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CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP 2004

REGAN JOHNSON

The Jack Green Churchill Fellowship to examine the strategies used to establish and maintain effective working relationships on dairy farms.

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**THE JACK GREEN CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP TO
EXAMINE THE STRATEGIES USED TO ESTABLISH
AND MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE WORKING
RELATIONSHIPS ON DAIRY FARMS.**

REPORT BY REGAN JOHNSON – CHURCHILL FELLOW 2004



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Introduction

In 2000 the Australian Dairy industry deregulated. With this deregulation the farm gate milk price dropped dramatically. The result of this was lower returns on farm. To combat these lower returns dairy farmers were being advised to increase herd size, therefore increasing the volume of milk sold and diluting the fixed costs of production.

However, with increased herd sizes there is also intensification on the farm. There are a number of issues that arise from this. Dairy shed capacity, laneways and feed budgeting are some of the more prominent concerns.

As a dairy advisor with NSW Department of Primary Industries the issue that most concerns me is Human Resource Management (HRM). Over the last 5 years since deregulation dairy farmers have begun to source labour outside the family. Dairy farmers are not trained labour managers and often the relationship between employer and employee breaks down.

This issue is relatively new to the Australian dairy industry; however countries such as USA, Canada and New Zealand have been dealing with this issue for decades. They are leaders in HRM on dairy farms, and have many strategies put in place to help dairy farmers become better labour managers.

Acknowledgments

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance and support of the following individuals and organizations in this invaluable study tour:

- The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia, for the financial means with which to travel, and for the support and encouragement from past Fellows.
- Mr Neville Miles and Mr Arthur Stubbs who are part of the group responsible for raising sponsorship funds in memory of the late Mr Jack Green. The Jack Green Fellowship has allowed me to visit parts of the world's dairy industry I may have never seen.
- Mr Tim Burfitt (NSW Department of Primary Industries, Program Leader – Dairy Products) and Kerry Kempton (technical team leader Human and Business Resources) for their support and also thank you to the other members of the dairy sub-program who are a group of truly dedicated professionals to the dairy industry.
- NSW Department of Primary Industries, for their financial support, and their commitment to the professional and personal development of individual staff members.
- The staff of research institutes and private organisations visited for their time and effort in preparing material and information for my use.
- My family and friends for their support and encouragement to apply for the Churchill fellowship and continued support during my travels.

Executive Summary

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Fellowship Project

The Jack Green Churchill Fellowship To Examine The Strategies Used To Establish And Maintain Effective Working Relationships On Dairy Farms.

Fellowship Highlights

1. Pennsylvania State University – Richard Stup (human resources specialist) and his team outlined the work that they have been doing to help dairy farms with labour management. Especially the program ‘Managing People Today’
2. Ohio State University – two day in-service for dairy county agents and Diane Shoemaker (dairy extension specialist) and her team of county agents detailed their work in the program ‘15 measures of a Profitable Dairy Farm’
3. Florida State University – Albert De Vries (Assistant Professor Dairy Systems Management) and David Bray (Dairy Extension Specialist) outlined their work in managing Hispanic labour and what strategies they are using to combat the language barrier.
4. Kerry Ryan (Human Resource Consultant) NZ – Kerry outlined his work in the area of personality profiling and what he sees are the necessary skills needed to be a good labour manager.
5. John Fegan (Human Resource Consultant) NZ – John and his co workers have established a company called ATR Solutions. Attracting, Training and Retaining labour in the dairy industry is their major aim.
6. Farm visits – the numerous farms I had the opportunity to visit. I visited some truly outstanding farms and talked to some amazing farm managers who have conquered labour management.

