

# BC Dairy Producers Human Resource Tool Kit



## NOTES

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# 1

## GETTING STARTED

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLE

The first step in human resource planning is understanding your leadership and management style and your impact on those with whom you work. We all have strengths and personal characteristics that support effective working and supervisory relationships with employees. We also have some weaknesses that stop us from meeting business goals and prevent effective interpersonal relations.

#### **Benefits of understanding your leadership style**

If you understand your leadership style you can also understand the impact you have on your employees and others with whom you work. You can learn to adapt your leadership style to best meet your employees' needs, experience, abilities and knowledge. Miscommunication and frustration often result when leadership styles don't match employee and situational needs. For example, if an owner/manager uses a directing style of management with mature and independent employees,

these employees will feel over supervised and unable to use their knowledge and experience to work independently.

#### **Assessing your leadership style**

Try the following Leadership and Management Style Quiz to assess your preferred style. Once you have completed the Leadership and Management Style Quiz, move to the situational leadership table, and consider how you might be able to adapt your leadership and management style based on employee and situational needs.

All leadership and management styles are valid, and no single style is better than another. The key to effective human resource management and leadership is the ability to use all the leadership styles depending on the needs of the situation and individual. Knowing the style you prefer helps you identify how you may modify your style in different situations and with different employees.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLE QUIZ

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🎧 When you're answering the questions, don't dwell too long on finding the 'right' answer. Think about how you normally lead and manage your employees, and respond with your most common style.

1. I have the final say over significant decisions made on my farm

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

2. When there are group conflicts, I don't get involved. Group members should work together to fix their own problems

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Never

3. I consider suggestions made by employees.

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

4. I tell employees exactly how to do specific tasks?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

5. I leave employees to resolve problems on their own:

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Always
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Often

6. I carefully watch employees to be sure they perform tasks properly.

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

7. I accept input and ideas from employees.

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

8. I ask for advice from employees when things go wrong.

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

9. When there are problems in the group, I work with members to arrive at a reasonable resolution.

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

10. I allow group members to carry out their role with little of my input.

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Never

## Leadership Quiz Scoring

**Look at the scoring for each question, and add up the total scores for your responses. When you have your total score, go to the leadership style continuum and see where you fall on scoring scale.**

1. I have the final say over significant decisions made on my farm

- ☐ Always (1)
- ☐ Often (2)
- ☐ Rarely (3)
- ☐ Never (4)

2. When there are employee conflicts, I don't get involved.

- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Always (4)
- ☐ Often (3)
- ☐ Never (1)

3. I consider suggestions made by employees.

- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ Always (3)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Never (1)

4. I tell employees exactly how to do specific tasks.

- ☐ Never (4)
- ☐ Rarely (3)
- ☐ Often (2)
- ☐ Always (1)

5. I leave employees to resolve problems on their own:

- ☐ Rarely (3)
- ☐ Always (1)
- ☐ Never (4)
- ☐ Often (2)



6. I carefully watch employees to be sure they perform tasks properly.

- ☐ Always (1)
- ☐ Often (2)
- ☐ Rarely (3)
- ☐ Never (4)

7. I accept input and ideas from employees.

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Often (3)
- ☐ Always (4)

8. I ask for advice from employees when things go wrong.

- ☐ Always (4)
- ☐ Often (3)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Never (1)

9. When there are problems in the group, I work with members to arrive at a reasonable resolution.

- ☐ Always (4)
- ☐ Often (3)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Never (1)

10. I allow group members to carry out their role with little of my input.

- ☐ Rarely (1)
- ☐ Always (2)
- ☐ Often (3)
- ☐ Never (4)

## Your Leadership and Management Style

Add up your results and note your score below the appropriate section below. Then review the four different styles outlined below, and consider your preferred style.

**40 (Delegate)**      **30 (Support)**      **20 (Coach)**      **10 (Direct)**

**Direct** - Leaders define the roles and tasks of the employee and supervise them closely. Decisions are made by the leader and announced and communication is largely one way, from leader to employee.

**Coach** - Leaders still define roles and tasks but seek ideas and suggestions from the employee. Decisions remain the leader's prerogative, but communication is much more two way.

**Support** - Leaders pass day-to-day decisions, such as task allocation and processes, to employees. The leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control is with the employee.

**Delegate** - Leaders are still involved in decisions and problem solving, but control is with the employee. The employee decides when and how the leader will be involved.

## SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP - MATCHING YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE TO YOUR EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Now that you know your preferred style of leadership and management, consider ways in which you can adapt your style to meet the needs of your employees and the various situations that may arise.

**Directing** leadership works in some situations. For example, you need to decide which cows to cull. Your employee is new, and hasn't previously made this kind of decision. The first time you make the decision, you explain why you're making a decision and then make the decision with little or no involvement from your employee.

If you have a group of employees with limited experience in your operation a **coaching** style of leadership would be most effective. If you're moving from two to three milkings per day, the final decision still remains with you, but everyone affected has an opportunity to provide input. You will coach your employees and seek their opinions and ideas.

You have a team of skilled and experienced employees who are able to make independent decisions about their daily

tasks and routine work. You'll use a **supporting** leadership style by asking for input from your employees and supporting them to help you make the best decision for your operation.

*“Situational leadership means using the leadership style that best fits the situation and the needs and abilities of your employee and employees.”*

You have a team of employees who have been making decisions with your support. You want them to move to making more complex decisions so that you can delegate more decision making. You give your employees the information about moving from two to three milkings, and use a **delegating** style and move the decision to your employees.

	High competence		Low or variable competence	
High confidence	Experienced at the job, and comfortable with their own ability to do it well. May be even more skilled than the leader.	Usually long-term employees with lots of experience and knowledge in many parts of the job.	Confident in their own ability but with few skills in the industry or on your operation.	Confident in their own skills but may be relatively new to the industry, farm or work required.
Low confidence	Experienced and capable, but may lack the confidence to work independently, or the motivation to work well and quickly.	Have experience and knowledge in the job, but may be less confident about their ability to take on some new tasks or decisions.	Generally lacking the specific skills and confidence required for the job.	Have little or no experience at your farm or in the industry, and are not confident in their ability to take on new jobs or tasks.

## DEVELOPING A HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN

A human resource (HR) plan is a road map that you develop to help you reach your human resource and business goals and objectives. The HR plan identifies important challenges, opportunities and includes action plans for each element. It supports your short- and long-term business goals.

### Benefits

Whether you have a small family-based operation or many employees, preparing a HR plan helps you, your family and employees clarify how you want your operation to run. It may be clear to you and your employees how many cows you milk, and what your milk quota is. However, without clearly communicating your long-term human resource plan your business goals may be much less clear.

### Your HR Plan

The HR plan can help your operation become more efficient and effective in the following ways:

- Culture - how you want your employees to behave with each other, and with you
- Organization - who is responsible for what parts of the operation, and what jobs and tasks can be completed with or without supervision
- People - what skills you expect each employee to possess, and what skills are required to move up the career ladder
- Human resource systems - the everyday ways that you communicate, train, reward employees and help them

understand their career development opportunities.

Your plan does not require days of work and documentation. It does require some time to write down your objectives, actions, costs, time frames and outcomes. Ideally, you would obtain employee input to your plan, and then you would make copies available to all employees. As you complete objectives and actions you can update the plan, and share these updates in conversations, staff meetings or by posting a copy on a bulletin board or in the milking parlour.

## SAMPLE HR PLAN - January 10

Objective	Action	Cost	Time frames	Measurable outcomes How will you know you've been successful?
To attract and retain employees	Provide increased benefits to employees	Medical and dental plan (cost to be identified)	Research costs of medical/ dental programs by Oct. 15/09	When we have researched, discussed with employees, and decided on the feasibility of a medical/dental plan - Feb. 15
To increase the responsibility of employees - so they require less supervision	Provide job descriptions to all employees  Coach employees to take on more responsibility	Manager to prepare job descriptions - 8 hours X \$25/ hour  Producer and Manager to coach employees	Job descriptions completed by Nov. 1/09  Each employee receives 2 hours of coaching each week until Dec. 1/09	By Jan. 30 each employee will take on additional job responsibilities
Health and safety	Contact FARSHA to help us develop a health and safety plan	Producer to talk with FARHSA to define time requirements  Producer, manager and employee to participate in developing the plan	By Sept. 15/09  Complete by Jan 1/10	By Feb. 26 we will have completed a Health & Safety plan

## NOTES

# 2

## MANDATORY AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT

No matter the size, location or type of farm you operate, the Employment Standards Act outlines your legal obligations when dealing with your employees. The Act sets out working conditions that apply to both full and part-time workers, no matter how many hours they work.

