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Manager's Signature: _____

Date: _____

4.7.3 Template - Time and Task Recording Form

Name: _____

Week starting: _____

| Task: | Time | | | | | | | Total | Other Details |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-------|---------------|
| | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun | | |
| Milking | | | | | | | | | |
| Calf rearing | | | | | | | | | |
| Weed spraying | | | | | | | | | |
| Pasture management | | | | | | | | | |
| Setting grazing breaks | | | | | | | | | |
| Administration | | | | | | | | | |
| Personal development | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Rostered time off | | | | | | | | | |
| Annual leave | | | | | | | | | |
| Sick leave | | | | | | | | | |
| Statutory holiday | | | | | | | | | |
| Total actual time | | | | | | | | | |

Timesheet

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4.8 Training and Development

Offering growth opportunities to staff

Why this is important

Training staff reduces work errors and therefore helps ensure that work is completed correctly. Improved work performance leads to better business performance.

Training also increases job satisfaction and motivation for staff and can help in retaining good employees.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Effective on-farm staff training
- Ensuring training leads to learning
- Feedback and other tips for training
- Off-farm training options
- Training checklists
- Training or development of farm staff
- Encouraging staff to learn
- Training example
- Training templates

Effective on-farm staff training

Farm staff come into the workplace with a considerable amount of life experience. When training staff on farm avoid talking down to people, or negating their contribution from previous experiences. The most effective training builds on what a person already knows.

When training farm staff be sure to avoid under-training or under-explaining concepts.

A good process to follow for training staff on farm is the following:

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Explain to the employee why the skill is important |
| 2. | Break the skill to be taught into simple components |
| 3. | Discuss with the employee what they already know about the skill and determine what knowledge is missing |
| 4. | Demonstrate and explain the skill to the employee slowly. Pause between steps and be sure all steps can be clearly seen |
| 5. | Allow the employee to go through a skill step-by-step while the employer talks through what is to be done and helps out where needed |
| 6. | Allow the employee to demonstrate the skill on his/her own without input from the employer |
| 7. | Ask the employee to give feedback on how they did. Give feedback to the employee on how they performed the skill. Don't forget to note the positive points! |
| 8. | Repeat steps 4, 5, and 6 as needed. |

Ensuring that training leads to learning

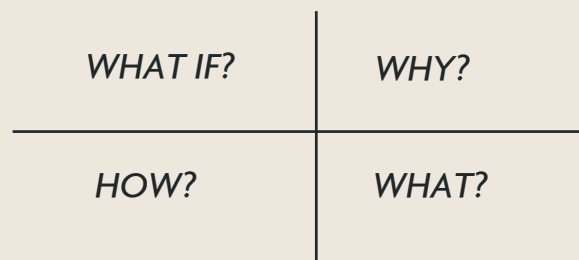
Training a person does not automatically lead to learning. For people to learn effectively, trainers should keep the following information about learning in mind:

Third person learning

Third person learning refers to the learning that takes place when the person who has learnt a new skill teaches it to another person (the third person in the learning process). To make this technique work, observe the trainer when they are training someone else, and only interrupt if necessary. This technique helps instill the learning more deeply in the person who is doing the training.

The learning cycle

The learning cycle has four quadrants. Training will be effective if it incorporates answers to the questions in all four quadrants of the learning cycle. People will often have a preference for learning through one quadrant of the learning cycle over the others. If training covers the questions in all quadrants in a repeating cycle it will ensure that the needs of the employee are covered in their own learning style.



To use the learning cycle start in the WHY quadrant and work in repeating circles answering the questions what, how and what if...

Example: Training in drenching

- We drench the calves to protect them from internal parasites that may stunt their growth (the WHY)
- We do this by administering an anthelmintic drench (the WHAT)
- We do it by loading the race with calves and then working from the front of the row we put the drench gun as far into the throat as possible and squirt the drench into the calf (the HOW)
- When we do this sometimes calves can swing their heads up or around suddenly. This can lead to crushed hands or bruising, or trouble administering the drench to the calf (the WHAT IF)
- However we still choose to drench the calves to stop parasite problems because drench is cheaper than other products (the WHY)
- Other products that can be used are injectable or pour-on anthelmintic products (the WHAT)
- And so on around the learning cycle.

See the Example Training Cycle for Lameness 4.8.1 as another example.

Learning styles

People can learn in the three following ways:

- Visually – by seeing the instructions written down, or watching a video
- Audibly – by hearing the instructor
- Kinaesthetically – by having the process demonstrated and then doing it themselves.

Most people have a combination of all three learning styles, but occasionally an employee will have a very strong preference for one learning style over the others. If instructions are not given in the preferred style both employer and employee may experience frustration during training for new skills.

In agriculture many people are most strongly aligned to the kinaesthetic learning style; they have a tendency to prefer learning by doing rather than by reading or listening to instructions.

To train a person with a strongly kinaesthetic learning style:

- Do lots of side-by-side work
- Demonstrate the tasks before asking them to do it alone
- Let them practice.

Feedback and other tips

Feedback on performance is part of training. Feedback can be given in the form of “I like the way you.....” followed by “I would like to see you....”. This technique will reinforce the positive while giving an opportunity for further improvement.

Other tips

- When training farm staff on their property it is common for farmers to either underestimate or under-play the complexity of the task. This is probably because farmers are very familiar with their own farming operation and take much of the way it works for granted
- It is better to err on the side of over-explanation rather than under-explanation when training farm staff. This is more likely to make them feel good because they know half of it already, rather than feeling stupid because they didn't quite understand
- Remember that people need time to practice and naturalise a skill, otherwise they are likely to forget it.

Off-farm training options

Subsidised industry training in agriculture is available through AgITO. This training is undertaken while a staff member continues to work on your property and is set up to work around busy periods on the farm. Phone 0800 691 111, or contact AgITO for more information.

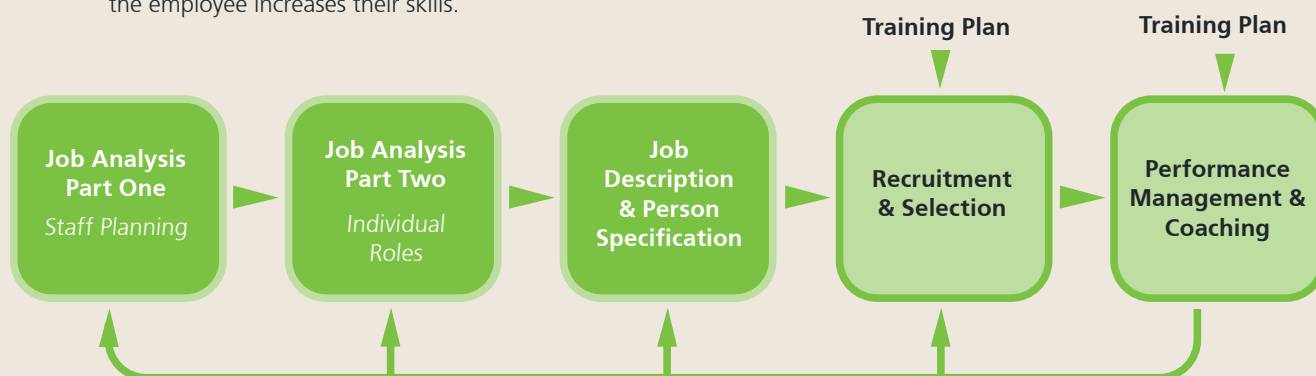
Short one-day courses can be motivating for staff. These may include such things as inter-farm seminars, vet courses in spring emergency treatment and field days.

Training does not need to be limited to traditional farming skills. Other things to consider are:

- Time management training
- Outward Bound courses
- Leadership training.

Training checklists

Training and development plans should ideally be developed during staff selection and then built upon over time as the employee increases their skills.



Before interviewing for a position an employer should have a clear picture of the knowledge, skills and abilities required to carry out the job. It is unlikely that a candidate will meet 100% of these requirements; in fact it may be preferable to employ a person who is able to perform only 60-80% of the job, so they don't get bored and move on. Some people prefer to select their staff on attitude rather than skills. If this is the case then there will be a higher training requirement for the employee.

During the interview process the employer will identify areas for development. This is the start of a formal training plan.

Farm-specific training, such as the farm's health and safety requirements, should be undertaken during the orientation phase. This phase will help to identify further needs (see Orientation Processes Fact Sheet 3.1).

Once in the job the performance review process leads to the development of formal training and development plans by identifying weakness in the employee's performance. However, training plans can be identified informally during your regular communication and coaching of staff (see Performance Management Fact Sheet 4.1 and the Employee Training 4.8.1 and Training Planner Templates 4.8.2).

Training or development of farm staff?

Training generally refers to the acquisition of new skills that directly relate to the farm business.

Development refers to training that leads to personal growth and may not be directly related to job performance. However it may help the person to do their job more effectively. For example, younger people may benefit from training in household management skills such as budgeting and cooking. This may reduce their stress outside of work time and help them focus more successfully on their job.

Encouraging staff to learn

Most people want to learn new things. If your staff are reluctant or uncooperative when you offer them an opportunity for training, it is most likely to stem from a lack of confidence in their own ability to understand and become competent in the new skill.

It may be necessary to start with very small steps in encouraging a staff member to learn new skills. Remember that success breeds success, so set tasks that are achievable and then encourage the employee to recognise their own achievement. Several positive experiences of 'success' will improve a person's likelihood of trying again.

Training and Health and Safety

Training is frequently undertaken in the area of health and safety. It is important to keep accurate records of the training that has been undertaken in health and safety areas, particularly where the training relates directly to farm practices that may be considered hazards, such as chainsaw use, chemical handling and application and ATV safety.

What are the benefits to me?

Taking the time and effort to effectively train staff will lead to better work outcomes and greater confidence in staff.

Employees benefit hugely from an employer who is prepared to train with patience. Employees will have greater job satisfaction, be more motivated towards their work and are likely to stay with the employer longer.

Training staff helps people feel they are valued and an important member of the farming operation.

What do I do next?

- Develop a training checklist for employees
- If necessary, see Job Analysis II Fact Sheet and consider all the skills employees need in order to perform their jobs effectively
- Use a performance management process with staff
- Discuss with staff what they consider to be important for their own training.