Major Findings and Dissemination

This has been a great opportunity to learn from some of the best HRM Consultants in the leading dairy industries of the world. There is an enormous amount of information that can be used to create long lasting solutions to the labour management problem in the Australian dairy industry. The major findings of this Churchill Fellowship include: • Selection of the right person to fill a position on a dairy farm is the first critical step in establishing effective working relationships. • In the selection of a new employee a number of tools can be used such as tests to assess the applicant’s ability to perform the job and personality profiling to ensure the dairy farmer and future employees can effectively work together and communicate efficiently. • Empowerment and motivation of the workforce is an essential part of human resource management, used effectively it can create a workforce that is productive and informed about the dairy farm allowing for production and financial targets to be reached. • Attracting new people into the dairy industry is vital to ensure a progressive industry remains, to accomplish these new programs in high schools need to be developed. • An industry that works together and is united at tackling challenges will be stronger and accomplish more. A united dairy industry will encourage dairy farmers to be proud of the industry they are part of and therefore will begin to attract quality people to the industry. The dissemination of these findings will be by way of ABC Radio interviews, newsletters by NSW Dairy Livestock Officers, articles in the Australian Dairy Farmer, Agriculture Today and the Weekly times. Meeting will also be arranged with local dairy farmers to speak on various topics arising from this fellowship.

Programme

Modesto, California, USA - University of California.

9th – 16 October

Hosted by Alejandro Castillo (Farm Advisor Dairy Science) and Gregory Billikopf (Human Resource consultant)

- Visit to 10 commercial dairy farms
- Visit to the University of California's Agricultural Issues Centre.

Vancouver, Canada

16th – 23 October

- Visited with Ron Barker and colleagues who are currently developing a qualification for dairy apprentices.

Columbus and other surrounding countys', Ohio – Ohio State University (OSU)

23rd – 30th October

- Visited with Dr Norman St Pierre OSU Extension Specialist Dairy Management.
- Toured the OSU dairy facilities and other farm enterprises
- Visited Dee Jepsen Program Director Agricultural Safety and Health
- Visited Ohio State University Columbus Campus, where I attended a two day animal science in-service
- Visited 20 commercial dairy farms with Dianne Shoemaker, Ernie Oelker, Tom Noyes and Chris Zoller (County agents)

State College, Pennsylvania – Penn State University

30th October – 8th November

- Visited with Richard Stup (Human Resource Specialist), Lisa Holden (Associate Professor) and Larry Muller (Dairy Nutrition and Management Consultant) who lead the Dairy Alliance team.
- Visited with James Beierlein (Professor of Agricultural Economics) with Penn State University
- 10 Farm Visits with Richard Stup and Lisa Holden

Gainesville, Florida – University of Florida

8th November – 20th November

- Hosted by Albert De Vries (Assistant Professor Dairy Systems Management) and David Bray (Dairy Extension specialist)
- Visited 15 commercial Dairy farms
- Visited North Florida Holsteins – Commercial Dairy farm milking 4000
- Visited with David Summerall. David is co-owner in 10 dairy farms across the USA

Hamilton, Tauranga and Whakatane, NZ

22nd November – 5th December

- Visited Dexcel, Hamilton
- Visited Geoff Taylor (Human Resource Management team leader, Dexcel)
- Visited with Kerry Ryan (Human Resource Management Consultant)
- Visited with John Fegan (Human Resource Management Consultant)
- Visited 7 commercial dairy farms



Photo: Farm hand feeding young heifers

Experiences of a Churchill Fellow

California

California is the biggest milk producing state in the USA, supplying about 21% of the nations milk supply. There are about 2125 dairies in California. Modesto is the most concentrated dairy area in California. There are over 250 dairies in this area; however the average herd size is 800 head. 90% of the milking cows are housed in free stall barns and the dry stock and heifers are in corrals or dry lots.

Therefore this dairy industry relies heavily on labour. The majority of employees on these farms are Mexican or Hispanic. Language is the greatest issue when managing labour on these farms.

Gregory Encina Billikopf – University of California, Davis

Gregory Billikopf is a specialist in Human Resource management and has concentrated his agricultural extension research and teaching efforts into employee selection, compensation, performance appraisal, discipline and termination, supervision, interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution and negotiation skills.

Employee Selection

“Hiring the right person for the job maybe the most critical management decision you will make.”

The process of employing a new worker can be as complicated as you like. However if the time is taken to ensure the process is comprehensive and effective, then the likelihood of employing the best applicant for the job is increased.

One of the strategies employed by some Californian dairy farmers is to perform tests on prospective employees.

These tests are used to measure the applicants’ qualifications. The tests can be practical, written or oral. Tests can measure knowledge, ability, skills, aptitude, attitudes, honesty and personality.