#### Employment Standards Act Benefits

The Employment Standards Act establishes standards for fair treatment of employees. The Act helps ensure that small and medium-sized businesses remain competitive by setting province-wide minimum employment standards. Adopting these employment standards is not only required, but can help develop and maintain good employer-employee relationships.

#### Producer/employer responsibilities

**Minimum wage:** The minimum wage in British Columbia is \$8 per hour and applies to everyone paid hourly, salary, commission or other

incentives except for those in the First Job Entry program. The First Job/Entry Level minimum wage is \$6 per hour for anyone who has no paid work experience. After an individual has worked 500 hours at \$6/hour, their rate must be increased to the standard minimum wage of \$8/hour.

**Meal breaks:** Employees are entitled to a 30-minute unpaid meal break after 5 hours of work. If an employee is required to work or be available for work during a meal break, they must be paid for the meal break. Employers may offer coffee breaks at their discretion.

**Paydays and payroll records:** All employees must be paid at least twice a month. A pay period cannot be longer than 16 days. All wages earned in a pay period must be paid within eight days after the end of the pay period.

- Employees must receive a written or electronic pay stub each pay day showing details about hours worked, rate(s) of pay, earnings and deductions.
- An employee must be paid in full within 48 hours after the employer ends the employment or within six days if the employee quits. This time is by the clock and the calendar, not business hours or business days.



**Hours of work and overtime:** Farm workers are exempt from the hours of work and overtime provisions of the Act. This means that there are no restrictions on maximum hours of work per week. However, if an employee is called to work, they must be paid for two hours of work, even if they work less than two hours.

- Producers must ensure that their employees do not work excessive hours harmful to the employees' health and safety.

**Averaging agreements:** An employer and employee can agree to average scheduled work hours over a period of 1, 2, 3 or 4 weeks. Averaging agreements must be in writing and have a start and end date.

**Statutory holidays:** Producers may offer statutory holiday pay at their discretion.

**Employing young people aged 12 – 14 years:** Written consent from a parent or guardian is required before employing anyone under 14 years of age. Children under 14 must also work under the direct supervision someone 19 years of age or older. In order to hire someone under 12 years of age, permission must be obtained from the Director of Employment Standards. There are limits on the number of hours per day, and at what times of day young people can work.

**Severance pay:** After three months of consecutive employment, employees may be eligible for compensation, written working notice, or a combination of the two as follows:

- After 3 months - 1 week,

- After 12 months - 2 weeks,
- After 3 years - 1 week for each completed year of employment, to a maximum of 8 weeks.

Severance pay is not required when an employee quits, retires or is terminated for just cause. Additional notice or pay is required if 50 or more employees are terminated within a two-month period at a single location.

**Annual vacation:** After completing one year of employment employees are entitled to two weeks vacation. After five years, an employee is entitled to three weeks vacation. Vacations must be scheduled in periods of one or more weeks, unless the employee requests otherwise. Vacation must be taken within 12 months of being earned.

**Vacation pay:** After completing one year of employment, vacation pay must be at least 4% of the employee's total earnings from the previous year. After five consecutive years of employment, vacation pay increases to 6%. A person who is employed for less than one year is not entitled to a vacation, but must be paid 4% vacation pay on termination of employment. Vacation pay is not payable if the employment term is 5 calendar days or less.

**Leave from work:** Producers are required to provide specific unpaid leaves. Employees should give as much notice as possible and provide sufficient information so that employers fully understand the reason for the leave. Employees are not required to give notice in writing or disclose personal or private

information. An employee cannot be terminated or have a condition of their employment changed because of a leave or pregnancy without the employee's written consent.

- **Pregnancy Leave:** A pregnant employee can take up to 17 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave. This leave may be extended by up to 6 additional weeks if she is unable to return to work for reasons related to the birth or termination of the pregnancy.
- **Parental Leave:** A birth mother who has taken pregnancy leave is entitled to an additional 35 consecutive weeks, for a total unpaid leave of 52 weeks. A birth mother who has not taken pregnancy leave is entitled to take up to 37 weeks of unpaid leave. A birth father or an adopting parent is entitled to up to 37 consecutive weeks of unpaid leave. This leave may be extended by up to five weeks if the child requires an additional period of parental care.

Birth parents must give their employers at least four weeks written notice of their intention to take parental leave.

- **Family Responsibility Leave:** An employee can take up to five days of unpaid leave in each employment year to attend to the care, health or education of a child in their care, or to the care or health of any other member of the employee's immediate family.
- **Compassionate Care Leave:** Employees can take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave within a 26 week period to care for a gravely ill family member. Employees must obtain a medical certificate which

states that the family member is gravely ill with a significant risk of death within 26 weeks.

- **Bereavement Leave:** Employees are entitled to up to three days of unpaid leave on the death of an immediate family member. This leave may be for used for purposes other than to attend a funeral.
- **Jury duty:** An employee who is required to attend Court as a juror is considered to be on unpaid leave for the period of their jury duty.

#### **Temporary foreign workers:**

Temporary foreign workers must be treated as any other employee. They cannot be charged a fee for job placement. Employers cannot require them to stay for a set period of time, or charge business or recruitment costs or deduct these costs from their pay cheques.

**Resolving disputes:** A self-help kit is available to help employees/ employers resolve disputes. The kit is available at all Employment Standards Offices, and online.

#### **What happens if you don't comply?**

Employees can make a complaint to the Director of Employment Standards. The Director will investigate the complaint and make a decision which could include dismissing the claim, remedying the situation, or imposing a monetary penalty.

#### **References:**

BC Employment Standards

## MANDATORY PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Producers are required to deduct income tax, Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Employment Insurance (EI) from the each employee's earnings. These deductions must be sent with your share of the premiums for CPP and EI to the Canada Revenue Agency. You must also report each employee's income and deductions by the end of February, for the previous year.

Other deductions may be made if the employee agrees in writing. Producers cannot deduct any business costs from employee wages such as cash shortages, breakage, or damage to farm property.

### Benefits of keeping accurate records

Accurate employment records are a valuable management tool. They can help you make critical decisions about your farms labour needs, and are useful in human resource planning. Accurate records can also promote good working relationships with your staff. Employees appreciate accurate payroll statements, delivered on time.

Accurate records also ensure that:

- Each employee is paid accurately for each pay period.
- Correct deductions are withheld from each employee's earnings,
- Revenue Canada requirements are being met.

### Producer/employer responsibilities

In addition to deducting income tax, CPP and EI premiums from employees, producers are required to

keep accurate records for payroll, personnel and Records of Employment. All employee records must be kept in English at your principal place of business for six years after employment ends.

### Payroll records requirements:

- Employee name, date of birth, job title, telephone number and residential address, and Social Insurance Number (SIN). Employees without a SIN must apply for one immediately and provide you with the number.
- The date employment began, wage rate, and how they are paid (hourly, salary), hours worked, benefits paid, and gross and net wages for each pay period with all wage deductions and the reason for each deduction.
- Dates of statutory holidays (if applicable), and annual vacations taken, amounts paid and days and amounts of vacation owing.
- Averaging agreement information (if applicable).
- Taxable benefits received, including board and lodging, rent-free or low-cost housing, personal use of a truck or car, subsidized meals or gifts. Taxable benefits must be declared by employees as income.

### Personnel records requirements:

- Notes from the hiring process, job descriptions, application or employee resume, interview and reference check notes, job offer letter, performance evaluations, education and training, grievances, and any disciplinary actions.
- Employees may want to see their personnel file and the file may also be made public in a legal action. Please include only important

relevant information, recorded in a professional manner.