Useful references

Selecting and training good staff, Kevin Chapman

The trainers resource book, Geoffrey Moss



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4.8.1 Example - Lameness Training Cycle

The training cycle



The lameness example

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Why do I need to know how to herd cows on raceways?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is one of the main reasons cows become lame • Lameness causes cows pain, and costs the farm dollars in lost milk • Lame cows take a lot of time to treat, putting extra pressure on staff • Treating lame cows is not a fun job and can result in personal injury • A refusal to comply with farm policy could result in dismissal. | <p>What background information do I need?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good stockperson controls the amount of pressure that is put on the herd, and allows them to walk at their own pace • If a cow is walking at a comfortable pace, she will have her head down. |
| <p>What if the cows just won't move?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the cows have stopped and are showing no signs of moving forward, move up to the front third of the herd and move them forward from there. | <p>How do I bring the cows in without causing lameness?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't use dogs • When cow's heads are up they are under too much pressure, give them more room • Stay at least 2 fence posts behind the last cow when bringing the herd in • It is OK to whistle and shout at the herd, but not to frighten them, particularly the 'tail enders' • Yelling or hitting the tail end cows will not speed up the lead cows so you will not reach the shed any faster. |

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4.8.2 Template - Employee Training

Name:

| Skills | Date | Trained by (Print name) | Signed by | |
|--|------|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
| | | | Trainer | Employee |
| <p>Vehicles</p> <p>Tractor skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance • Good driving habits • Power take offs • Coping with slopes • Hydraulics • Using loader • Feeding out • Safety <p>ATV/Motorbike skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance • Cornering techniques • Coping with slopes • Attachments, loads & towing • Safety <p>Other Vehicle (specify):</p> | | | | |
| <p>Machinery</p> <p>List key fixed and mobile machinery used on property, e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milking plant • Chainsaws • Using topper • Other Machinery (specify): | | | | |
| <p>Livestock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling procedures <p>Other Livestock (specify):</p> | | | | |
| <p>Health & Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of personal protective equipment • Agrichemicals (storage, handling, mixing, ect) • Disease prevention. e.g Leptospirosis • Sun protection, e.g Melanoma <p>Other Health & Safety (specify):</p> | | | | |

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4.8.3 Template - Training Planner

When planning training for staff members try to answer the following questions so that the training process is as effective as it can be.

Task for training _____

The WHY questions

Why are we doing this and what is the value of it to the farm?

When do we do this?

The WHAT questions

What is it we are going to do? What is the process?

Break down the task into logical, easy to follow steps or stages.

Consider what resources are going to be required to train on the task and make sure they are available.

List them here.

The HOW questions

Ask staff members what they know about the task and how they have done it in the past.

Consider what is important to you in the way the job is done. Is the result or the process most important?

When training what is the most appropriate way to demonstrate the task?

Who is the most appropriate person to be doing the training?

When is the staff member going to get the opportunity to practice? Do I have to make the opportunity?

The WHAT IF questions

What are the things that can go wrong & how will you deal with them?

Once the skill is mastered what are the on-going benefits or the next stage in learning?

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4.9 Managing Drugs and Alcohol On-farm

Why this is important

Drug and alcohol use is an increasingly visible and controversial problem. Research indicates that the most effective method of eliminating the effect of drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace is to introduce a comprehensive Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace Programme - often referred to as Workplace Drug Testing.

This fact sheet covers

- Do you have the right to carry out testing?
- When is it acceptable?
- Safety-sensitive areas
- When is it justified
- Implementing drug and alcohol testing

Do you have the right?

There are many conflicting rights when looking at drug testing on farm. On one hand, it is your obligation as an employer to provide a healthy and safe workplace. On the other, an individual has the right to be free from unreasonable search and the right to privacy. The law acknowledges the need for a balancing exercise between those rights and obligations.

An employer does not have the right to force an employee to submit to drug testing. However, where an employer has a proper and fair drug policy and testing regime in place, an employer can treat the employee's failure to cooperate with testing as a serious breach of the employment terms (sufficient to justify termination of employment) in certain circumstances.

When is it acceptable to do a drug test?

There are generally five occasions when an employer may be justified in testing:

1. As part of pre-employment testing (with the employee's consent - the employee has a choice, to submit, or not pursue the employment)
2. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect an employee's behaviour is an actual or potential cause or source of harm to themselves or others as a result of alcohol or drugs
3. In a post accident/incident, or where there has been a near miss (these are sometimes known as "with cause" tests, because employer has grounds to believe there is some drug involvement)
4. On a random basis in 'safety-sensitive' areas
5. Where an employee applies to be transferred to a 'safety-sensitive' area.

Safety-sensitive areas

What equates to 'safety-sensitive' area is a subject of much debate; people like pilots are obviously in that category. On farm safety-sensitive positions are those that are considered to be potentially hazardous safety situations. These include, but are not limited to, operations requiring the use of farm equipment or work vehicle (including using a private vehicle within work hours).

When is it justified?

Employees who come to work with alcohol and performance impairing drugs in their system have a high risk of causing an accident or injury to themselves or their co-workers. Their overall job performance is also adversely affected.

If random testing without cause is to be justified, an employer will need to show that the safety of others may be seriously at risk, if those employees were impaired.

It would be wrong to assume, however, that just because you meet one of the above criteria, you as an employer can now start testing your employees, particularly in the area of random testing. It is recommended that legal advice is sought if you wish to carry out random drug or alcohol testing.

The Health and Safety in Employment Act plays a key role in determining the reasonableness and lawfulness of testing. It is clear that employees in occupations that impinge on the safety of others must see to it that they come to work substantially (or completely) free from alcohol or drugs.

Employees are expected to cooperate with their employer's need to monitor the presence of drugs or alcohol. It is no different in principle to the need for employees to wear protective clothing and the employer's duty to ensure it is worn.

As an employer, if you believe that drug testing is warranted in your workforce you must ensure that the time and effort spent on carrying out the testing will not be undone by the lack of time and effort spent on preparation for the testing. Seeking legal advice is recommended.

Implementing drug and alcohol testing

Workplace drug and alcohol testing is legal as long as it follows certain procedures and complies with a number of obligations. Testing can only be carried out if:

- It is for the express purpose of protecting from harm in the workplace
- It does not discriminate
- Consent is obtained
- The collection is discreet and private
- The accuracy and validity can be assured.

In addition the company must provide an explanation of the process and possible action that will occur if tests are found to be positive, including any disciplinary procedures.

The testing that is carried out for drugs is different to testing for alcohol and it is important that the processes are carried out in line with a testing policy and in a structured and fair way. It is recommended that independent advice and help is sought when implementing testing.

What do I do next?

If you are worried about drugs and alcohol on your farm look at implementing a comprehensive drug and alcohol free workplace programme. This will:

- Reduce absenteeism (especially morning after 'sickies')
- Reduce errors and their associated costs
- Help employees play their part in creating a healthier and safer work environment
- Reduce the number, type and cost of accidents
- Reduce employee turnover
- Reduce the costs of recruiting and training new staff.

Federated Farmers has a drug and alcohol policy template which can be adopted directly or tailored to suit your business's needs.

Useful references

Federated Farmers – more information on policies phone 0800 327 646 (members only).

There are a number of independent organisations that offer the development of drug and alcohol testing programmes and implementation of testing.

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5.1 Retention Strategies

How to keep quality employees within the business

Why this is important

The cost to a business of losing a valued staff member is recognised to be 50-100% of the annual wage of that person. This is the result of both direct and indirect costs of unplanned employee turnover.

Direct costs are such things as the cost of recruitment, the cost of training a new person and the cost of mistakes made by the new person while they are becoming familiar with the business.

Indirect costs are such things as reduced business performance, increased stress and the effects of reduced job satisfaction while remaining staff run the business short-handed.

Making an effort to retain employees who might otherwise be lost can add value to a business in terms of improved work performance and labour productivity.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Matching employer and employee needs
- Using performance management to assist in staff retention
- Other retention strategies
- Motivation Questionnaire

Matching employer and employee needs

Employer and employee needs change over time. Retention is about determining if the needs of both parties are still compatible, or if new arrangements can be found that accommodate the changing needs of either party, but still provide both parties with the required outcomes.

When there is incompatibility between the employer and the employee there is no value in retaining the staff member.

What does an employer need?

- To get the work done efficiently and effectively
- To be able to pass on responsibility with confidence in the quality of the work.

What does an employee need?

The needs of an employee are different for each individual. However, some of the following needs have been identified as fairly generic amongst all people.

- **Money:** While money is not necessarily the primary driver of most employees, people do need fair remuneration
- **To belong to the in-crowd:** Being kept up to date with what management is up to and why decisions are being made helps people feel that they are an "insider" in a business. This gives people a sense of social belonging. Improving the quality of interpersonal relationships in the workplace will increase staff retention by developing a culture of belonging

- **The opportunity for growth and development:** This includes education and training, a career path and stimulation from outside sources such as discussion groups
- **Leadership:** Employees need a vision of what the business is working towards, with clear expectations and directions as to how they are contributing to this in their daily work
- **Control of their work:** This includes such things as the power to influence some farm decisions and may also include having the opportunity to meet their responsibilities through planning their own work load
- **A balance between work and other parts of life:** This includes knowing as well as possible when the working day will start and stop, so that the rest of life can be planned around work. Roster systems, to allow effective planning of time off, also contribute to a work/life balance.

Using performance management to assist in staff retention



Performance management is part of a complete staff management package.

Performance reviews can help retain employees when they are used effectively. When the performance appraisal process is used effectively, it leads to a plan for employee growth and development. Most people want to know how they are doing and how to improve. By giving your employee this feedback through a performance appraisal process, you can help the employee improve their performance, and this leads to increased job satisfaction and motivation.

Performance reviews also give an employer and employee the opportunity to talk about what is important to each of them, and this can improve understanding and employer/employee affiliation.

A process for assisting in the retention of employees:

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Work through the performance appraisal process (see Performance Management Fact Sheet 4.1) |
| 2. | Identify training and development needs of an employee within the current position and develop a plan to meet these needs |
| 3. | Discuss the business plans, vision and direction for the following season and, where relevant, further into the future |
| 4. | Discuss the business and personal goals of the employee (refer to the attached questionnaire). It is very important that employers listen to understand what is most important to that employee, as this is key to retaining that staff member |
| 5. | Discuss options for continuing to meet the employee's needs within the business |
| 6. | Take a break. The employer can take the opportunity to consider which of the options that the employee is seeking that may also fit within their own business strategy, or if there are other options that the employer would like the employee to consider |
| 7. | From here the employer can put together a proposal for the following season and go through the negotiation process until an agreement is reached that is suitable to both parties. |

Career planning and retention

Career planning is the process of making and implementing career decisions. As an employer it is an effective way to contribute to your employee's development. Assisting with career planning can also lead to increased retention, particularly if your business provides growth opportunities.

What is a career plan?

A career plan describes a person's career goals and outlines the steps they need to take to reach their preferred career option/goal. To be effective career plans need to look out over a three-year horizon.

A career plan should set out:

- Their career goal – this may be broken down into smaller, more manageable achievements over a period of time
- A stocktake of current skills and experience
- An analysis of the gap between their goals and current situation
- What they need to do to achieve the goal (actions) and by when (date)
- In what order the actions need to be carried out – in particular what you are going to do NOW!
- A skills development plan
- Specific dates by which decisions or activities must be complete
- How progress will be monitored
- A way of evaluating success or ways of making alternative plans to stay on track
- A way of keeping an eye on future opportunities.

An effective career plan includes:

- A clear statement of the career goal
- A summarised personal profile - values, interests, skills
- A list of current skills and qualifications
- A list of career objectives
- A list of additional skills or qualifications needed
- Any personal development strategies planned
- Details about how support networks, mentors etc will be utilised.