Examples of tests include: tractor driving, mixing teat dip and general animal handling skills.

The type of position the farm is looking for will determine how extensive the tests should be. A relief milker may only need to show he/she has cow sense and is able to drive a motorbike; on the other hand a prospective manger may need to show he/she can competently use a cow management computer program.

This type of strategy to employ labour is not well used in Australia. Therefore there is considerable scope for the use of tests to be researched and examined in the Australian dairy industry.

There are a number of steps involved in good employee selection. Table one below is a practical, yet comprehensive approach to selection:

1. Decide What you need	2. Design the selection process	3. Exchange information with applicants	4. Bring new employee aboard
Determine whether an employee is needed	Determine which selection tools to use	conduct a pre-interview	Make offers and convey rejections
Complete a job analysis, description and specification	Prepare questions and situations for written and practical tests, the interview and reference checks	Review applicant application and resumes	Ensure prospective employee undergoes a physical examine
Weight the job specification items	assign the necessary objectives the employee must accomplish to obtain the job	<i>Conduct tests</i>	Conduct orientation
Determine the recruitment strategy	Provide a realistic job advertisement	Conduct Interviews	
		Check References	
		Conduct a final interview (if needed)	

Table 1: compiled from Labour Management in Agriculture, Gregory Encina Billikopf

Canada

There are 18,000 dairy farms in Canada; however the average herd size is about 60 head. Over the last five years the industry has experienced many challenges, these challenges are very similar to our own. They include meeting environmental requirements, surviving a market that is increasingly competitive on a global scale, increasing input costs for such things as feed (grain), equipment and labour, with decreasing revenue and dealing with increasing competition for land use (e.g., urban push, increasing land values, etc.).

In Vancouver there are 679 dairy farms, with an average herd size of 113 cows. The average cow produces 29 litres/day, this equals 8839 litres/cow/year.

Ron Barker – Ministry for Agriculture and Food - British Columbia

Although the dairy industry in Vancouver is relatively small to other parts of Canada, Ron Barker and his team are currently working on developing training for young people to enter the dairy industry. In Canada and the USA there seems to be numerous university courses a prospective student may take on dairy. However the industry lacks the opportunity for people who do not want to attend university or any form of technical training. These types of training may include apprenticeship schemes or simply certain certificates in dairy farming. The aim of the training is to attract people into the industry who have never thought of dairy as a career or considered entering the dairy industry and for whom university was out of reach for them.

Topics these courses cover include:

- Milking management
- Mastitis
- ATV motorbike and tractor driving
- Herd recording
- Basic fencing

Although the training has only proceeded in the last six months, interest has been large and further courses are in the planning stages.

Ohio

In the state of Ohio there are 5000 dairy farms, milking over 260,000 cows. The average dairy farm milks 70 cows. The industry employs over 14,000 people annually.

The Amish community represents the majority of the smaller farms, often only milking ten cows. This community lives simplicity, no electricity, no modern day vehicles and no milking machines.

In Ohio dairy cows are housed 365 days of the year and are fed a predominately corn silage ration. Therefore the reliance on labour to milk, grow feed and bed free stall barns is enormous. In Ohio two labour units are required for 200 cows, where as in Australia only one labour unit is used. Although the majority of farms in Ohio still use mostly family labour, there are a growing number of farms milking in excess of 1000 cows. The majority of the labour force is American, however over the last couple of years farmers are looking towards employing Hispanic labour.

Ohio State University

Animal Science In-service

This was a two day update for all county agents (county agents would be equivalent to Australia's extension officers in State Agriculture Departments). Topics for the two days include:

- Fly control around livestock facilities

- Radio frequency identification update
- Amino acid research with dairy cattle
- National animal identification.

This was a very informative session and gave me the opportunity to talk some of the county agents working with dairy farms.

Diane Shoemaker and Colleagues (OSU Dairy Extension)

During my time spent with Diane and colleagues I had the opportunity to discuss many aspects of the dairy industry in Ohio. The dairy extension team are undertaking a number of programs to assist dairy farmers with labour management. Such programs include:

- Relief milker training courses – the objective of this course is to train new employees to milk and perform simple tasks on a dairy farm. The course is given in English and Spanish. One aspect of this course I was particularly interested in was the session on communication with your employer. The aim of the session is to give employees the skills needed to communicate effectively and efficiently.
- ‘How to hire’ - Steps to improving your hiring skills.