### **Record of Employment requirements:**

- Employers must issue a Record of Employment (ROE) within five calendar days of either the employee's interruption of earnings, or the date you became aware of the interruption. An interruption can occur when an employee:
  - Quits their job,
  - Is laid off or terminated,
  - Has had, or is anticipated to have seven consecutive calendar days without both work and insurable earnings.

### **What happens if you don't comply?**

If you don't maintain and provide adequate records or comply with CRA payroll requirements, you may be assessed a penalty and fined from \$1,000 to \$25,000, or fined and imprisoned for a term of up to 12 months. Interest may be applied to an amount owing from the day your payment was due, and is compounded daily.

## WORKSAFEBC

WorkSafeBC is a no-fault insurance system that protects producers/employers and workers. Producers/employers pay the premiums that fund the system and in return can't be sued for the cost of a work-related injury, disease or fatality. Workers who sustain a work-related injury or disease receive compensation from WorkSafeBC for medical and wage-loss costs.

In the event of work-related injuries or diseases, WorkSafeBC works with the affected parties to provide return-to-work rehabilitation, compensation, health care benefits, and a range of other services.

### WorkSafeBC Benefits

WorkSafeBC helps employers with registration, education and developing and enforcing workplace health and safety requirements. They also provide support to employees after an injury or disease at work, including administering disability and death benefits.

### Who has to register?

The most important fact about WorkSafeBC is that coverage is required for nearly anyone who works on your farm. You must provide coverage for your employee(s) whether they are full-time, part-time, seasonal or family members and relatives. If you hire contractors, they must provide you with proof of their WCB coverage or a copy of their WorkSafeBC clearance letter. Individuals and firms are not required to register if they are:

- partners or proprietors in a unincorporated business
- independent operators who are neither employers nor workers

### Producer/employer responsibility

It is your responsibility to ensure you:

- register with WorkSafeBC
- report your assessable payroll
- pay your premiums
- notify WorkSafeBC of any changes to your operation
- provide a safe workplace
- if a worker is injured transport them to medical treatment and pay for the costs of transport
- report injuries, diseases and other incidents
- investigate and report on incidents
- submit forms if a claim is initiated

### What happens if you don't register?

If you don't register when you're required to, and one of your workers is injured, you could be fined and charged the total compensation costs of the injury and retroactive insurance premiums. Simply put, you may be fined and could be obligated to pay for an employee's WorkSafeBC benefits for the entire time they collect payments.

### How do you pay WorkSafeBC premiums?

If your WorkSafeBC costs (premiums) are assessed at under \$1500, you can generally report and pay once a year. If your premiums are \$1500 or more, you will generally need to report and pay quarterly.

## HARASSMENT & BULLYING

Harassment, whether sexual, racial, based on a personal characteristic, or through abuse of authority is against the law. Excluding someone from regular activities or practices based on these criteria is also considered harassment. The BC Human Rights Code protects employees from workplace harassment, and the Canadian Criminal Code protects people from physical or sexual assault.

The Canadian Labour Code requires employers to write their own anti-harassment policy, and educate their employees on the policy.

### **Benefits of an anti-harassment policy**

**Improved morale:** Employees are more likely to communicate when they know harassment is not tolerated.

**Increased profitability:** Decreased employee absenteeism leads to increased productivity and profitability

**Limit liability and mitigate damages:** simply having an anti-harassment policy can limit liability and mitigate damages if the event of a lawsuit.

### **Producer/employer requirements**

Employers are responsible for preparing, monitoring and updating appropriate policies, and ensuring all employees are aware of the policies. All employers are required to have anti-harassment training.

### **What if I don't have a policy?**

Employers can be held legally responsible for harassment in their workplace. Courts may impose penalties on an employer, even if they were not directly involved in the harassment. Doing nothing to prevent harassment could have serious financial and legal consequences.

### **References**

BC Human Rights Tribunal  
(complaints)  
BC Human Rights Coalition  
BC Human Rights Code



## HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION – HIRING MATURE, IMMIGRANT, ABORIGINAL, WOMEN, YOUTH AND WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

Finding skilled labour can be a difficult task. When you can't find an employee through your usual networks, accessing an alternative labour pool might be the answer. Mature, immigrant, aboriginal, women, youth and workers with disabilities bring a high level of skill, education and enthusiasm to the workplace.

### **Benefits of workplace diversity**

Hiring a diverse mix of employees is good for business because it brings a variety of skills, knowledge and abilities to your farm. It sends a positive message to the community about your farm, and helps ensure you remain competitive by reflecting the changing face of BC's workforce and your own customer base. Workplace diversity can also help you access larger labour pools, and develop better human resource policies and practices, that benefit all employees.

**Mature workers** bring critical skills, experience and emotional maturity to the job. Mature workers can have a positive impact on the performance and productivity of younger workers through coaching and mentoring.

**Immigrant workers** are skilled individuals who have come to work, live and invest in Canada. They bring expertise, education, training and experience to the workplace.

**Aboriginal workers** make up one of the fastest-growing populations in BC, representing an increasingly educated, readily available workforce.

**Women** bring a wide range of vital skills to the workplace and represent a large number of BC's part-time employees. Many women are already in the dairy workforce.

**Youth workers** often bring new perspectives to the workplace. They are creative, adaptable, quick learners and independent thinkers.

**Workers with disabilities** represent a skilled and largely untapped labour pool. Staff retention of persons with disabilities is significantly higher than the general population.

### **Producer/employer responsibilities**

Producers must ensure their hiring practices are fair and equitable. The BC Human Rights Code states that employers can not discriminate against any employee based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, age, family or marital status, sex (including pregnancy or childbirth), criminal conviction (in employment only, physical or mental disability, political belief (in employment only), or sexual orientation.

### **What happens if there is a problem?**

Workers who feel their human rights have been violated can file a complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

**References:**

BC Human Rights Tribunal  
WorkBC Employer's Toolkit  
Canadian Human Rights Act

## CANADIAN QUALITY MILK PROGRAM

The Canadian Quality Milk (CQM) program is an on-farm food safety program designed to help producers prevent, monitor and reduce food safety risks on their farms. The program shows producers how to integrate proven best practices into their own farm management systems. CQM certification helps boost consumer confidence in Canadian dairy products.

**CQM benefits**

**Producers currently registered in the program are eligible for the BC Milk Marketing Board's quality bonus.** Participating in the program can increase your profitability by decreasing your product losses. It can enhance your ability to control and prevent food safety hazards, increase your staff's understanding of food safety risks, improve communication, and ensure everyone on your farm consistently implements the procedures. A program manual and workbook can be downloaded online, and personal training is available.

**Who has to register?**

The CQM program is recognized by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and is supported by the Canadian Dairy Foundation, the BC Dairy Foundation, and the BC Milk

Producers Association. Participation in the program is voluntary, however many dairy farms in BC are now registered.

**Producer/employer responsibilities**

Once you have implemented the CQM requirements on your farm and kept complete records for at least three months, you can apply for registration. A validator will visit your farm to ensure you are following the program correctly. If approved, your farm will be certified. A coordinator is available to help you work through the validation process.

Producers in the program, agree to:

- Say what they do,
- Do what they say,
- Prove they do it, and
- Improve it, if necessary.

**What happens if you don't register?**

The Canadian Quality Milk Program will eventually be mandatory in BC.

**References:**

Canadian Quality Milk Program



## FARM AND RANCH SAFETY AND HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Since 1993, the Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association (FARSHA) has promoted safety and health in the BC farming industry. FARSHA's goal is to reduce the number and severity of incidents and illness on farms and ranches, and in turn realize a corresponding reduction in costs to the Agricultural Industry of British Columbia.

### **FARSHA benefits**

FARSHA offers free province-wide tools such as ongoing safety programs, training courses and workplace reviews. FARSHA also publishes educational material on a variety of topics, operates an informative website and has an extensive lending library.

### **Supports to Producers**

FARSHA has divided the province into seven regions and assigned responsibility for each region to a Regional Safety Consultant. Two consultants act as specialists in Orchard/Vineyard and Ranching.

Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association

Suite 311, 9440 – 202 Street,  
Langley, BC V1M 4A6

Phone: 604-881-6078

Fax: 604-881-6079

Toll Free: 1-877-533-1789

[www.farsha.bc.ca](http://www.farsha.bc.ca)

### **Case Study: Standard operating procedure**

One producer understood HACCP, but was not convinced the individual components of the CQM program would benefit his farm. He decided to implement the program anyway, including writing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), even though his employees had been working with him for years and they were familiar with his operation. The producer went to the barn one morning and found one of the employees reading the SOP for "Treating Cattle with Antibiotics". She had not treated a cow in a while and she wanted to make sure she was doing it properly. The producer was delighted to see that the SOPs "really work!"

## NOTES

# 3

## RECRUITMENT- FINDING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

### JOB DESCRIPTIONS

A job description is a communications tool that includes: performance expectations, key responsibilities, tasks and duties. It can be used in writing job ads, orienting a new employee and developing job expectations and training requirements. A job description is an important tool for managing performance, providing feedback and offering positive and constructive criticism.

When completing a job description you can be specific about the kind of skills, abilities and experience you're looking for from potential employees.

#### Benefits

Job descriptions provide a basis for setting performance expectations and completing performance reviews.

Job descriptions are excellent recruiting tools, as they give prospective employees a complete understanding of the job requirements, and may allow some applicants to decide for themselves if they're qualified for the job. This self-

selection process may result in having fewer less-qualified candidates apply for a job, as they will realize they don't have the right characteristics and skills and don't meet the producer's requirements.

### Writing a job description

There are many ways of writing a job description, see Appendix C for a sample job description and Appendix D for a job description template with brief instructions.

The job description process normally progresses as follows.

- Identify who reports to whom - in a larger operation this may result in developing an organizational chart, in a smaller operation this reporting information need only be included in each job description
- Identify the jobs for which you need a job description. Even in small operations it's useful for all employees to have a job description, including the producer/manager
- If you have employees in these jobs, work with them to complete the job description template
- Develop job descriptions for each position. If several employees hold the same position, for example, a milker, and their job duties are the same, one job description can be developed for all the milker positions
- Decide on how and when you can use the job description to discuss performance, provide performance feedback and additional wages or benefits that come with satisfactory or good performance

## EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS TEMPLATE

There are three different kinds of requirements that you want to explore when selecting employees. You have behaviours and characteristics you'd like your employees to possess such as: reliability, honesty, flexibility, ability to work without supervision. You have a set of skills and abilities that you require the applicant to have to complete the tasks and activities of the job. You will also have some preferences that support your farm culture and leadership style. The following table is an example of some of those topic details.

### **Benefits**

If you haven't developed job descriptions, a good first step is to develop a set of employee requirements. These can be useful as a first step in developing a job description, and will provide sufficient detail to write a job ad.

### **Sample Employee Requirements - Dairy Manager**

#### **Behaviours and Characteristics:**

- Reliable
- Willing to learn
- Positive attitude
- Interpersonal skills
- Communications skills
- Responsible
- Accountable
- Honest
- Flexible
- Able to work independently
- Effective team player
- Self-motivated

#### **Skills and Abilities**

- Milking

- Breeding
- Raise replacements
- Plan and implement feeding program
- Supervise dairy employees
- Assist with field work and machinery maintenance
- Parlour sanitation
- Heat detection
- Some herd health - mastitis, etc
- Operating machinery
- Good time management skills
- Able to multi-tasks
- Ability to work with cows in a patient and calming way
- Computer literate

#### **Preferences:**

- Able to work Sundays
- Non-smoker at work
- Sense of humour
- Committed to excellence

See Appendix B for Employee Requirement Template

## ADVERTISING JOB VACANCIES

While producers successfully find some employees through community organizations, friends and family most producers will need to expand the search for employees to other sources. Depending on the position to be filled, job search methods should vary.

### Finding employees

There are numerous employee search options. This brief list provides some suggestions. See Appendix E for further and more detailed suggestions. Some of the common job search methods are:

- Agriculture Labour Pool
- Local newspapers
- Career and job centres
- On-line job boards
- Facebook
- Foreign worker program
- Agriculture colleges
- Agriculture programs and universities
- High school and college job/career fairs
- 4-H Clubs
- Youth Employment Centres
- High School Career Counsellors

## DEVELOPING JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Job advertisements are easily developed from job descriptions. Different job search companies usually have a template or format in which you can input your requirements. The following sample

provides some key elements for any job ad. Once you've created job ads, you can keep a copy on file and use them for future employee searches.

### Case Study: Hiring

1. You are hiring to fill a milker position. There are qualified applicants available locally, and you decide to advertise through the Agriculture Labour Pool, local newspapers and 4-H.
2. You need to hire a Manager who will supervise 5 employees. You've checked with friends, family, employees and community organizations, and you don't find any potential employees. You want to increase the scope of the search to include the following search options:

Agriculture Labour Pool - a Canada-wide search

Agriculture colleges and universities in BC and Alberta

On-line job boards

Targetted Facebook advertising

See Appendix D for a list of on-line on-line job resources

## DEVELOPING JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Job advertisements are easily developed from job descriptions. Different job search companies usually have a template or format where you can input your requirements. The sample provides some key elements for any job ad. Once you've created job ads, you can keep a copy on file and use them for future employee searches.

### **SAMPLE JOB AD FOR MILKER:**

#### **Skills Needed:**

Must have min 2-3 years milking experience  
Good livestock handling skills  
Mechanical experience an asset, employer is willing to train for this  
AI certificate or willing to obtain

#### **Benefits**

Two weeks holidays after one year on-the-job  
Medical and dental benefits  
Accommodation possible

#### **Duties:**

Milking approximately 140 cows twice daily  
Parlour sanitation  
Heat detection  
Some herd health - mastitis, etc

#### **Characteristics**

##### **Team player**

Work well with six other employees  
Reliable  
Willing to learn  
Honest

##### **Preferences**

Non-smoker  
Able to work weekends

##### **Other Job Information:**

Dairy farm near Armstrong

##### **Work Schedule:**

4:00am -8:00am & 3:00pm -7:00pm  
6 on 1 off, 5 on and 2 off (flexible, open to discussion)  
4 - 6 weeks probationary period

## REVIEWING RESUMES AND INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

When you review resumes use the job ad and job descriptions to ensure resumes meet these requirements. Your list of employee requirements will also provide a guideline to develop interview questions.

If you're working with an employee search company like the Agriculture Labour Pool or posting your job on-line you may receive a short-list of resumes based on your requirements. You'll have fewer and more qualified applicants to choose from.

Once you've reviewed resumes and decided how many candidates you want to interview, you can set up interviews by:

- calling employees
- telling them how long the interview will take
- providing an outline of what the interview will include
- asking them to bring a list of references

## DEVELOPING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Behavioural questions are one of the best ways of understanding what a candidate can do based on their experience and knowledge. However, interviews are often stressful times for both the interviewee and the interviewer. When you begin the interview, a couple of easy ice-breaker questions are helpful. You don't need to check all behaviours and characteristics, skills and preferences in an interview. Ideally you ask

questions about your key requirements, test any concerns you may have with the applicant by asking additional questions and completing reference checks.

After you interview candidates you will want to ask them for work references and advise them of when you'll make a decision about the successful applicant.

Sample Interview Questions and Ratings Scale		
Questions	Rating Scale (1-5)	Comments
<b>Ice Breaker Questions:</b> "How was your drive here today?" "Would you like a coffee before we start?"		
<b>Characteristics:</b> <i>Flexible employee with a positive attitude</i> "Describe a time when you have demonstrated your flexibility and positive attitude at work."  <i>Able to do many tasks</i> "Describe a day in your dairy farm experience where you were able to accomplish many different tasks during the day."		
<b>Skills:</b> <i>Milking</i> "Tell me about your experience in managing a large milking operation. Describe a morning milking schedule at your previous employment."  <i>Supervision</i> "Tell me about a time when you've had to tell an employee that their work isn't up to par."		
<b>Preferences:</b> <i>Non-smoker</i> "Our farm is non-smoking. Do you smoke at work?"		
<b>Other:</b> "Do you have any questions about the job?"		