Career goals and plans will change throughout a person's life as they gain experience and achieve previously set goals. It is important to understand the stage at which your employee is at before starting career planning with them. Are they new to the industry and looking for a wide range of experience? Are they looking for a career in farm management? Or are they looking for business opportunities?

It is important to remember that while you may not be able to provide the employment opportunities your employee is looking for, if you are creative you can meet people's needs through allocating responsibility and thinking outside the square. In some situations it may also be more appropriate to help them into another job where they will be able to meet their career goals more effectively.

Other ideas to improve retention

- Organised sporting and social events
- Giving staff ownership of areas of work (e.g. calf-rearing) to increase personal responsibility and job satisfaction
- Praising staff
- Housing improvements
- Have a party and arrange for relief milkers to work the following morning
- Give time off for sports or to attend children's school and sporting events
- Do a spontaneous act of kindness or thanks for staff
- Split up farm "freebies" amongst all people on the farm
- Recognise and show appreciation to the partners of staff members
- Help the staff become part of the community by taking them along to community functions
- Ensure that staff are not treated as the bottom of the social hierarchy of the community
- Offer staff a session in business planning with the farm's consultant (employer pays)
- Consider profit-sharing with senior staff members
- Give staff an opportunity to buy into the business e.g. own a small, growing number of stock
- In the case of multiple farm ownership it may be possible to create a career path for progression within the business.

Remember people's differences – check that what is offered is important and of value to the staff member.

Retention can be closely linked to remuneration (for remuneration strategies to increase retention see the Remuneration Fact Sheet 4.7).

What are the benefits to me?

There are many direct and indirect costs of unplanned employee turnover. Retaining employees will:

- Reduce recruitment costs (advertising, time interviewing and checking references etc)
- Reduce training costs
- Raise the profile of the business as a quality work environment where people like to stay
- Increase business performance by reducing down-time while new employees reach full performance
- Increase business performance by reducing stress errors of remaining workers
- Reduce employer stress
- Increase workplace confidence.



What do I do next?

- Communicate the business plans to staff and discuss how everyone is contributing to success
- Take time to communicate appreciation to staff
- Discuss with employees what matters most to them
- Go through the performance management process with staff
- Consider making changes to the employment relationship to better match the needs of the business and employee.

Useful references

Leadership Fact Sheet 6.1

Useful websites

www.peoplemanagement.co.uk

www.hrinz.org.nz

www.hr-guide.com

www.joanlloyd.com

www.talentkeepers.com

Useful links

Work-Life Balance: <http://www.dol.govt.nz/worklife/index.asp>

Productivity: <http://www.dol.govt.nz/workplaceproductivity/index.asp>

Retention: <http://worksite.govt.nz/en/looking-for-staff/>

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5.2 Managing Conflict

Practical advice for dealing with conflict in the workplace

Why this is important

Conflict in the workplace is unpleasant and stressful for everyone on the farm. If not dealt with quickly and effectively, it can undermine staff motivation, reduce on-farm productivity and even affect your reputation as a good employer.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Potential sources of conflict
- Dealing with conflict
- Guidelines for confronting issues

Potential sources of conflict

There are many potential sources of conflict within the team environment. Some are more serious than others and a lot depends on the personalities within the team. Conflict arises when people, their ideas or beliefs clash. Within a farming context, serious conflict can come from:

- Misunderstanding or miscommunication
- Dishonesty
- Negligence
- Bullying (verbal and physical)
- Personality clashes
- Religious and cultural differences (differences in beliefs)
- Favouritism
- Differences in opinion over how things should be done.

Dealing with conflict

Ignoring conflict, hoping it will disappear with time, is extremely destructive because it creates tension, stress and ill-feeling. Often conflict that is not addressed will fester until a crisis point is reached. This is often too late and may result in the loss of a key employee, or manifest in unpleasant counterproductive behaviours.

The first thing to do when a conflict develops is to treat it seriously. Listen to the complaint and try to identify the key points. It may help to repeat these back to those complaining, in order to ensure that you have understood them correctly.

If another person or group is involved, talk to them as soon as possible. Be objective (i.e. don't pre-judge the issue) and try to get their side of the story.

If the source of the conflict is you, e.g. the team disagree with the way you do things, try not to take it personally. Try to treat the situation as you would any other conflict.

Once you have the facts, you can decide what to do. Options include:

- Getting the various parties together to discuss the issue and find a way forward with you as a mediator
- Using a professional mediator to resolve the issue (third party)
- Disciplinary action.

The first aim of any conflict resolution process should be to encourage open discussion between the people involved, without allowing it to become personal. Only when each party understands the position of the other will it be possible to find a solution. This requires great patience on your part, especially when dealing with people's beliefs.

Don't expect to identify a completely acceptable solution first time around. Often the process towards successful conflict resolution involves negotiating a way forward and compromise on both sides. Having an agreed plan in place which is regularly updated can be a good place to start.

In some cases, such as where personal violence or repeat offences are concerned, there may be no option but to take disciplinary action. In these cases, you should follow a clearly defined process. In cases where staff are dismissed as a result of conflict, it is a good idea to seek professional legal advice before (or as soon as possible after) making the decision to dismiss.

Keep a record of the complaint, the date it was raised, the key points on both sides and the action taken. Give copies to all parties involved. Records are especially important in cases which lead to disciplinary action or dismissal.

Of course, it is better to avoid conflict in the first place rather than to have to deal with it. Encourage an open-door policy on farm where staff feel comfortable letting you know about issues as they arise. It may also be helpful to become part of an employee assistance programme where staff can seek independent support on issues.

Guidelines for confronting issues

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Keep the communication going at all times-rather than just when issues arise |
| 2. | Stick to the issue concerned – don't get sidetracked by other non-relevant issues. Deal with one thing at a time – don't get caught up in feelings, emotions or personal issues |
| 3. | Be positive and have the desire to resolve the issue |
| 4. | Stick to the present – don't drag in historical issues |
| 5. | Be honest |
| 6. | Acknowledge your error – if you are wrong admit it |
| 7. | End positively – put the issue in perspective, emphasise the positive aspects of your relationship. |

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6.1 Leadership

Guiding and empowering people to work towards a shared vision

Why this is important

Businesses and people need leadership to survive and grow. Leadership is vital to all organisational success – both for large and small farming businesses. Good leadership can be the difference between an average business and an outstanding one.

This fact sheet will cover:

- What is leadership?
- The difference between leadership and management
- Four characteristics of admired leaders
- Five practices of leadership
- How to practise leadership in your farm business
- Personal leadership

What is leadership?

Leadership has been described as “the art of mobilising others to want to struggle for shared aspirations”¹. Leadership is about creating a vision for the future and then enabling people to do what they need to do to make the future vision a reality.

Leadership has a values component. It is vital that leaders adhere to a strong set of values and that they activate and enlist others by understanding and appealing to their own values, hopes and dreams.

In larger organisations it can be possible to divide management roles and leadership roles, where there are enough people involved in the business to spread these responsibilities. However in small businesses, such as the average NZ dairy farming operation, it is necessary for the business manager(s) to have a combination of both leadership and managerial skills.

The difference between leadership and management

The following list shows that for many of the tasks and responsibilities of management there is an equivalent responsibility for the leadership role².



| Management | Leadership |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Administers | Innovates |
| Focuses on systems and structures | Focuses on people |
| Maintains | Develops |
| Relies on control | Inspires trust |
| Has a short-range view | Has a long-range perspective |
| Asks how and when | Asks what and when |
| Has their eye on the bottom line | Has their eye on the horizon |
| Does things right | Does the right things |

Essentially the leadership role takes a big picture view of the business, while the managerial role is more focused on the day-to-day operations.

Four characteristics of admired leaders¹

1. **Honesty:** 90% of people value honesty in a leader above all other behaviours. People want to consistently see honesty in their leaders' behaviour
2. **Being forward-looking:** People expect leaders to have a sense of direction with clarity and purpose. A long-term vision of the future is part of being forward-looking
3. **Being inspiring:** A leader needs to communicate their vision and be energetic and positive about the future
4. **Being competent:** Leaders need to be competent in the technical aspects of their business, but still have the ability to challenge the norm of the way things are done.

Leaders must also "walk the talk". This means they must always be prepared to be fully committed to and involved in whatever the organisation is working towards.

Five practises of leadership¹

1. **Challenge the process:** Leaders search for opportunities to change, grow and improve upon the way that things are usually done
2. **Inspiring a shared vision:** Leaders visualise a positive future and enlist the efforts of others to achieve the future vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams
3. **Enabling others to act:** Leaders foster cooperation in their team by building an environment of trust and they strengthen others by sharing information and power
4. **Modelling the way:** Leaders set an example for others by behaving in a way that is consistent with their stated values.
5. **Encourage the heart:** Leaders recognise individual contributions and celebrate team accomplishments.

How to practice leadership in your farm business

Ideas for improving leadership of your farm business can include:

- Share your farm vision
- Take a mindset of responsibility for the mistakes of others. Consider how a lack of leadership or direction may have contributed to errors
- Develop an aura of professionalism.

- Consider your behaviour in the community as a whole – do you behave appropriately on all occasions?
- Develop a culture where people can make mistakes and still be supported to grow through them
- Provide opportunities for others to take a leadership role
- Employees can show leadership by being pro-active in looking for opportunities to grow.

Personal leadership

Personal leadership refers to the idea that all people have the ability to take on a leadership role. This means that leadership behaviours like integrity, forward thinking, working towards common values etc can be taken on by every person, including employees and owners of businesses that do not employ staff.

For employees, recognition of the fact that they have a personal leadership role within the business where they are working can be motivating and increase job satisfaction.

Good employers will look for opportunities to develop the personal leadership styles of their employees. This helps create a win-win working environment with many benefits for the employer.

What are the benefits to me?

Practising and improving your leadership skills can have a huge effect on the success of your business and on the quality of your staff relationships. Strong and effective leadership helps businesses and people grow and move forward.

A lack of willingness to act as the leader of your business will make business growth and dealing with staff difficult and less enjoyable.

What do I do next?

Some ideas can include:

- Read books listed in the useful references section of this fact sheet
- Attend some leadership training
- Make a business plan
- Watch other people who demonstrate effective leadership.

Useful references

The Leadership Challenge,¹ Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, P.Z. USA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995.

On Becoming a Leader,² Bennis, W., , Addison-Wesley 1989.

Leadership and the One Minute Manager, Blanchard, Kenneth, , Fontana 1987.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Covey, S. R., , Business Library, 1990

Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway, Jeffers, Susan, Century, 1987.

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6.2 Communication

The key to gaining a common understanding

Why this is important:

Communication is the glue that holds businesses together. From day-to-day running of the business through to creating high-performing teams, communication is critical.

Communication is so important that it has been identified as the most important ingredient for a high-performing culture.