“I want to give you an opportunity”

This is a workshop for dairy farm managers and looks at hiring employees. Topics included in the workshop are:

- Getting ready to hire
- **Job analysis**
- Job descriptions
- Building a pool of applicants
- Interviewing skills
- Training of employees

One of the sessions in this course is **Job analysis** this is a systematic way of gathering and analysing information about the content of a job, human requirements, and the context in which the job is performed. To perform a job analysis the steps involved are:

1. Collect background information such as mission, goals, objectives, and organization chart and employees experiences with job analysis and job description.
2. Select a new position or position that is changing
3. Collect information – some combination of
 - supervisor knowledge
 - employee interviews
 - employee questionnaire
 - employee keep a daily log for the week

4. Review information with rest of the management team and employees to gain credibility for the process
5. Finalize a list of duties and responsibilities
6. Write a job description
7. List the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities.

This can be a lengthy process, however it does give the farmer a better understanding of the position which needs to be created or filled.

Highlights from Farm Visits in Ohio

Bill and Debbie Grammer – Grammer Farms. Wayne County, Ohio

Bill and Debbie milk 400 cows doing an average of 58lbs/day (30 litres/day). They employ 12 full time staff and have just started to employ Hispanic labour. Their top priority at this stage is to learn Spanish, however in the mean time they have employed a consultant who visits once a week to deal with issues that arise, and communicate between the farm manager and Hispanic staff.

Some strategies put in place by the Grammers to manage staff include:

- Monday morning meetings
- Spend individual time with employees
- Farm owners and employees eat together at least once a week
- Boots, gloves and work shirts supplied

Andreas farm – Sugarcreek, Ohio

Brothers William and Dan Andreas milk 1000 cows and employ 27 employees. The Andreas brothers have a many strategies in place to assist with labour management:

- Employ a full time human resource manager
- A monthly newsletter for employee, this includes staff news and farm statistics
- Have an employee of the month who receives a pay rise
- Produces weekly statistics for employee on how the farm is performing in terms of milk production and number of sick cows.

Andreas farm is continually taking in job applications and has a waiting list of over 50 people. It has a great reputation for being a good employer.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania State University (PSU) – Dairy Alliance team

‘Good managers are made not born’

Richard Stup (Human Resource Specialist) and the Dairy Alliance team aim towards developing educational program for progressive dairy producers, their employees and their advisors. The programs focus on five subject areas, business management, information management, nutrient management, workforce training and human resource management. The Dairy Alliance Team has developed a number of programs:

- *Managing the Hispanic workforce* – this workshop aims to provide managers working with Hispanics the skills necessary to overcome cultural and language barriers so they can create a safe, productive workplace.
- *Managing People Today*- this workshop equips managers with the practical skills needed to supervise others.
- *Planning for Tomorrow, how to develop your workforce for future success* – participants in this workshop identify strengths and weakness in people management; explore strategies for business succession; learn how to develop skills in their current employees; and how to sharpen their own leadership skills.

Richard Stup has also performed research on empowering employees. Un-empowered employees just follow the boss’s orders, they come to work do their job and then leave when the job is finished. They have no concern for goals, because the boss doesn’t share that information with them. Any changes are the responsibility of the boss. Employees in this situation are unmotivated and turn over is high. On the other hand empowered employees are well aware of purpose and performance goals of the dairy business. They have team spirit of working together to accomplish challenging goals. They are also information seekers and learn about dairy management from various sources of information such as magazines and educational meetings. They bring back fresh ideas to the dairy. They even make decisions and plan how to implement the best ideas in their own work duties so greater goals can be achieved. An empowered workplace will have a highly motivated and stable workforce that attracts high quality employees.

Table two shows the four stages of empowerment, this demonstrates the movement of responsibility from the management to employees.