## REFERENCE CHECKS

Reference checks are arguably the most important part of employee selection. Whether you've interviewed ten candidates or only one, checking references will provide you with important information. References can confirm the positive attributes of the candidate, and provide you with more information about an issues you may have detected in the interview.

Using your interview questions and rating scale checklist will help you identify the areas in which a candidate has strengths and weaknesses. These ratings will provide an objective review of the results of each interview.

### **Case Study: Reference checking**

You've interviewed Sam and Jill for a Farm Manager position and have short-listed them both. Sam has a lot of experience working as a farm manager, he's supervised employees and was convincing about his ability to manage a large operation.

However, he wasn't able to answer the questions about flexibility and positive attitude very well. You're not sure if his difficulty is related to having to think of examples, but these employee characteristics are very important to your operation. You call two previous employers to check on his stated experience, and to ask questions about his attitude and ability to be flexible.

Jill has less experience in managing a large dairy operation but has supervised large numbers of employees in her previous career as manager of a riding school. She answered the questions about personal characteristics easily and completely. However, you're concerned that she may not have enough experience to manage a large milking operation. However, you like her flexibility, honesty, communication and interpersonal skills. You call two previous employers, one a producer in Alberta and the manager of the riding stable. You want to check on whether she can learn quickly enough to manage manage a milking operation and to supervise employees.

## NOTES

**APPENDIX A - EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS**

Behaviours & Characteristics	Skills & Abilities	Preferences

## APPENDIX B - SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

### Job Title: Dairy Herd Manager

**Summary Description:** Manages 140 head including: milking, herd health and breeding. Supervises 5 - 7 part and full-time employees and plans feed program with producer.

### Tasks and Responsibilities:

Manages dairy herd, including: milking, herd health, breeding and raising replacements. Plans and implements feeding program with producer. Supervises dairy employees responsible for milking and feeding. Develops job descriptions, conducts performance reviews and evaluations. Develops career and training plans with employees. May assist with field work and machinery maintenance as time permits.

**Supervised by:** Producer/owner

### Qualifications

**Characteristics:** honest, reliable, flexible, positive attitude, good interpersonal and communication skills and willing to learn

**Skills:** Work with (specify kind of milking equipment), transponders and automated feeding system. Keep herd health and breeding records up-to-date. Ability to supervise, train and evaluate current and new employees. Work with the owner to develop appropriate benefit programs for employees.

**Experience:** At least 3 years experience working with a dairy herd and supervising employees.

**Preferences:** Non-smoker and able to work weekends.

**Salary:** Minimum xxxxx to Maximum xxxx based on experience and ability.

**Work hours:** 5 - 9 am and 3 - 7pm.  
**Days off per week** 1.5

**Overtime -** Seldom

**Benefits:** Accommodation, 2 weeks vacation after 1 year and 3 weeks after 5 years. Medical/dental plan

**Work environment:** Modern 140-cow free-stall operation with 400 acres of field crops.

## APPENDIX C - JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

### Guidelines

If you have employees in the position that you're writing the job description you may:

- interview them
- have them fill in the template
- work together in completing the template

### Using the template

- Begin with the Section 1, Job Title
- Complete Section 4, Qualifications
- Work through Sections 5- 9
- Finally, complete sections 2 & 3

## APPENDIX C - JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

### 1.Job Title

--

### 1.Summary Description

--

### 2.Tasks and Responsibilities (use bullet points)

--

### 3.Supervised by

--

### 4.Qualifications

#### (1)Characteristics

--

#### (2)Skills

--

#### (3)Experience

--

**(4) Preferences:**

--

**5. Salary or Wages (minimum and maximum)**

--

**6. Work Hours (average per week or month)**

--

**7. Overtime required (average per week or month)**

--

**8. Benefits**

--

**9. Work environment**

--

## **APPENDIX D - ON-LINE JOB RESOURCES**

Agricultural Institute of Canada

BC WorkInfoNet

Agriculture Labour Pool

Agriculture Careers

Canadian Job Bank

Aboriginal Job Boards

Immigrant Serving Agencies

# 4

## RETENTION - KEEPING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

### UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

The other important facet of leading others, is to understand more about your own personality. You may obtain more information about your personality type by completing a personality assessment. These assessments are best completed with a qualified professional, however, the on-line free instruments provide a quick glimpse of your personality type.

#### Benefits

If you understand your personality type and preferences, you can understand how to better work and communicate with others. For example, if you prefer to make decisions quickly and once the decision is made, stay with your decision; and your employee prefers to take time to think over all the information before making a decision, you can see there may be some conflicts. Understanding these difference in personality and preferences can help you accommodate different decision-making methods.

#### Personality assessments

There are several personality assessments commonly used with qualified professionals: Myers Briggs Type Instrument (MBTI), True Colours, Insight, Kiersey and many others. Kiersey is free on-line (google Kiersey), however, it is a shortened version of the full instrument, and the results should be only considered as an indication of the personality type. A full assessment completed with a qualified professional provides a better indication of your personality type.



**Case Study: Personality instruments and managing employees**

John is an extroverted producer who is detail oriented, rational and logical in his decision-making and makes decisions quickly. The operation milks 120 cows. Ella is a milker who has worked with John for 2 years. She is a reliable employee who works hard. However, John and Ella frequently have difficulty communicating.

Ella is an introvert who finds John's constant conversation, loud, joking and fast-paced instructions hard to manage. She likes to have some time to think about the consequences of an action before she makes a final decision.

John and Ella attend a workshop and complete personality profiles and discover how different they are. John agrees to give Ella more time to understand and think about information before making decisions. Ella agrees to let John know if she's feeling that she doesn't understand his instructions, and to ask him to slow down the pace of his communication.

## ORIENTATION

Orienting new employees is a way of welcoming an employee to your team and operation. You want your employee to:

- feel welcome as a team member
- clearly understand their role on the team and your role in your operation
- know who will manage, coach and support them in their role
- understand how, when and why performance feedback will be provided

When you hire a new employee your orientation is the first opportunity to ensure you and your employee are clear about job, and performance expectations. A good orientation is an important step to retain employees.

### Benefits

There are many benefits of effective employee orientation. The first days and weeks can be used to help employees feel welcome and comfortable on your farm. Effectively introducing and orienting employees sets the stage for good two-way communication, clarity of expectations and reduces the stress for the employee and employer. A job description provides a useful guide to the orientation.

### Orienting employees

It's often difficult in your busy schedule to spend enough time orienting a new employee. You've hired an employee who is competent, but is new to your operation and needs some time to become accustomed to your way of operating. The amount of time you spend on orienting your employee has a direct benefit for their effectiveness

on the job and your bottom-line results.

We sometimes think an employee orientation is complete after the first day of employment. However, a good orientation is staged over a few months. It's difficult for anyone to learn everything about a new operation in a few hours. Most producers use a "tell, show and do" approach to orientation by:

- telling employees about the operation
- showing how the farm runs
- having employees do some parts of the job while supervised
- doing the work without supervision
- supporting employees with coaching and mentoring
- ensuring that there's an opportunity for the employee to comfortably ask questions

The sample orientation checklist on the following page provides an example of some key elements of an employee orientation

### Sample orientation checklist

#### ✓ Farm Tour

Introduce employee to general farm operations, other employees, and standards of safety, sanitation and farm culture

#### ✓ Welcome employee

Provide opportunities to make your new employee feel welcome, and ensure they feel comfortable asking questions

#### ✓ Code of behaviour

Explain acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, for example

- arriving and leaving work
- alcohol, drug and tobacco use at work
- missing work for illness
- absenteeism
- breaks and lunches
- relationships with producer and other employees

#### ✓ **Confirm employment benefits**

Holidays, medical and dental benefits, days and hours of work, accommodation, etc. A brief written agreement is useful, signed by you and your employee

#### ✓ **Health and safety**

Provide copies of, and instruct employees about, health and safety requirements and procedures

#### ✓ **Demonstrate machinery, tools and equipment**

Introduce employee to machinery, tools and equipment. Depending on your employee's experience and knowledge, introduce them to each part of the farm operation

#### ✓ **Use the job description, walk the employee through each of the major tasks**

Depending on the maturity, knowledge and experience of your employee decide whether to introduce the major tasks one at a time and allow time to practice, or to support the employees while they complete their tasks.