The greatest advantage of good communication is motivated staff. This comes as a result of staff knowing what is going on and what is expected of them, and feeling their ideas are valued and their performance praised.

This fact sheet will cover

- Effective questioning
- Listening
- Giving feedback
- Barriers to communication
- Other communication hints

Good communication is about people being able to verbalise what they are thinking and then having other people hear and understand what they have said.

While this process may sound straightforward, poor communication and communication breakdowns are common in dairy farm working environments.

Effective questioning

Questioning people in a non-threatening and effective manner is a good way to make communication happen. Effective questioning supports people in finding areas of common interest and builds relationships.

To use questions to improve communication it is helpful to understand that questions can be closed or open.

Closed questions are questions that can only be answered with a yes, a no, or with only a few words. Using closed questions in a conversation has the effect of limiting conversation. In order to get conversation flowing, try asking open questions that cannot be answered with a yes or no response.

Open questions are good for starting conversation, putting people at ease, encouraging discussion and including other people. These are key steps in building a good working relationship. Open questions tend to start with these key words:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| How | What |
| When | Why |
| Which | Where |

Listening

Careful listening is vital to effective communication.

The role of the listener in a conversation is an active role and requires effort on the part of the listener. This will ensure that the listener hears what the speaker is saying and not what the listener expects the speaker to be saying. Active listening techniques to help communication include:

- a) Be supportive. Positive body language such as eye contact, nodding of the head and verbal cues help support a speaker and encourages them to talk
- b) Use open questions to encourage further communication
- c) Allow silences to develop as a pause will encourage the other person to fill in the gap.

Listening carefully will provide clues as to what interests a person has and “what matters most” to them. Signs that a “hot button” has been hit will be an increase in the pace of speech, more animated talk, more gestures used.

Giving feedback

Giving feedback on work performance is an essential part of communication in a working relationship. Feedback ensures that work standards are met and is also an opportunity to praise people when standards are exceeded.

Feedback can be in the form of praise or corrective feedback.

Giving praise

- Recognition of a job well done is one of the most satisfying aspects of an employee’s work and ranks well ahead of money in terms of factors contributing to job satisfaction
- Praise provides recognition and is critical to ongoing motivation
- Regular praise motivates and builds trust and loyalty in people
- Praise must be specific and attached to a particular action or piece of good work so that it has real meaning
- For motivational purposes it’s also important to give praise to people when they do things well even if the rest of their work is not up to scratch
- When any negatives do have to be expressed it’s a lot easier if praise has been forthcoming.

Corrective feedback

- When things are going wrong it is important to deal with the issue as quickly as possible to avoid small problems becoming large ones
- Corrective feedback aims at getting the job done to the expected standard
- Handled properly, corrective feedback can be motivating for employees, as people generally want to perform well provided they believe they are being well treated
- The key to corrective feedback is to make sure that a lack of training or resource has not led to the problem arising
- A well-recognised model for giving feedback is the “I like... I would like” model. This starts out with the statement “I like...” and commends the person for things they are doing well. Using positive introductions makes people less defensive and more receptive toward change. This is followed up with “I would like...” and recommendations as to what the person must do to meet performance expectations.

Once again, be specific about the behaviour and remember that the feedback is about behaviour and should not be a personal attack (for more information on giving feedback see the Performance Management Fact Sheet).

Barriers to communication

Poor communication can lead to de-motivated staff and frustrated employers. Among the top reasons for failed communication are:

- **Preconceptions and bias:** This is where one or both parties have strong opposing opinions or make assumptions about the other person without taking the opportunity to listen with an open mind.
- **Personality issues:** Personality clashes do arise and make it difficult for people to converse. Such issues need to be dealt with as soon as they become apparent, otherwise the rest of the workplace will suffer (refer to the Understanding People Fact Sheet 6.3).
- **Environment:** The environment in which we communicate influences the quality of the communication. Talking in a noisy farm dairy or beside a running tractor is likely to mean people find it difficult to listen. Other distractions such as mobile phones also detract from full communication.

Other communication hints

Making sure everybody understands

We all listen to varying extents depending on concentration spans, stress levels, the environment and the person doing the talking. For effective communication to take place it is important to make sure that both parties truly understand what they have heard.

Checking on understanding can be done by:

- Getting the person listening to summarise the conversation back
- Asking open questions about what has been communicated.

A good strategy when giving instructions is to ask the person what they know about the subject first. This gives them the opportunity to contribute rather than just being told what to do. It also provides the opportunity to identify any bad habits.

Understanding what's not being said

Often during a conversation, people will steer away from certain topics. Listening for omissions or for changes of subject around some issues will provide cues that further investigation needs to occur.

Body language provides other clues as to what is going on in people's minds. If somebody is understanding and agreeing, they will display behaviours such as nodding the head, adopting a similar and open body posture and offering agreement in speech.

If they are not in agreement then they will display behaviours such as looking away, folded arms and either keeping quiet or openly disagreeing. In this case it is important to review why agreement has not been reached by exploring the other person's point of view and the motivations behind that view.

Keeping staff informed

The following ideas can be used to keep staff informed:

- Have frequent and regular catch-up meetings
- Make time to chat to staff
- Manage by walking about.

Meetings don't need to be too formal but should be regular, to inform staff of what is happening. This is reinforced by talking to staff as individuals as the opportunity arises. Management by walking about means keeping a good overview of what is happening by walking about observing progress and talking to staff.

What are the benefits to me?

The benefits of good communication in a workplace include:

- Increased satisfaction among staff, so they know what is going on and what is expected of them
- A more pleasant working environment as a result of issues being dealt with promptly
- Improved staff retention and increased productivity.

What do I do next?

- Evaluate how well communication presently occurs on the farm in meetings and general discussion
- If communication is at a low level then schedule in some time just for "improving communication". Use open questions to get staff talking
- To improve questioning and listening skills, managers may wish to consider attending workshops.

Useful references

Problem People at Work and How To Deal With Them, Marilyn Wheeler

Management by Effective Listening, Kevin J Murphy

"*TARGET 10 Online*", www.nre.vic.gov.au, is a website of information for Australian dairy farmers and has some excellent material on communication in farming workplaces.

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6.3 Understanding People

Making staff management easier through knowledge of human behaviour

Why this is important

To create a good working environment on a farm, people need to be able to see each other as more than just “workers” on the farm. Farm managers and staff need to have some knowledge of people and their behaviour in order to work to the strengths of the people in the team and to manage the weaknesses.

Diversity in a team is an asset when each team member is given the opportunity to make their best contribution to the work environment. Understanding behaviour will help employers accept differences in their staff and create environments in which their staff can function to their best ability. The information in this fact sheet can help make sense of staff behaviour that at times may seem senseless.

Understanding people will also help employees get along with their employer and their peers and find success in their employment experiences.

Understanding people is a skill. It is an ongoing process that is never complete. This fact sheet is simply a starting point to some parts of human behaviour that can affect work environments. This information is general and further reading is recommended.

This fact sheet will cover:

- Motivation
- Human development and work-life stages
- Understanding personality
- Stress and coping

Motivation

The motivation to behave in a particular way stems from a person’s needs which can vary in intensity at different times of life. It is not the responsibility of an employer to meet all of an employee’s needs. However, it is useful to understand that an employee will be working for the employer to meet some of these needs and that internal motivation drivers will vary from person to person.

Unfortunately there is no recipe for motivating staff – people are motivated by different things and something that you think is a motivator may have no effect on another person’s efforts. It is important not to make assumptions about what will or will not motivate different people. Nor should you assume that what motivates you will motivate your staff. Communication with staff and understanding their internal motivations is essential.

Theories of motivation

There are many theories about what motivates people. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is one of the most commonly referred-to theories. Maslow believed that throughout their lifetime people will satisfy their needs in a specific order – from bottom up:

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



In most circumstances people's lower-level needs will need to be satisfied before higher level needs could start to have any significant motivating effect. So if people are not happy with their basic needs such as shelter and food being met, they would have little interest in personal growth and development.

Think about how your employees basic needs are met. Is the housing up to scratch? – do they feel satisfied with this? If not, is it likely that they will not be able to see all the other positive things about the working environment?

Good managers are good motivators. They create an environment where employees have a sense of pride and pleasure in their jobs. A good way of doing this is being motivated yourself – like a smile, motivation is contagious. Motivated employees will feel they have a stake in their jobs. Build up their confidence and involve them in decision-making.

The benefits of having motivated staff far outweighs the time you will need to put into get a good understanding of how to do it.

Advantages include:

- Reduced costs
- Reduced stress
- Productivity
- Raises the profile of your employment environment.

Motivation amongst your team can also have a very positive effect on retention of staff.

Refer to Template 5.1.1 for a questionnaire to identify what will motivate your employees.

A person's biological needs include the need for food, drink, clothing and shelter. It is generally accepted that as biological needs are met then a person can move into satisfying their social needs.

Social needs include such things as the need for friendship and belonging, the need for achievement and the recognition of achievement, the need for independence and the need to nurture and care for others.

We have many other social needs as well as those listed here. In relation to work performance the needs of employees that are especially important include the following:

- 1. Money:** While money is not necessarily the primary driver for most employees, people do need fair remuneration
- 2. To belong to the in-crowd:** This means people want to have a sense of "belonging" in the work place. It can help people to feel like they belong if they are kept up to date with what management is up to and why decisions on farm are being made
- 3. The opportunity for growth and development:** This includes education and training, a career path and stimulation from outside sources
- 4. Leadership:** This includes clear expectations and directions from leadership, with a picture of the desired outcomes
- 5. Control of their work:** This includes things like the ability to have an influence on farm decisions, clear responsibilities and the opportunity to meet those responsibilities through planning their own work load, and recognition of achievement
- 6. A balance between work and life:** Many people work their hardest when they know that there is plenty of opportunity for recreation when the work is finished.

How to increase staff motivation

If staff are unmotivated, work through the above list and consider if the employees' needs are being met in each area.

Alternatively it may be useful to work through the process of identifying what matters most to employees, as outlined in the Retention Fact Sheet 5.1. Identifying what matters most to an employee may lead an employer to change some features of the employment relationship to more closely match the needs of the employee, in exchange for better work motivation and performance.

Employees should also take time to consider what matters most to their employer. This will help the employee meet the employer's needs in their work performance and lead to a more successful employment relationship for both parties.

Note: Just because money is the top of the list this does not mean it is the best motivational fix-it. Strong leadership that pays a fair wage but offers the employee an exciting vision for the business is an under-rated motivational tool in the dairy industry.

Human development and work-life stages

Employers usually have a need to get work within their business done and get it done properly. However the ability of a person to perform at work may be affected by their life stage. Using the following information when working through the staff planning process (see Staff Planning Fact Sheet 1.5) will help lead to better work performance results.

Adolescence

Work becomes important to a person during adolescence. It is during this time that the work ethic is established and people start to develop a sense of “Who am I and what is my contribution to society?”