Management Control

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Management decides and then informs staff	Management gets staff input before deciding	Employees decide and recommend	Employees decide and act
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Telling - Directing - Management is accountable and responsible - Management is in control - Team members are told about decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selling - Coaching - Employees ideas harnessed as input to decisions - Team member are consulted and have input into decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating - Facilitating - Accountabilities are shared - Team members must consult management before acting to get approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delegating - Employees are accountable and responsible - Team members can set direction and take action without approval

Table 2: Bens I. (2000) Facilitating with ease: A step by step guidebook.

Very few managers will reach stage four, however many will reach stage three, employees will be actively involved in the everyday running of the dairy operation and will only go to management for final approval. This gives the manager time to tackle the big issues.

The dairy alliance team are working towards developing workshops and management strategies to allow managers to move along the continuum.

Other strategies that the PSU Dairy Alliance team believe are essential to good labour management are:

- Use of good job descriptions
- Development of standard operating procedures on farm
- Performance appraisals

It is important to the Dairy Alliance Team that dairy managers continue to improve their skills in labour management to ensure that the Pennsylvania dairy industry continues to grow in its capacity to be good employers and attract good quality employees.

Highlights from farm visits in Pennsylvania

Although I visited many farms in Pennsylvania, one farm really stood out for me.

Red Knob Farm – A modern Family Farm, Managed by Andy Griswold

This farm milks 400 cows and employs seven full time staff. Management of the staff is comprehensive and efficient. The manager has the respect of the Hispanic staff and

has taken on the responsibility to learn Spanish. There are a number of strategies employed to assist with labour management. These include

- Employee performance evaluation which not only appraises the employee's ability to perform duties but also the attitude of the employee.
- Incentives provided
- Job descriptions developed for all members of staff, including management.
- A *Daily Manager Report* used.

Daily Manager Report

This is a really simple tool, but it works very well. The idea of this report is for each manager (eg. Parlour manager and feed manager) to write down their major accomplishments for the day, this maybe anything from getting a herd through the parlour in record time, to finding a case of mastitis. The report also includes major challenges, planned changes, employee review and ideas, thoughts and suggestions. The report is completed after each shift and then given to the dairy management to read. The report is good way to keep the dairy manager informed and allows for any challenges or problem to be solved in an efficient manner.

Florida

Over the last decade Florida's dairy industry has been decreasing in dairy farm numbers. However dairy herd sizes are increasing therefore becoming increasing reliant on an outside workforce. This workforce is predominately Hispanic and very transient, most Hispanic employees are working on dairy farms to save money for their families back in their home country and then leaving the US to return home.

University of Florida - Albert De Vries (Assistant Professor Dairy Systems Management) and David Bray (Dairy Extension specialist)

Due to the four hurricanes that passed through Florida, a few weeks before I arrived, the dairy farm visits that my host had arranged for me were cancelled.

David Bray (Dairy Extension Specialist) has been working for the Florida dairy industry for 30 years and has worked with a number of dairy farm managers trying to improve their labour management.

Highlights from Florida's dairy farm visits

North Florida Holsteins – owned by Donald Bennick and operated by David Temple

Over the past five years North Florida Holsteins has moved from a predominately American workforce to the majority of the workforce now being Hispanic. Some of the strategies management uses to manage labour include:

- Treating everybody as equals
- Individuality – know their name
- *Provide incentives*
- Deal with conflict straight away and then leave it behind.
- Managers work with the employees on a regular basis, eg. Milk in the shed

Providing Incentives to Employees

The concept of providing financial incentives to employees is not commonly practiced in Australia; however it is widely used in the USA dairy industry. This is a good strategy to tap into employee motivation and reward performance. The majority of incentives are performance based and are directly related to the dairy shed. Most incentive schemes are pay based and encourage the employee to reach a certain target by providing an increase in the take home income of the employee.

An example of this is a Somatic Cell Count incentive. The employees are encouraged to maintain a certain somatic cell count and if this is achieved in a fixed period of time then the employees receive a bonus amount of money.

This is simplest form of incentives, more complicated schemes are used, however these tend to be for management and not for employees.

In order for incentives to be effective motivational tools for improving performance, the incentives must be important to the employee. Offering flexible working hours to some employees might be more valued than offering a small per hour increase. This depends on the individual employees circumstances.