Have the employee sign the job description so it is clear they understand the job expectations.

#### ✓ **Provide coaching support from you, or mentoring with another employee**

Let the employee know what is required and how their performance will be evaluated. Ideally you will meet your employee within the first two weeks and provide specific feedback related to the job description.

Document the conversations and have the employee sign a copy of the job description.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Compensation and benefits packages may be what differentiates you from your competition and allows you to attract better qualified employees who will stay with you longer. You may pay an hourly wage or a salary and provide increases based on performance or years of service. Benefits include any compensation given to employees beyond regular wages: bonuses, paid holidays, medical, extended medical, dental, pension plan, accommodation, meat, milk, paid sick time and maternity and paternity benefits.

### Benefits

No pun intended, but there are many benefits to a carefully planned compensation and benefits plan. Research suggests that if you provide employees with the benefits they value they'll be more satisfied, miss fewer workdays, be less likely to quit, and have higher commitment to meeting your farm goals.

### Designing a compensation and benefits plan

**Benefits** may include many options and any plan can be flexibly designed to meet the needs of your business and your employees. It's important to assess the cost of a compensation and benefits plan against the:

- price of employee turnover -- research confirms that employee turnover costs an employer from 30% to 150% of their annual wage or salary

- employees who receive well planned compensation and benefits plans are motivated, committed and stay longer with their employer
- flexible plans provide the opportunity to match the plan to an individual employee's needs. For example, one employee may prefer meat, milk and a dental plan, while another employee may want medical, extended medical and dental.

Depending on the size of your operation, you may have a larger number of options and more flexibility. However, there are a many options available to producers with operations of any size.

Most employees rank medical, extended medical and dental as the most important and most preferred benefits. See more detail in Appendix F.

**Compensation plans** are usually developed with a starting salary, and staged increments based on either performance, years of service or a combination of both. Here are some options to consider when designing your compensation plan.

### Hourly Wages

- Easy to manage
- Extra hours of work required are easily calculated
- Based on an hourly rate and usually paid every two weeks
- Sets a standard number of hours to work, and additional hours are negotiated if required

### Salary

- Calculated on a monthly or yearly salary

- Based on an estimated number of hours per week but provides more flexibility to change and adapt hours of work and schedules

#### **Salary and wage increases based on good performance**

- Linked to performance reviews and clearly based on exceeding performance expectations

#### **One-time bonus**

- A bonus given to appreciate a particular effort and may be provided in additional wages or gifts such as restaurant vouchers, gas cards, etc.

#### **Salary and wage increases based on time on the job and good performance**

- Employees know when they will receive their increases
- May be linked to performance reviews so that increases are not given if performance is poor

#### **Holidays**

- All employees must be given 2 weeks holidays per year, and 3 weeks after 5 years
- Additional paid holidays are an excellent way of rewarding or recognizing employee contributions

#### **Medical, extended medical and dental**

- This was identified by dairy employees as the compensation they would most like, and are not currently receiving, in research completed in August, 2009. See Appendix B and C for more information.

#### **Pension plans**

- All employers are required to contribute to Canada Pension Plan for employees older than 18
- Additional private pension plans motivate employees to stay with their employer

#### **Accommodation (may be a taxable benefit)**

- Many employees value appropriate accommodation and rate it as a valuable benefit

#### **Benefits such as meat and milk**

- Producers may provide this benefits at relatively low cost to their operation

#### **Access to land, farm equipment, etc.**

- Many employees value the opportunity to build their own herds and careers

## EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS

A contract clearly outlines each element of the job, and the conditions under which it is offered. It is a legal document and binds you and your employee to the terms of the agreement. The contract may be as simple as a copy of the job description and a one page outline of compensation and benefits, increments and details of a probation period. You and your employee each sign the contract as it establishes and documents performance expectations.

### Benefits

The employment contract is a communication tool that confirms the conditions of employment and performance expectations. The contract ensures that if there is any misunderstanding the contract can be used to correct the misunderstanding.

### Contract elements

- Probationary period - a 1 - 3 month time period during which the employee must meet performance requirements or the employer may dismiss the employee without documentation or progressive discipline
- Wages/salary - details of wage and salary compensation, hours of work, planned performance or annual increments/increases
- Benefits - any benefits that will be provided, and when they will begin. You may choose to only offer benefits after the probationary period is completed
- Training and other education benefits
- Signed by producer and employee

### Case Study: Benefits

You have four employees, two of whom are your wife and son, and they have all indicated their preference for benefits that include a medical and dental plan. You talk with an insurance broker who suggests you consider a Private Health and Welfare Trust plan. This plan provides the following benefits.

#### For you

- all your employees medical, dental, prescriptions, eyeglasses etc. are tax deductible expenses

#### For your employees

- a full range of benefits, covering all medical and dental expenses

## MANAGING PERFORMANCE

There are several parts of managing employee performance, but the most important skill is clear, effective, honest and respectful communication. The following steps are important to managing employee performance, and to recognizing good performance. If an employee is having difficulty doing some tasks and performing poorly, the sooner they receive feedback about their performance problems, the easier it will be to have the discussions and to improve performance. If the employee is unsuited to the work, and is unable to perform satisfactorily, early communication and intervention helps deal with issues quickly and move to

progressive discipline or dismissal if required.

### **Provide regular employee feedback**

- Employees like to hear 'how they're doing' regularly and frequently. If your feedback is positive and appreciative, then it's normally easier to provide. If you need to provide constructive criticism, you will want to plan how you communicate with your employee.

### **Give constructive criticism -**

Providing 'negative' feedback is always challenging, most of us are uncomfortable delivering a difficult message. However, there are ways of communicating constructive criticism that are helpful. The following page lays out communication tips to address performance problems.

**Manage progressive discipline if an employee is not performing adequately** - If an employee is not performing adequately or meeting performance expectations, then you need to begin progressive discipline.

### **Benefits**

Like situational leadership, progressive discipline means matching the amount and kind of discipline to the performance issue. This is one of the most challenging and time consuming activities that you'll have to do as a manager. Most managers don't like dealing with difficult behaviours and poor performance. However, failing to deal with the issues makes them worse and can have negative consequences for you, your operation and your employees. When handled well, progressive discipline can often resolve the performance issues and help an unsatisfactory employee become a good employee. If the employee is unsatisfactory, it's also a fair and equitable way of ensuring that firing the employee is appropriate.

## **MANAGING PERFORMANCE ISSUES AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Progressive discipline is a method of clearly communicating with employees who aren't meeting the expectations you have of their performance. If an employee isn't doing their work you must use a progressive discipline process outlined by Labour Canada in Appendix B. If you don't follow this process, your employee may be able to dispute your decisions to suspend or fire them.



## **Managing performance problems**

There are stages and steps to progressive discipline. It's a process that requires attention to detail and commitment to continuing even when things get difficult. The steps are simple, sometimes the emotional conversations are not so simple but are worth the effort. Like all human resource management techniques, honesty and fairness combined with good communication skills are very important.

### **Steps in progressive discipline**

- Provide feedback
- Ask questions and find out what may be causing the issue or problem
- Develop solutions with employee's agreement
- Followup with the employee to make sure progress is being made
- Provide training and coaching
- Set time frames for performance to improve
- Identify discipline/consequence if performance doesn't improve
- Suspend employee if performance doesn't improve
- Fire the employee

### **Some reasons why your employee may be performing poorly**

- Lack of clarity about performance expectations
- Orientation was insufficient
- Employee has personal issues that are hindering performance
- More supervision is required
- Employee didn't receive sufficient training
- Employee is not suited to the job or the work
- Losing interest in the job
- Interpersonal issues or conflicts with other employees

- Alcohol or drug abuse

The best way to address poor performance or inappropriate behaviour is to talk with the employee. The following communication tips are a good guide for those conversations.