It is important during this stage that people have the opportunity to experiment and work out for themselves what they can do to best contribute to society. For this reason it is relatively uncommon for adolescents to have a strong sense of commitment to any one career – they are still experimenting with work. Generally if an employer expects commitment from a person under the age of about 20 - 23 years old they will be asking the employee to operate against the coinciding drive for experimentation. For this reason it can be better for an employer to structure a job that is filled by an adolescent in a way that ensures the job gets done properly even when the employee’s mind may be elsewhere.

In modern society the period of adolescence is being stretched out further and further as people spend more time becoming educated; they are older before they become financially independent and tend to take on “adult” responsibilities such as child-rearing later in life.

This does not mean that employers should not employ adolescents. Adolescents have a lot to offer an employer. Just be aware and don’t ask more of any employee than what they can reasonably give for their stage of life.

Early adulthood

Early adulthood is about career establishment. Many people will stabilise their commitment to their work at this time, which means they may be prepared to make their job a priority in their lives.

Anecdotal evidence from the dairy industry suggests that for positions where strong commitment to the job is required, best results are achieved by selecting people who have clearly entered their adult time of life. As a generalisation this means people who are aged 25 – 30 and older.

Middle adulthood

During middle adulthood career development generally peaks and then maintains that peak. Mature employees can offer an employer a wealth of experience and life skills, including skills in things such as crisis management, time management and maintaining balance.

There is often a tendency to shift energy from career concerns to family concerns at this time of life and this is often reflected in better time management and work/life balance choices. This period usually lasts until a person reaches retirement age.

Generation Y

There have always been differences between the age of people in the workplace but the gap that exists between younger workers and the generations before them seems greater than ever before, creating new challenges for management. This section examines the most effective strategies for managing “Generation Y” employees.

People born between 1978 and 1994 have been dubbed “Generation Y” (Gen Y) and they come into the workforce with quite different attitudes and expectations from previous generations.

Generation Y is a techno-savvy generation that has grown up with the internet in a digital, mobile world. They look for roles that offer them opportunities to acquire skills and build networks that will make them more marketable in the future. Many don’t expect to stay with their first employer for more than two years.

Generation Y are idealistic, with a strong focus on family and religious values and jobs that “matter” hold great appeal.

According to Peter Sheahan, an Australian Generation Y expert, they can be defined as driven by seven mindsets:

1. **Fast:** Generation Y want immediacy and instant gratification in aspects of their lives
2. **Stimulating:** Workplaces that offer fun and challenging work are more likely to retain Generation Y
3. **Relevant:** Workplaces need to address what's in it for Generation Y (Gen Why)
4. **Connection:** Generation Y want to make a difference and to be accepted by their peers. This is a generation that makes a huge contribution to society
5. **Respect:** Fairness and honesty are important matters to Generation Y – treat them the way you want them to treat you. Traditional status hierarchies just won't cut the mustard
6. **Control:** Generation Y are lifestyle-centred and want control over their careers
7. **Modern:** Generation Y are early adopters and active users of technology. Don't avoid technology just because you don't use it, because your future Generation Y employees do.

The following tips will help you to engage, motivate and retain Generation Y employees:

Recruiting Generation Y

- Be candid - they don't respond well to a hard sell or "BS"
- Ensure there is a cultural fit by matching individual values to the businesses
- Use the internet as an advertising means
- Manage the candidate relationship effectively, responding promptly, making each candidate feel unique and keeping them informed.

Managing Generation Y

- Build effective relationships that acknowledge people professionally and as individuals (people are reluctant to leave if they have friends)
- Provide frequent feedback
- Instantly recognise and reward outstanding efforts
- Adopt a collaborative management style
- Work-life balance is essential (younger employees want control of their time)
- Encourage and support personal growth and development plans
- Let people know how their work contributes to organisational goals so that work feels meaningful
- Train well at the beginning so that you get an early return on your investments – you may not have them long-term.

Salary and benefits are important to employees of any generation, but finding challenging work in a nurturing environment is more important to Generation Y.

How to use life-stage information

Consider where employees are in terms of their life stage. What are they looking for at the moment? Discuss it with employees and consider if the job available meets what the employee is currently looking for in life and in a job.

If there is a mismatch, are there ways to change the way the workload is being managed on the farm to match both the employer's and the employee's needs more closely? For example, a person in a managerial role may be prepared to take less money in exchange for more part-time help on the farm and more time off.

Understanding personality

There are many different tools available for understanding personality. This fact sheet discusses the DISC model, but other equally useful personality tools can be found through books and the Internet.

The most important thing to remember when using these tools is that no person fits completely into one box. Personality typing is a guide only and each "box" represents an extreme of a personality type. In reality all people have a combination of all the types in their personality. People usually tend more towards one of the personality types than the other types, however they will move towards other personality types under different conditions, for example when stressed.

Many people who use personality-typing information find that the most useful information they gain is self-understanding. When people understand themselves they can then see more clearly why another person may choose to behave differently.

Understanding interactions between the different personalities is an important part of personality typing. Usually strong differences between people creates discomfort and friction in a working environment. Employers and employees who make an effort to understand personality differences will be able to work with people who are different from themselves with greater understanding and appreciation for the differences.

Employers may also like to use this information to select staff to either take advantage of personality differences and fill gaps in their own work style, or to select staff to get complementary personality styles. From here all people still need to be managed effectively to get the best results for the team.

All personalities can add value to a farming business. There is no type that is most suited to dairy farming.

I = Influencer

- Outgoing/friendly/sociable
- Leads by enthusing
- Global approach
- Promotes change
- Impulsive
- Operates from gut feel
- Avoids data
- Seeks attention

Motivated by: Change, acknowledgment, new ideas

S = Stabiliser

- Reserved
- Good team member – loyal
- Patient
- Undemanding
- Accommodating of others
- Maintains status quo
- Submissive
- Avoids conflict

Motivated by: Security, acceptance, teamwork

D = Direct

- Outgoing
- Assertive
- Challenges the status quo
- Focused on results
- Likes to take the lead
- Takes action to bring about change
- Operates from fact
- Resists authority
- Aggressive

Motivated by: Results, recognition, challenge

C = Conscientious

- Reserved
- Systematic
- Attentive to detail
- Sets high standards
- Focuses on the task at hand
- Sticks to guidelines
- Likes to plan for change
- Desires control but passive in approach
- Revengeful

Motivated by: High standards, appreciation, quality

Hints on communicating with DISC styles

Communication in the workplace can be improved by understanding personality styles. A flexible approach must be taken depending on the other person's style.

Direct personalities

Direct personalities speak in shorter sentences and come straight to the point. They think and respond quickly and have an impatient style. Don't bother with niceties or tell them long stories, but keep communication direct and to the point.

Influencing personalities

Influencing personalities are bubbly, friendly, informal and use creative language. To communicate effectively with influencers be positive and enthusiastic as well as emphasising the value of the person.

Stabilising personalities

Stabilising personalities are generally quietly spoken but are friendly and approachable. They need space to speak and should not be interrupted. Use phrases such as "How do you feel about it?", "I'd be grateful if..." and avoid harsh orders with stabilising personalities.

Conscientious personalities

Conscientious personalities speak thoughtfully and precisely with pauses for thinking. Do not interrupt conscientious personalities. Use words like "It's logical, reasonable, clear...." and avoid creative and colourful talk.

Source: Target 10 website – www.nre.vic.gov.au

Stress and coping

Stress can be both positive and negative. Stress is a part of everyday life and can be part of what makes life stimulating and interesting, but excessive stress can be destructive.

We all experience stress differently. Some people thrive on stress while others shy away from it as much as possible. Events that are stressful for one person can be routine for another.

Responses to excessive stress include:

- Taking it out on other people (yelling, losing temper, aggression etc)
- Giving up
- Self-indulgence (e.g. with food, alcohol etc)
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Poor judgement
- Headaches, indigestion, high blood pressure.

Excessive stress can lead to impaired work performance, burnout, and health problems. Under the Health and Safety in Employment Act employers have a duty to manage stress to avoid such problems, which in effect means monitoring individual responses to stress.

Almost all people experience times when they feel excessively stressed, and there can be a fine line between coping and not coping with stress. It is recommended that employers and employees seek professional advice when they are experiencing problems in coping with stress as early as possible.

Employers also have legal responsibilities following the amendment to the Health and Safety in Employment Act that came into effect on May 6th 2003, which states that employers have a responsibility to their employees in managing workplace stress.

Employers are required to take all practicable steps to eliminate, isolate, or minimise the “physical and mental harm caused by work related stress and physical or mental fatigue” .

The following features in a work environment will help minimise stress in the workplace:

- Clear expectations of what is expected from employees in their work
- Boundaries around responsibility areas – this ensures that people know where their responsibilities start and where they stop
- Consistency from management in how staff are treated
- A culture of support for all people on the farm
- Regular and scheduled time off
- Regular breaks during the day.

The level of social support that a person has from friends or family can also help them manage stress. More support means better stress management.

Useful references

How to Speed-Read People, Des Morris

Stress and Fatigue, Federated Farmers Fact Sheet

Useful websites

www.discprofile.com

www.nre.vic.gov.au, TARGET 10 Online, is a website of information for Australian dairy farmers and has some excellent material on personality and communication in farming workplaces.

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7.1 Ending Employment

Information about terminating an employment relationship

Why this is important

There are many ways that employment relationships can end. Being aware of this and knowing how to deal effectively with the most common situations is important. Action in the heat of the moment can lead to a claim for unfair dismissal by the former employee, which can be costly and damage your reputation as an employer.

Ending employment is a very serious employment relations issue. Unless someone has resigned or a fixed-term agreement has come to an end, seeking legal advice is strongly recommended.

This fact sheet will cover:

- How people leave employment
- Final pay
- Handling the leaving process

How people leave employment

There are many ways that people can leave employment. The most common situations are:

- Resignation
- End of a fixed-term agreement
- Abandonment
- Frustration of contract
- Dismissal
- Redundancy.

Resignation

The most common way people leave employment is as a result of resignation. Resignation occurs when an employee gives advance notice of their intention to leave employment. Employees may resign at any time, provided they give reasonable notice. The acceptable notice period is usually included in the employment agreement and depends on circumstances. The employment relationship continues to the end of the notice period.

Caution: Heat of the moment resignations

Sometimes people resign in the heat of the moment following an argument. Such a resignation should never be accepted immediately as it may lead to a personal grievance being raised by the employee, due to them feeling as if they've been forced to resign or constructively dismissed.

In this situation it is suggested you say to the employee:

"Let's both/all have some time out away from here/each other. If you still want to resign tomorrow, put your resignation in writing and we'll discuss it then."

The employer must be justified in taking steps to discipline staff and must consider all the circumstances of the case.

Retirement is also initiated through resignation. In general there is no set age to retire from work. Employers cannot require employees to retire just because of their age, except where an employment agreement from prior to 1 April 1992 is still in force and contains an explicit retirement age.

You should ask for the employee's resignation to be given in writing to which you reply verbally and then also in writing.