When designing incentives it's important to ask these three questions:

1. Will this incentive be valued by the employee?
2. Is the incentive directly tied to outcomes that improve profitability?
3. Do employee's receiving the incentive directly control all areas related to the desired outcome for the incentive?

Incentives need to be reassessed regularly to ensure that the target is realistic and achievable and to ensure the target is challenging and that the target being reached is constantly improved.

Hamilton and Tauranga, New Zealand

Dairy is New Zealand's largest industry; the average herd size has doubled in the last 20 years to 302 cows in 2003/2004. While average herd size is increasing, the number of herd had decreased to 12,751. Therefore the dairy industry is a significant employer and continues to be world leaders in Human Resource Management on dairy farms.

The New Zealand dairy industry can be considered our major competition on the world market. However it can also be a learning opportunity.

Geoff Taylor, Product Developer, People for Dairying – Dexcel

Dexcel Ltd is the research and extension arm of New Zealand's dairy industry, incorporating the former Dairying Research Corporation and the consulting officer service of Livestock Improvement.

Dexcel is 100% owned and funded by all New Zealand dairy farmers.

Geoff Taylor and the Dexcel's People for Dairying team have developed a HR Toolkit, this was launched in 2004 and aims at providing farms with practical tools and information to help manage people employed on dairy farms. Although the HR Toolkit has only recently been available to farmers it seems to be making an impact. One farmer described the HR Toolkit as "the equivalent of the invention of the rotary shed"

Following the launch of the HR Toolkit, there are a number of farmer workshops planned. These workshops will include topics such as staff selection, training and communication.

Strategic Framework for Dairy Farming's Future

The New Zealand dairy industry has come together as a whole and after wide consultation has adopted a strategic framework. The vision for this framework is that New Zealand will be the world's best in Dairying.

Within this framework there are a number of goals pertaining to human resources. These goals are:

- Improve the status of dairy farming as a preferred career
 - o Monitor the human resource needs of the dairy industry and the satisfaction of these needs over time.
- Ensure that training and development opportunities are provided which attract and retain high calibre people in the dairy industry so that:
 - o Productivity of each farming full time equivalent is improved by 25% by 2014
 - o Best practise employment standards are adopted
 - o Secondary school students are well aware of agricultural career opportunities
 - o Intake into tertiary agricultural courses is improved by 100% by 2014
 - o Vocational training is undertaken by at least 15% of all farmers (including employees) annually.
- Innovation and excellence will continue to be recognized and rewarded by way of suitable scholarships, study grants, awards and seed funding.

This is a great example of an industry working together to achieve a common goal. The Australian dairy industry could benefit from this type of co-operation.

John Fegan and Co – Rural Training and Recruitment

John is one of the leading HR consultants in New Zealand. John is the business of rural recruitment and works with some of the top dairy farms in New Zealand to find good quality staff. The idea is to match the people first not the skills, if dairy farm owners cannot communicate effectively with their employees due to personality clashes then it doesn't matter how qualified and capable the employee is, the relationship will fall apart.

Window to Dairying in NZ

John and his colleagues have established a company called, ATR Solutions. (Attract, Train, Retain). ATR Solutions with the help of funding from Dairy Insight (farmer levies) have developed a program called 'Window to Dairying in NZ' Window to dairying is a high school program, which is targeted at improving the perceptions of high school students and their careers advisors of a career in dairying. The program focuses on two events:

The Careers Day Event

This provides opportunities for attendees to go on farm for a day and find out what a career in dairying has to offer. They talk with young people who are working on farm and see a snap shot of the high degree of professionalism and knowledge our top farmers must have to succeed.

On the day the attendees get to meet a range of people who can assist them in planning and developing their career, with a strong emphasis on training opportunities that exist in their region.

The Agricultural Skills Competition

This provides a chance for students to compete in a fun competition with other schools and demonstrate the skills they can learn at school. Events include fencing, tractor skills and budgeting skills.

This program is a great way to encourage students to look closer at a job in dairying and helps build the perception that dairying does not need to be the career of last resort.

Kerry Ryan and Associates Ltd – Consultants to Primary Industry

Kerry Ryan has spent over 20 years selecting managing staff for farming, corporate and his own business. As a consultant to agribusiness working internationally he has used his unique insight to develop practical systems for recruiting, training and retaining staff.