See Appendix A for extensive details about managing progressive discipline.



## CASE STUDY - MANAGING PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

### Step 1

Sally has been late for her afternoon shift a few times during the past couple of week and she is usually on time. You want to address the problem immediately, and the conversation might go like this:

*You: Sally, you've been late a couple of times this week and you're normally right on time. Is everything ok?*

*Sally: Yes, I've just had a hard time getting organized to get back.*

*You: It's very important that you're here on time.*

*Sally: OK, no problem, I'll be on-time.*

### Case Study: Managing performance problems

Sam, a long term employee is becoming difficult and challenging. His productivity has dropped, the quality of his work is decreasing and he is arguing with your directions. Sam has always been a good worker but has become more angry and easily frustrated. You haven't given Sam any feedback yet because his work has been good for a long time. The advice from Labour Canada is:

*If the misconduct is minor, speak with the employee face to face. Allow all sides of the story to be heard. Collect all the facts, including those given by witnesses. Review the job expectations with the employee. Outline the consequences if these expectations are not met. Although time consuming, it is important to keep a written record of these activities. If you both come to an agreement that the behaviour will be corrected —the problem is solved! However, if the behaviour does not improve, you may give the employee a written warning about possible suspension.*

## Step 2

Sally's performance problem has not improved, and she is still arriving late for her afternoon shift.

*You: Sally, we talked last week about your late arrivals for the afternoon shift, and I notice that you've been late again a couple of times this week. What's going on?*

*Sally: I'm ok, I'll try and deal with this.*

*You: Sally, if you're having some difficulties, I'd like to try and help, but we need you here on time.*

*Sally: Thanks, I've had some problems with the after school care for my daughter, and it's making it hard to get back on time.*

*You: How are you going to deal with this issue? Is there anything I can do to help?*

*Sally: Could I start the afternoon shift 30 minutes later until I get this better organized?*

*You: Sally, I'd like to be flexible but I can't change the milking schedule, are there other options?*

*Sally: How about if I take a day off, without pay, to talk to some other day cares?*

*You: Ok, that will mean we're short-staffed for milking, so I'd like to let the other employees know about your situation are you ok with that? 'll give you a day off, and then we can talk again the day after tomorrow.*

## PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

A performance review is a communication tool to help clarify performance expectations and motivate and encourage employees. Performance reviews are a more formal conversation with your employee about their ability to perform their work. The conversation provides an opportunity to provide positive feedback about an employee's work performance, areas needing improvement and how improvements can be made. Brief notes as shown in the sample performance review are sufficient to document the conversations.

### Benefits

Employees want to know "how they're doing" and an effective performance review motivates an employee by having a conversation about what they do well, and what they need to improve.

#### Employees benefit by:

- confirming and discussing performance expectations
- clarifying what needs to be improved, and how to improve
- confirming the areas in which they're performing well

#### Employers benefit by:

- helping employees know how to make improvements
- building an environment where employees and employers can work together to resolve problems
- identifying coaching and training opportunities
- helping an employee become a better performer

### **Communications tips to address performance problems**

- **Stay Focused:** Sometimes it's tempting to bring up past seemingly related conflicts when dealing with current ones.
- **Listen Carefully:** People often think they're listening, but are really thinking about what they're going to say next when the other person stops talking. Truly effective communication goes both ways. While it might be difficult, try really listening to what your employee is saying. Don't interrupt. Don't get defensive. Just hear them and reflect back what they're saying so they know you've heard.
- **Try To See Their Point of View:** In a conflict, most of us want to feel heard and understood. We talk a lot about our point of view to get the other person to see things our way. Try to really see the other side, and then you can better explain yours.
- **Respond to Criticism with Understanding:** When someone responds to your criticism with criticism it's hard not to get defensive. While criticism is hard to hear, and often exaggerated or coloured by the other person's emotions, it's important to listen for the other person's view and respond with understanding of their feelings.
- **Own What's Yours:** Realize that personal responsibility is a strength, not a weakness. Effective communication involves admitting when you're wrong. If you both share some responsibility in a conflict (which is usually the case), look for and admit to what's yours. It diffuses the situation, sets a good example, and shows maturity.
- **Use "I" Messages:** Rather than saying things like, "You really messed up here," begin statements with "I", and make them about yourself and your feelings, like, "I feel like you're frustrated that you're not working to your full ability" It's less accusatory, sparks less defensiveness, and helps the other person understand your point of view rather than feeling attacked
- **Look for Compromise:** Instead of trying to 'win' the argument, look for solutions that meet everybody's needs. Either through compromise, or a new solution that gives you both something you want.
- **Take a Time-Out:** Sometimes tempers get heated and it's just too difficult to continue a discussion without it becoming an argument or a fight. If you feel yourself or your employee starting to get too angry to be constructive, take a break from the discussion until you both cool off.
- **Don't Give Up:** While taking a break from the discussion is sometimes a good idea, always come back to it. If you both approach the situation with a constructive attitude, mutual respect, and a willingness to see the other's point of view and find a solution, you can make progress toward a resolution

<b>Sample Performance Review</b> <b>Employee: George Joe</b> <b>Timeframe: Sept 2009 to Dec 2009</b> <b>Supervisor: Jane Doe</b>			
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Performance expectations</b>	<b>Rating Scale (1-5)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Manages dairy herd	<i>Supports meeting quota</i>	4	Have met quota requirements
	<i>Herd health is maintained</i>	4	
Plans and implements feeding program	<i>Effectively manages all aspects of feeding</i>	5	Have done an excellent job in this area
Supervises dairy employees	<i>Employees clearly understand their roles and responsibilities</i>	3	Some employees understand their roles and responsibilities, but more time needs to be spent on direct supervision. George has found a supervision course through Farm Credit Corporation and will attend next month
Develops job descriptions, conducts performance reviews and evaluations	<i>Job descriptions are completed for each position</i>	3	3 of 5 job descriptions were completed. The remaining 2 need to be done within the next 60 days
	<i>Quarterly performance reviews are completed</i>	4	Informal performance reviews have been done quarterly. Completing job descriptions would help make this task easier. The supervision course includes job description and performance reviews, and will help George with these activities
	<i>Annual performance reviews are completed</i>		
Develops career and training programs	<i>Career and training plans are completed during annual performance reviews</i>	n/a	Will look to have this completed after the next set of reviews by April, 2010

<b>Sample Performance Review</b> <b>Employee: George Joe</b> <b>Timeframe: Sept 2009 to Dec 2009</b> <b>Supervisor: Jane Doe</b>			
Assists with field work and machine maintenance	<i>Work is completed as required</i>	5	Well done
Demonstrate flexibility and positive attitude	<i>Adapts to changes in schedules and situations while maintaining a positive attitude</i>	3	George is always positive and flexible and a pleasure to work with
Communicates clearly with employees and producers	<i>Communicates clearly with employees and producer</i>		George has worked hard to communicate clearly. He communicates well when he is able to prepare for his communications. I will provide regular coaching and feedback to help George improve his communications with employees
Willingness to learn	<i>Learn new tasks and jobs</i>	5	Work hard to learn new tasks and jobs and to teach others
	<i>Demonstrates an interest in learning</i>		
Develop coaching and training plan	<i>What coaching and training is required</i>		Attend supervisory training course  Joe (producer) to coach George in communication skills
Develop career development plan	<i>Identify career and promotional opportunities</i>		Will consider additional management opportunities at the annual review and after George has completed his supervision course

## COACHING AND MENTORING EMPLOYEES

Coaching is a way of supporting employees by encouraging them to improve and enhance their performance, and helping them correct performance weaknesses or issues. Rather than directing or managing employees, you coach by asking questions and encouraging employees to figure out ways and means of improving their own performance.

Mentoring is normally a process where one employee helps and supports another employee. The mentor helps the employee in a similar way to the coach, by asking questions and assuming that by asking questions, offering suggestions, the employee will be able to develop their own solutions.

Both mentoring and coaching assume the employee has the ability and motivation to come up with appropriate solutions with coaching and mentoring support.

### Benefits

Coaching and mentoring help improve and support employees perform more effectively.