Notice periods

If the employee gives the required notice, the employer must pay the employee to the end of the notice period. If an employee is asked to stop work before the full notice period has been worked, they are still entitled to be paid for the full period. The employer cannot force the employee to stop work and take holidays owed to them over the notice period.

Where the employee leaves without providing notice the employer is only required to pay the employee up to their last actual day of work. The employer must not deduct pay in lieu of notice unless this is agreed in writing.

End of a fixed-term agreement

As long as there is a genuine reason for a fixed-term agreement, the employment agreement terminates when the terminating event or end date is reached. As long as the relevant legal requirements have been met no further action is needed by either person.

Good practice would dictate the employee is reminded of the impending end of the agreement two to four weeks in advance and the process is handled with respect.

Abandonment

The first thing to do if you suspect an employee has abandoned their employment is to try to contact them. Several phone calls/texts, visits to their residence and a call to next of kin should be made to check on the employee's wellbeing before abandonment can be confirmed. After a reasonable amount of time has passed without contact (three days or more), a letter should be sent to their last known address, stating that the employee must make contact within a certain time period or face dismissal. If no contact is made after that period, a further letter stating that the employee has been dismissed should be sent.

If the employee should return to work at a later date, any corrective action should be handled through a proper disciplinary process.

Frustration of contract

Frustration of the contract occurs when the employee becomes unable to perform the required duties. Examples where frustration may occur include:

- The employee is put in prison.
- They lose their driver's licence (or class of licence) which is a necessary part of their employment.
- Permanent sickness or injury which leaves the employee unable to fulfil their duties.

A letter needs to be sent to the employee, stating the reason that their employment with you has been terminated.

Long-term illness

Ending an employment relationship in the case of long-term illness or injury is extremely challenging and stressful for everyone involved. Options for bringing the employee back into the workplace, such as a change in practice or use of some equipment, must be seriously considered before a decision to terminate employment is made. Employers should also obtain a professional medical opinion before terminating employment.

Where accommodation is provided, the employee is entitled to live there (and pay rent) while they are ill. Once the decision to terminate employment has been made the person may be asked to vacate the accommodation under the terms set out in their employment and / or tenancy agreement. Obviously this must be handled sensitively.

Dismissal

In order to be lawful, the dismissal of an employee must be substantively justified and conducted in a procedurally fair manner.

Dismissal may occur in the following circumstances:

- Due to poor performance
- Due to misconduct (does not include incidents away from work or in their own time)
- Constructive dismissal.

Dismissal often results from mismatched expectations between employer and employee. It is important that the recruitment process is carefully examined to make sure expectations are clear to both parties.

Dismissal is very serious and needs to be handled carefully, both legally and with respect for the individual. There must be good reason for the dismissal and the dismissal must be fair. What is fair will depend on the circumstances of the dismissal and is therefore subject to interpretation. **Legal advice should be sought** to ensure the process is fair and the risk of the employee lodging a personal grievance is minimised.

At all times the employer must maintain an open mind and remain as objective as possible, applying the basic principles of procedural fairness:

| | |
|---|---|
| Full Investigation | Don't rush the investigation and ensure the facts are correct. |
| Promptness | The employer must take action as soon as possible once aware of the issue. |
| Consistency | All employees must be treated equally and fairly. |
| Non-punitive | Disciplinary action must not be used to punish or gain revenge on an employee; the aim is to correct employee behaviour. |
| Free from entrapment | You must not knowingly allow an employee to commence a course of action where the result would be dismissal without first warning the employee of this possibility. |
| Free from bias and | Asks what and when. |
| Pre-determination | Disciplinary action may only be taken after full investigation and the employee's explanation has been heard and given full consideration. |
| Employment agreements must be followed | Any relevant provisions in the agreement must be followed, including notice period. |

Dismissal cannot be instant

Even in cases where there has been serious misconduct, or where the employee is a danger to themselves or others, they should be immediately stood down or suspended (if allowed in their employment agreement) from work on full pay, pending an investigation rather than dismissed on the spot. This gives the employer time to investigate the issues properly and both parties the chance to seek professional advice.

Keep good records

Good records are essential, as the employee can legally request a written statement of the reasons for the dismissal up to 60 days after the dismissal, or after they find out about the dismissal, whichever is the later. The employer must provide this within 14 days.

Constructive dismissal

This occurs where an employer:

- Directly or indirectly puts pressure on an employee to resign
- Makes the situation at work intolerable for the employee, forcing them to resign
- There has been a breach of duty by the employer such that the employee feels they can no longer stay in the job.

Where constructive dismissal occurs the employee will usually have a case for a personal grievance.

Redundancy

Redundancy occurs in the following circumstances:

- When a position is genuinely no longer needed in the workplace due to reasons such as restructuring or the business closing down
- Where there is a genuine economic or commercial reason to discontinue employment.

Redundancy must be for genuine reasons and not used as a tool to force an employee out of the business. For example, a restructure and a change in job title do not automatically mean a redundancy is justified if the duties performed are substantially the same. Remember at all times that redundancy is about positions not people, otherwise you greatly increase the risk of a personal grievance.

Redundancy is a form of dismissal, so needs to follow a fair and open process including:

- All provisions of the employment agreement must be met
- You must consult with affected employees before making a decision to terminate their position. Consultation must be genuine, with a real desire to listen on the part of the employer
- Information relevant to the proposed redundancy must be available for employees
- You must give employees time to seek advice and to respond to the information you have given them
- You must give staff the opportunity to discuss alternatives such as re-deployment to other roles within the business
- Consider providing support of a non-financial nature, e.g. offering counselling or giving time off to attend interviews
- If redundancy is unavoidable, notification of termination of employment should be made in writing to each affected employee. The letter should contain information about the notice period to be worked (four weeks seems to be acceptable) and any entitlements they can expect.

Compensation for redundancy is not compulsory unless employer and employee have agreed to compensation. This agreement may take place prior to employment commencing or following the decision to make the employee redundant.

Treat people with respect through the process and consider their needs. For many people, the prospect of redundancy is a huge shock and it will take time to come to terms with.

Employee protection

The Employment Relations Act 2000 requires that employers make every reasonable attempt to protect the employment of their workers when the business changes hands. This must be documented in the employment agreement and employers must be able to show that the process was followed when the business is sold. Note that the new business owner is not obliged to accept any of the existing staff.

Final pay

At the end of any period of employment, regardless of how it ends, the employee is legally entitled to all outstanding pay, including any holiday pay and any other benefits specified in their agreement, such as production bonuses or meat. The Wages Protection Act 1983 requires employers to pay the entire amount of any wages, without deductions, unless they are required to make deductions by law or the employee has authorised deductions in writing.

The employee's final pay and any applicable bond refunds arising from accommodation arrangements should be paid on the last day of employment, or shortly afterwards (within ten working days). You should provide the employee with a written summary of how the final pay is calculated, including any authorised deductions and the date it will be paid.

Handling the leaving process

The way you handle the leaving process can be the difference between a smooth and a stressful process. An employee leaving also provides an opportunity for some learning to take place regarding the job and your strengths and weaknesses as an employer. The following process provides some ideas as to how you can make the experience as smooth as possible for both parties.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Confirm dates | Make sure there is no confusion regarding notice periods, final day of work and date for vacating accommodation. Ask the employee to provide notice of their resignation in writing (<i>template provided 7.1.2</i>). |
| Check employment agreement | It's important to check the employee's agreement and make sure of your obligations. |
| Plan the leaving process | Discuss what will need to happen over the time leading up to their departure. A checklist is provided suggesting the sort of tasks / events you will need to plan. |
| Review the job description | The person leaving will have some valuable insights into the job. This provides a learning opportunity to help you shape the recruitment and selection process and ensure a better match between employee and job. |
| Conduct an exit interview | Once again a person leaving can also provide the opportunity for learning. An exit interview can help you to understand both your strengths and weaknesses as an employer. The interview should be conducted with a third party so the employee feels more able to provide honest feedback. |
| File employee records | The Minimum Wage Act 1983 and Employment Relations Act 2000 require employers to keep a record of the time worked and wages received for each employee for 6 years (<i>refer to the Legal Responsibilities Fact Sheet 1.1</i>). |

Useful references

New Zealand Employment Law Guide, Rudman, R., (2007), CCH New Zealand Ltd, pp408, ISBN: 978-0-86475-698-5.

Federated Farmers of New Zealand (members only) 0800 327 646

Federated Farmers provides a range of employment related services to members including fact sheets, legal and practical employment advice and agreements.

Employment Relations Infoline 0800 20 90 20 (website – www.ers.dol.govt.nz).

ERS is part of the Department of Labour and has comprehensive fact sheets on the internet as well as free phone and email help desks.

Useful websites

Employers and Manufacturers Association – www.ema.co.nz

Federated Farmers of New Zealand – www.fedfarm.org.nz

Employment Relations Service – www.ers.govt.nz

Department of Building and Housing (tenancy matters) – www.dbh.govt.nz

Department of Immigration – www.immigration.govt.nz

This fact sheet is part of DairyNZ's HR Toolkit - a guide to the fundamentals in establishing successful employment relationships. To access the full HR Toolkit please visit the DairyNZ website at www.dairynz.co.nz

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7.1.1 Template - Employee Exit Check List

Tick

| |
|---|
| Official notice of resignation received |
| Confirmation letter of resignation provided to employee |
| Exit plan completed |
| Team notified |
| Review the existing job description with the employee departing to make sure it is still appropriate for the position |
| Initial accommodation inspection complete <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect accommodation and grounds and determine if any repairs or maintenance is required by employee Plan for any additional R&M to be carried out before next employee moves in. |
| Any purchasing delegations cancelled with suppliers |
| Final timesheet completed |
| Final pay calculated and payslip provided to employee |
| Any existing wage / salary auto payments stopped |
| Final pay lodged in employee's bank account |
| Business property returned |
| Exit interview complete |
| Final accommodation inspection complete (where applicable) |
| Bond refund for accommodation complete (where applicable) |
| Certificate of employment issued to employee |
| Immigration notified if appropriate |
| Forwarding address / phone number recorded |
| Employee file closed off: (Employee records including wages / salary, timesheets and holiday records must be archived for 6 years.) |
| Date: _____ |
| Signed: _____ |

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7.1.2 Template – Resignation Letter *(For employee to complete)*

Dear *[Insert your name]*

This letter is to confirm that I intend to resign my position in your business.

My notice period is ____ weeks.

My last day of work will be _____.

I will be moving out of my accommodation on _____.

Sincerely,

Employee's signature: _____

Employee's name: _____

Date: _____

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7.1.3 Template – Confirmation of Resignation Letter

Dear *[Insert employee's name]*

This letter is to confirm your resignation and the end of your employment.

It is understood that your last day of work will be *[Insert date]* and you will be vacating the accommodation provided with your job on *[Insert date]*.

I will meet with you over the next few days to plan the process for your leaving and discuss what will happen in your remaining time with us.

Thanks for the time you have worked with us in our business. You will be missed.