Kerry is a strong believer in matching personalities, when a new client begins with Kerry they are required to complete a personality profile. This will determine their personality type and will be used in making employee selections.

Personality Profiling

There are four motivational drives and everybody is born with a combination of the four. They are:

- Authority seeker
- Attention seeker
- Agreement seeker
- Accuracy seeker

Depending on the percentage of each of these four behaviours, our personality is determined. Table three below describes the traits of each motivational drive.

Authority Seeker	Attention Seeker	Agreement Seeker	Accuracy Seeker
Assertive	Playful	Competent	Intellectual
Materialistic	garrulous	Watcher	Reasoning
Dynamic	Vitality	Prudent	Principles
Fearless	Talkers	Unassertive	Perfectionist
Born leaders	Fun	Non aggressive	Logical
Opinionated	Talk loudly	Listeners	Possessive
Controlling	Persuasive	Routine	Criticises
Competitive	Story tellers	Procrastinators	Serious
Practical	Counsellor	Patience	Accurate
Risk takers	Need to be Socially accepted	Enjoys others company	Analytical

Table 3: Compiled from How to Speed Read People, Des Moss

Everybody is a combination of these four personalities. Although we have a bit of each in us, there will be a type that dominates over the rest of the types. For example someone maybe an authority seeker but also have the traits of an attention seeker.

To use personality profiling when selecting an employee, it can be very helpful ensuring that the personalty of the employer and employee compliment each other. For example the employer is an attention speaker and the employee is an agreement seeker. This relationship will work well because agreement seekers have their own high standards of production but will be inspired by the attention seekers enthusiasm and respond accordingly. Conforming to standards act as a guideline for agreement seekers. This combination will communicate and encourage each other to reach targets and meet deadlines. However an attention seeker and an attention seeker are a recipe for diaster. Basically attention seekers will not share the stage with anybody.

Personality profiling can be a very helpful tool to help dairy farmer understand themselves and their staff. Although it is not without its hurdles, one being the ‘touchy feely’ nature of the process. Many dairy farmers will struggle with this and it may lead to unnecessary stress and confrontation. However if the process is operated by a trained professional this matter should not arise.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Employee Selection is the first critical step in Human Resource Management. If dairy farmers are making mistakes and are not selecting the right people to fit the position they are trying to fill, then the relationship between employer and employee will become strained. In most situations the outcome of this will be the employee leaving the workplace by being terminated or of his/her own will.
Recommendation: promote the benefits of good employee selection and develop extension information for dissemination to dairy farmers and other agricultural operations.
2. The concept of conducting tests for prospective employees to complete is used by some large employers; the tests are used to assess the applicant's ability to perform the task of the job.
Recommendation: investigate the opportunity for the usefulness of using employee tests in Australia.
3. It is important for managers to understand that it is essential to build an empowered workforce. Motivated employees are more productive and will strive to reach farm goals. 'Good Managers are made not born'
Recommendation: Develop an extension program for managers to build their capacity to motivate and empower their staff.
4. The use of incentives is widely used in the USA, incentives can be income based or employees can be encouraged to attend company BBQ's to build a team environment.
Recommendation: investigate the use of incentives in Australia and develop some useful guidelines for dairy farmers.
5. How to attract people into the dairy industry? Is constantly being asked by industry leaders and dairy farmers. New Zealand's Window to Dairying program is one way of educating high school students about a career in dairying.
Recommendation: Approach Dairy Australia to support the possibility of developing a program similar to Window to Dairying for high schools in dairying areas.
6. Getting the right person to fill a position on a dairy farm is the first step in building effective working relationships. Personality profiling is one tool that can be used to ensure dairy farmers are making the right selections when employing.
Recommendation: investigate the opportunity of working with industry leaders in Human Resource Management to develop Workshop/guidelines on using personality profiling.
7. Working with the whole of industry to collaborate any findings and project development is important; the benefits of this can be seen in the New Zealand dairy industry.

Recommendation: with the NSW DPI Dairy Business Management and Human resources technical team continue to be involved in industry projects on HRM and facilitate the NSW Dairy industry Labour management group.



Photo: Milkers pre dipping milking cows

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