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]

[Insert your position in the company]

[Insert the company name]

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7.1.4 Template – Exit Plan

Exit plan

The following table outlines what needs to happen over the next few days in preparation for your leaving:

| Date | Event/Task |
|---|--|
| Today's date: ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify the team |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | Preliminary inspection of accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail any R&M required to be carried out by employee |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final timesheet required |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business property returned (e.g. RT, cellphone or bike) |
| Final day of work: ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exit interview |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farewell with team |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacate and clean accommodation |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final accommodation inspection Accommodation bond reviewed |
| ___ / ___ / _____ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final pay lodged in employee's bank account |

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7.1.5 Example – Certificate of Employment

A. Farmer
Dairy Lane
RD
Somewhere

4 December 2008

RE: Joe Bloggs

To whom it may concern.

This letter is to verify that Joe Bloggs has been employed by Dairy Farming Ltd from 3 March 2006 to 30 November 2008 in the position of Farm Manager.

During this period the main duties of Joe were:

- Supervise three staff members
- Manage feeding of the cows, including supplements at 500kgDM/cow
- Manage animal health
- Manage mating
- Carry out repairs and maintenance as needed
- Prepare and manage the farm budget

For a verbal reference please call me on 028 654 891.

Sincerely,

Andy Farmer
Owner
Dairy Farming Ltd

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7.1.6 Template – Certificate of Employment

[Insert your address]

[Insert date]

RE: *[Insert employees name]*

To whom it may concern

This letter is to verify that *[Insert employees name]* has been employed by *[me / us / company name]* from *[Insert date]* to *[Insert date]* in the position of *[Insert position]*.

During this period the main duties of *[Insert employees name]* were:

For a verbal reference please call me on *[Insert phone number]*.

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]

[Insert your position in the company]

[Insert the company name]

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7.1.7 Template - Exit Interview

Employee name:

Final day of work:

Duration of employment:

Position:

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | What job will you be moving to? |
| 2. | Why did you start looking for a new job? |
| 3. | How do you think your new role compares to your role here? <i>A step backward / About the same / A promotion</i> |
| 4. | Did your job with us turn out as you expected? |
| 5. | What did you like most about the job and why? |
| 6. | What did you like least about the job and why? |
| 7. | Did you feel you were able to approach your manager? Why? |

| | |
|-----|---|
| 8. | Did you feel that you were able to contribute to the business? Explain? |
| 9. | Did you feel you were able to develop skills and knowledge useful to your career while working here? In what areas? |
| 10. | Would you have liked more training either on or off farm? If so what? |
| 11. | Were you provided with the tools and machinery required to do the job well? |
| 12. | Was your workload fair? Explain? |
| 13. | How has pay level and time off influenced your decision to leave? |
| 14. | What could have been done to retain you in the business? |
| 15. | Any other comments you would like to make? |

| | |
|------------|--|
| 15. | <p>Are you happy to act as a referee and discuss working for our business with people who are considering coming to work with us?</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>If Yes, what phone number will be most suitable to contact you?</p> |
| 16. | <p>Are you happy for us to call you in the future if a job that you may be suited for comes up in our business?</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>If Yes, what phone number will be most suitable to contact you?</p> |

Reasons for employee leaving in the interviewer’s opinion:

Suggestions for future action:

Interview carried out by:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

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7.1.8 Template – Final Pay Confirmation

[Insert your address]

[Insert date]

RE: Confirmation of Final Pay

Dear [Insert employees name]

You chose to terminate your employment with us on the [Insert last day of work] after giving [Insert notice given] weeks notice.

We have calculated your final wages. These are:

| | \$\$ |
|---|------|
| _____ days ordinary pay from ___/___/_____ to ___/___/_____ | |
| _____ day holiday pay | |
| Bonuses (list) | |
| Bond refund on accommodation | |
| Less Deductions (list) | |
| TOTAL | |

This total will be paid by direct credit to your bank account as provided on [Insert date].

Should you have any queries please notify me prior to your departure and I will explain how these calculations have been made.

We wish you all the best with your future and thank you for your input into our farm business.

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]

[Insert your position in the company]

[Insert the company name]

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7.1.9 Template – Property Inspection

This report should be used to record the condition of the accommodation at the end of the period of tenancy. The landlord and the tenant should fill out this form together and agree on any action required.

Property:

Landlord(s):

Tenant(s):

Date of inspection:

STATE code explanation: S = satisfactory, N = needs attention – detail action required

| Entrance/Hall | State at start | Action required | State at end |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Lounge | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Dining Room | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Kitchen | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |

| Kitchen cont... | State at start | Action required | State at end |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Cupboards/drawers | | | |
| Bench tops/tiling | | | |
| Sink/disposal unit | | | |
| Taps | | | |
| Stove | | | |
| Exhaust fan | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Bedroom 1 | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Bedroom 2 | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Bedroom 3 | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |

| Bathroom | State at start | Action required | State at end |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Bath | | | |
| Shower | | | |
| Shower screen | | | |
| Wash basin | | | |
| Tiling | | | |
| Mirror/cabinet | | | |
| Towel rail | | | |
| Toilet | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Laundry | State at start | Action required | State at end |
| Walls/ceiling/woodwork | | | |
| Floor/coverings | | | |
| Curtains/blinds | | | |
| Light fittings/power points | | | |
| Windows/doors/screens | | | |
| Wash tubs | | | |
| Comments/other | | | |
| Exterior | State | Action required | |
| Exterior walls/window frames | | | |
| Lawns/gardens | | | |
| Roof/gutters | | | |
| Garage/carport/driveway | | | |
| Clothes line | | | |
| Fences/gates | | | |
| Mailbox | | | |

| Exterior cont..... | State | Action required |
|--------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Balcony/veranda/porch | | |
| Outside lights | | |
| Doorbell/security system | | |
| Comments/other | | |
| Other comments | | |
| | | |

Impact on tenant as a result of failing to take required action

Failure to take the required action as detailed above will result in deductions to the tenant's bond to make good the repairs / cleaning required.

The cost of remedial action will be determined by obtaining two quotes to complete the work and selecting the lowest amount.

The amount to be deducted is estimated at: \$ _____

(subject to receiving quotes)

NOTE: Given there is a need for action to be taken quickly, before the next staff member commences work, the availability of contractors may be limited and cost may be greater than expected.

Acknowledgement

This report is a fair reflection of the of the state of the property and the action required to remedy the situation. (Do not sign unless you agree with all the details in the report.)

Landlord

Tenant

Name: _____

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

7.2 Disciplinary Procedures

Why this is important

Poor performance or misconduct on farms affects morale and productivity for all staff. Effectively dealing with poor performance and misconduct demonstrates your leadership skills and commitment as a fair and equitable employer. Failing to deal with performance and misconduct usually results in the best employees leaving.

Case law clearly demonstrates that sound judgement must be used at all times. In practical terms this means that decisions made would be the same decision that any other reasonable person would make.

The risk of a personal grievance is always high when dealing with disciplinary issues. This fact sheet provides a guide as to how to minimise your risk. However, this fact sheet should not be used as a substitute for appropriate legal advice.

This fact sheet will cover:

- When the disciplinary processes should be used
- A guide to the disciplinary process

When are disciplinary procedures required?

Disciplinary procedures are usually started due to either:

- Continued poor performance
- Misconduct.

Poor performance

Poor performance should initially be addressed on an ongoing basis through the performance management and coaching processes set out in Fact Sheet 3.3: Performance Management. **However, if performance continues to be poor, disciplinary procedures may need to be started.**

Misconduct

Misconduct occurs where someone behaves in an unacceptable way in the workplace. Examples of misconduct include:

- Unauthorised use, possession or movement of farm (or another employee's) property
- Not complying with safety procedures
- Dishonesty
- Harassment of another employee
- Cruelty to stock.

Acts of serious misconduct are not defined as the circumstances surrounding the incident all contribute to interpreting the event. Serious misconduct occurs where the employee's behaviour is such that you feel threatened, unsafe or the act results in a deeply impaired trust of the person. This may result in instant dismissal.

Minor misconduct can be dealt with informally but repeated minor misconduct offences or serious misconduct will usually lead to disciplinary procedures being started. Employers must take active steps to prevent an employee's misconduct; an employer must warn the employee if they are about to act in a way that is considered misconduct, especially if that act may lead to dismissal.

Prevention is better than cure. Misconduct can be avoided through having a code of conduct and regular discussion at team meetings about what is considered to be acceptable behaviour. These team meetings must be documented, dated and signed by all staff who have attended.

A guide to disciplinary procedures

The most important rule when dealing with disciplinary procedures is to make sure that you are fair and reasonable when disciplining or dismissing staff. Whenever judgement goes against the employer in an employment dispute the most common reason for this occurring is that the employer did not follow, or was unable to demonstrate they had followed, a fair and reasonable process.

Disciplinary action must follow a "fair" process. What is considered to be a "fair" process varies depending on the circumstances. Because of this uncertainty it is strongly recommended that you obtain legal advice before you start disciplinary proceedings.

If, for some reason, legal advice is not available the following process provides a guide to handling the situation. Remember that because the circumstances vary in each situation, what is "fair" changes in each situation and therefore this process will not be right for every situation. Please make sure you seek legal advice as soon as possible.

Step-by-step process for dealing with disciplinary issues

Before you start

Always start the process with an open mind and remain as objective as possible. It is critical that you have not pre-determined the outcome of process – this would not be fair.

It is important to deal with issues as soon as you become aware of them, but avoid getting drawn into heat of the moment decisions and actions.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Step 1 | <p>Conduct an initial investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a specific action to be dealt with? • What evidence is available? • How has part of the employment environment or the way in which the person has been managed contributed to the issue? • Is there an alternative to disciplinary action that would give a better result? |
| Step 2 | <p>Arrange an investigative meeting with the employee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the employee of the purpose for the meeting • Let the employee know that the meeting may result in disciplinary action • Let them know they have the right to bring a legal representative or support person along to the meeting • It is also advisable for you to have an independent support person • Ensure the employee has enough information about the issue that they can consider their response. You should let them know about your evidence • Record that a meeting has been arranged. |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Step 3 | <p>Allow the employee to respond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully to their point of view • Ask questions for clarification but do not argue • If it becomes clear that further investigation is needed then adjourn the meeting until this has been completed • If no further information comes to light you should still adjourn the meeting to consider the employee's explanation. |
| Step 4 | <p>Consider your response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete any additional investigation required • Reflect on the meeting, and consider your response • Take time to consider if your planned course of action is fair and reasonable. |
| Step 5 | <p>Arrange a meeting to discuss your response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once again make sure the employee has the opportunity to bring a legal representative or support person along to the meeting • It is also wise for the employer to have a support person present as they will view the situation from an independent perspective. • Outline your decision and your reasons for it • If concerns are not founded then you must ensure this is removed from the employees file and you cannot raise this issue again in further disciplinary proceedings • Give the employee time to respond and if new evidence arises adjourn the meeting to investigate further • Decide with the employee the corrective measures they need to take • Notify employee of disciplinary action if appropriate. <p><i>(see page 308 & 309 for an explanation of corrective and disciplinary action.)</i></p> |
| Step 6 | <p>Record outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes should be taken throughout the process • Have the employee and the witnesses sign the minutes as a record of the meeting • Provide the employee a letter formalising the outcomes of the meeting • Follow any requirement outlined in the employment agreement that requires removing a warning from the employees file or setting expiry dates for warnings to be removed. If expiry dates are not outlined in employment agreements then verbally agree when you will remove them (standard is usually 9-12 months). |

Planning corrective action

Disciplinary processes focus on correcting the performance or the behaviour (misconduct) of the employee. The employee must be given a fair opportunity to improve their performance with support from the employer to achieve this. Corrective action may be taken in conjunction or independently of a warning.

The steps to follow when taking corrective action are:

- Agree with the employee what corrective action they need to take to meet performance requirements. This must provide specific performance levels and goals
- Agree a time frame for the correction to take place. This must be reasonable.

- Agree how you will support the employee to improve their performance. Examples of support include redesigning a system, providing training or helping to ease conflict with another employee
- Document the expected performance levels and goals, the support to be provided and the time-frame for correction
- Provide a copy to the employee
- Carry out regular follow-ups to check on progress
- Carry out an objective review of performance at the end of the agreed time frame.

If performance or behaviour have not improved to the level required then repeat the disciplinary process from Step 1.

Taking disciplinary action

Disciplinary action may be either:

- Issuing a warning
- Dismissal.

Is your action justified?

Issuing a warning or dismissing someone is a serious step and opens employment practices up to scrutiny. You must be sure your action is warranted and appropriate to the circumstances. The employment court will consider questions such as those below to decide if action was justified.

- What options did a fair and reasonable employer have?
- Did the employee's behaviour breach their employment agreement?
- How has the employer contributed to the situation?
- Was the employee given specific reasons for the employer's dissatisfaction?
- Did the employer demand a reasonably specific and measurable improvement from the employee over a reasonable period?
- Be aware that you will need to provide several opportunities for improvement in order to be deemed a 'fair and reasonable' employer
- Was the review of the employee's work fair?
- At the end of the period given for improvement, were the results considered dispassionately?
- Did the employer take into account the employee's previous good record (if they had one)?
- Were the warnings for poor work performance both explicit and fair?

Issuing a warning

If issuing a warning, you must provide a letter to the employee clearly stating:

- The letter constitutes a warning
- The reason for the warning
- The improvement required
- The timeframe for the improvement
- How improvement will be measured

- The support the employer will offer
- Notification of the potential consequences of failing to meet the required standard, especially if the next step would be dismissal.

Warning systems

There are no set rules about the number of warnings required; once again it depends on the seriousness of the incident and the surrounding circumstances. The over-riding principle is that all action should be fair and reasonable. You should check what your employment agreement with the employee contains with respect to warnings as this may set out a process.

It is possible to issue final warnings for offences that are serious but not grounds for summary dismissal. If the same offence is repeated or there is a second incident of an equivalent nature, this may lead to dismissal. This process must be outlined in the employment agreement. For less serious issues at least two warnings are likely to be appropriate.

Dismissal

Should the result of the disciplinary process be dismissal of the employee you should write the employee a letter outlining:

- The fact they have been dismissed
- The reason for dismissal
- The period of notice and effective date of termination.

You must provide the employee notice. If a notice period is not specified in the employment agreement it must be fair, probably two weeks minimum. When an employee is dismissed it is appropriate to ask the employee to stop work immediately and pay them in lieu of notice.

The employee may have accommodation provided and appropriate notice of eviction must also be provided where the accommodation is required for a new employee.

Instant dismissal

In certain circumstances, such as for serious misconduct it may be deemed fair to instantly dismiss the employee. However, "instant" does not mean instant. It is still necessary for you to follow a fair process and carry out a full investigation. The employee should be suspended from work, on full pay, until the investigation is complete.

If instant dismissal is being contemplated it is essential to seek legal advice from the outset.

Heat of the moment resignations

The disciplinary process is a tense time and people can resign in the heat of the moment. Such a resignation should never be accepted immediately as it may lead to a personal grievance being raised by the employee, due to them feeling as if they've been forced to resign or constructively dismissed.

In this situation it is suggested you say to the employee:

"Let's both/all have some time out away from here/each other. If you still want to resign tomorrow, put your resignation in writing and we'll discuss it then."

Record-keeping

The employee has the right to challenge the way they are treated through taking a personal grievance against their employer, up to 90 days after becoming aware of the issue you wish to raise a grievance for. It is critical that you maintain records of disciplinary procedures to defend your actions. Records should include:

- Diary notes of all activity related to the disciplinary process
- Detailed minutes of meetings and interviews with other parties
- Any evidence available to support your claims.

Maintain respect

It can be a stressful time for both the manager and employee, when dealing with performance or misconduct problems. Please remember that discipline is about behaviour not the person. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect, even in these difficult circumstances.

What do I do next?

This is a situation where prevention is better than cure. Should you need to put an employee through a disciplinary process, seek out legal advice and conclude the situation, but then move to prevention. Things to consider include:

- Review your performance management and coaching practices to ensure staff are aware of your performance expectations
- Provide coaching and training to help them meet expectations
- Draw up a code of conduct for your farm. Involve your employees and get their input into establishing reasonable behaviour on farm
- Communicate regularly with staff and confront issues as they arise
- Consider mediation as an option.

Useful references:

Employment Relations Service, 0800 800 863, www.ers.dol.govt.nz

ERS is part of the Department of Labor and has free phone and email help desks

Federated Farmers of New Zealand, (members only) 0800 327 646

Federated Farmers provides a range of employment related services to members including legal and practical employment advice and agreements

Termination of Employment - A Best Practice Guide (2008), CCH New Zealand Limited (www.cch.co.nz).

This book published by CCH is updated regularly to reflect changes in the law. It provides an excellent guide to this sensitive issue. Its companion, the *New Zealand Employment Law Guide* (updated annually) also provides an excellent reference text and examples of case interpretations.

The Department of Labour, <http://www.ers.govt.nz/problem/mediation.html>

The Department of Labour provides mediation services to help people resolve their employment relations problems quickly and effectively.

Appendix i – New Staff Check List

The following check lists are suggestions of things you can do:

- before offering a job
- before the employee starts work
- getting the employee started, and
- regarding health and safety precautions.

These things can help your new employee fit into the team better and gain a better understanding of your farm system. The lists are not exhaustive and should be used in conjunction with the relevant sections of the HR Toolkit.

If you are a first-time employer please confirm your obligations as an employer with the Inland Revenue Department.

Before offering the job:

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Develop a job description for the role | | Check the applicant's drivers licence (if required) and criminal record | |
| Put together an employment agreement | | Check that the applicant is entitled to work in New Zealand | |
| Develop a person specification | | Request a pre-employment health test (if required) | |
| Get each applicant to complete a job application form | | | |
| Check the employee's references | | | |

Refer to the before you get started and where to start sections.

Before employee starts work:

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Formally offer the successful applicant the job – send a letter offering the job | | Clarify in writing the amount he/she is to be paid, the rent, bond to be taken (if any) and terms of bonuses (may all be in agreement) | |
| Provide the employee with a written employment agreement and job description (and allow them time to get advice on it) | | Let other applicants know that they were unsuccessful | |
| Make sure the employee signs and returns one written employment agreement | | Keep in contact with the successful applicant to make sure they are still committed to taking on the role | |
| Make sure their accommodation is ready | | | |

Refer to the finding the right person section.

Getting the employee started

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Make sure the employee provides their bank account details | | Discuss and explain the roster system | |
| Set up a personal file for the employee where you will keep records for wages, hours worked, and holidays taken and entitlements | | Get the employee to complete a tax code declaration form (IR330) | |
| If you keep weekly hours of work records make sure the employee is shown where/when/how to record hours of work | | | |

Getting the employee started cont.....

| | |
|---|--|
| Go over the job description and make sure the employee understands: | Let them know who the key people are associated with the business, and when and how to contact them (e.g. banker, vet, farm advisor) |
| Who he/she reports to | Buddy the employee up with an existing team member to help them through their first few weeks (i.e. farm manager or colleague) |
| Purpose of position | Communicate expectations to employee clearly regarding: |
| Who reports to them (if any) | Dress standards |
| Hours of work (including breaks) | Acceptable and unacceptable language and behaviour |
| Let the employee know about annual, sick and bereavement leave entitlements | Treatment of stock and farm machinery |
| Expectations of routine work | Accommodation |
| Inform employee of farm policies | Let them know who they can raise concerns with |
| Review previous training records | Complete a property inspection with the employee |
| Plan employee's training needs | Lodge the bond with Tenancy Services (if taken) |
| Discuss the business values and team culture | Transfer power and phone to employee's name |
| Show employee all farm policies and/or farm manual | Set up a date and time for a progress review |
| Complete a farm tour and give them a copy of the farm map identifying key features like hazards and water lines etc | Talk to them about the importance of asking questions and asking for help if they are feeling overwhelmed, stressed or they are not coping |
| Introduce the employee to other employees and their families | |

Refer to the getting people started and keeping your team working sections.

Health and safety

| | |
|---|--|
| Ensure the employee has read and understood the Health and Safety manual and knows where to find it | Let them know the procedure for reporting accidents |
| Show employee all workplace hazards | Show them how to update the hazard register |
| Show employee all safety equipment is (fire extinguishers, first aid kits etc) | Make sure they know where personal protective equipment is kept |
| Make sure they know what to do in an emergency | Check that employee can safely use common machinery (i.e. ATV, chainsaws, etc) |

Refer to the health and safety information in the where to start section.

Disclaimer

DairyNZ Limited endeavours to ensure that the information in this publication is accurate and current. However, DairyNZ accepts no liability for any error or omission in fact or the consequences of any actions taken pertaining to the content of this publication.

Appendix ii: Key Contacts

PrimaryITO

PO Box 10383
The Terrace
Wellington
Phone: 04 801 9616 | 0800 691 111
www.primaryito.ac.nz

DairyNZ

Private Bag 3221
Hamilton
Phone: 0800 4 DAIRYNZ (0800 4 324 7969)
www.dairynz.co.nz

Dairy Training Ltd

Private Bag 3221
Hamilton
Phone: 0800 467 768
www.dairynz.co.nz/what-we-do/education/dairy-training-ltd

Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment Labour Inspectorate

PO Box 3705
Wellington
Phone: 04 915 4400 | 0800 800 863
www.dol.govt.nz

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment – Building and Housing Information

Phone: 0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62)
0800 73 76 66 (Bond enquiries)
www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-index

Federated Farmers

PO Box 715
Wellington
Phone: 04 473 7269
www.fedfarm.org.nz

Inland Revenue

Phone: 0800 377 772
www.ird.govt.nz

Tenancy Tribunal

www.dbh.govt.nz/tenancy-tribunal