### Case Study: Coaching

You're a dairy herd manager, and Sally (a new employee) is having difficulty getting all her work done as quickly as you'd like. Other employees seem to complete the work easily in the time allowed. You've talked with her a couple of times, but she is still having trouble getting her work done efficiently. She seems to be motivated and interested in the work, and has a very positive attitude.

You want to coach Sally, and you do the following:

- Ask Sally if she'd like some help getting her work done more quickly
- Sally says she'd welcome your help
- You suggest that you'll work with her the next morning, and see if there are ways to complete the work more quickly
- While you're working with her, you observe Sally and ask her some questions about how she does the work
- At the end of your 'working' time, you ask Sally if she can identify some ways of working more effectively and quickly
- Sally has some ideas, and you make some suggestions and help Sally come up with a few ways in which she can work more quickly
- You agree to follow up with her in a few days

## MANAGING EMPLOYEE DEPARTURES

Employees end their employment for several reasons. They may quit to: move to or search for another job, return to school or retire. Whatever the reason for leaving, there's benefit for you to understand why an employee leaves and to plan for their departure.

### Benefits

If your employee makes a decision to quit you have the opportunity to complete an exit interview and ask them questions about why they are leaving, and obtain valuable information about your management style and farm culture. This information can help you adapt and

change your management style. Employees who are leaving tend to be much more honest and willing to provide constructive criticism, as long as you're able to listen to and hear their feedback.

If you complete a progressive discipline process, and decide to fire an employee, there are some steps that are wise to follow to avoid legal issues and mitigate difficult situations.

### Firing employees

If you need to proceed to dismiss an employee, and you've completed a progressive discipline process, you've begun the dismissal process effectively.

The following checklist outlines the steps:

Dismissal Checklist	Yes	No
Is the dismissal related to on-the-job performance?		
Was the employee clear on their performance expectations?		
Do you have job descriptions and/or performance reviews that outline performance expectations?		
Do you have evidence that your employee knew how they were expected to perform?		
Have you completed a progressive discipline process?		
Do you have evidence in signed performance reviews and progressive discipline action plans that the employee knew about the consequences of the progressive discipline process?		



## **Exit Interviews**

When your employees leave, if you make time to complete an exit interview, you can receive valuable information. As you interview employees when they begin employment, you can interview them when they leave.

### **Sample exit interview questions**

- 1. What suggestions do you have that would help the next person who does this job?*
- 2. Do you have any comments, positive or negative about my management style?*
- 3. What would do we do best at this operation?*
- 4. What could we do better here?*
- 5. Do you have any other comments?*



## NOTES

## APPENDIX E: CONCERNS WITH EMPLOYEES' WORK PERFORMANCE

### Do you have concerns with an employee's work performance?

Here are the steps for applying progressive discipline in the work place.

Most employees want to do what is expected of them. You can help by ensuring that company policies are made clear and applied consistently and fairly to everyone. However, as an employer, you may need to deal with problems caused by the performance of an employee. You should:

- **act early...** before poor work becomes a habit;
- **be fair...** by clarifying the job expectations with the employee;
- **improve the employee's performance...** by providing appropriate direction;
- **try to solve the problem...** before it gets to the dismissal stage by applying the "progressive discipline process".

The steps outlined in these pages describe the process known as **progressive discipline**. It allows you to build on the skills of your present staff and to make clear to everyone what the company policy is on job expectations. It improves the efficiency of your company by saving you the time and money involved in dismissing one employee and hiring a new one. As an employer, the way you apply the progressive discipline process is the basis of your defense if

an employee files a complaint of unjust dismissal.

### What kind of problems?

**Incompetence:** employee lacks the skills or ability needed for the job

**Misconduct:** employee breaks rules for keeping the work place efficient and safe

A good employer uses every opportunity to clearly communicate to all employees the expectations of the job and what will happen if these expectations are not met.

In the step-by step method described here, *negligence* may be treated as **incompetence** (if the employee is neglecting duties without realizing what is expected) or as **misconduct** (if the employee is fully aware that duties are being *neglected*, but *neglects* them anyway). The following charts and explanations walk you through the progressive discipline process.

### Dealing with Incompetence

Does the employee lack the skills needed to do the job? If so, first speak with the person face to face and clarify the expectations of the job. Tell the employee what will happen if there isn't improvement. This may include being dismissed. Act promptly. If you let it go for too long without taking action you are considered to be **condoning** the poor work performance. You can't then use it as a reason for dismissal.

Next, ask yourself if this person has the ability to learn the skills needed for

the job. If so, give the employee a fair chance to improve work performance by providing job training and supervision. Allow enough time for the employee to practice and use new skills. Or, if this is a long-time employee with a good work record who has now changed positions, you could consider giving the person different work duties. This might be fairer than starting the disciplinary process.

If the employee's work performance improves, the process worked! Congratulations! If not, you are now in a better position to decide if dismissal is warranted.

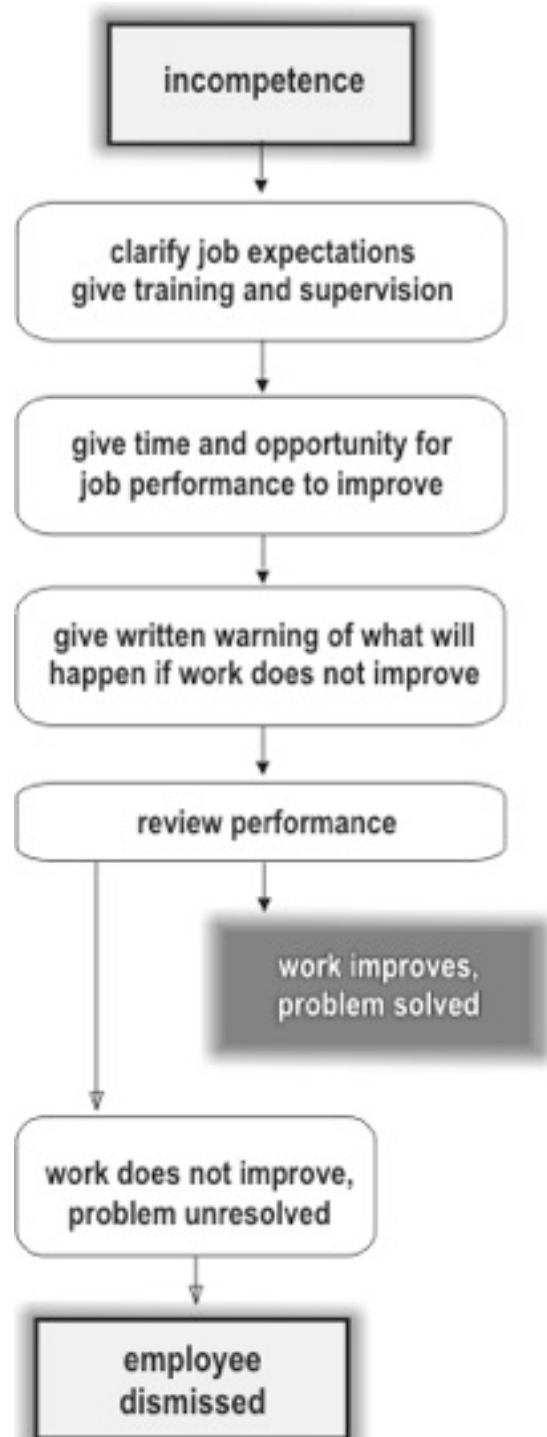
### Don't Forget!

Keep a written record with dates of:

- Meetings
- Training sessions
- Warnings
- Performance reviews

Begin keeping records when you first speak to the employee about the problem. *THIS IS ESSENTIAL*. If you have not done so and the employee decides to change the dismissal, your chances of successfully defending your actions at a hearing are greatly reduced.

Rather than straight dismissal, the goal of progressive discipline is correcting poor behaviour and creating a better and more productive employee.





# Labour

## Progressive Discipline

Do you have concerns with an employee's work performance?

*Here are the steps for applying progressive discipline in the work place*

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The steps outlined in these pages describe the process known as **progressive discipline**. It allows you to build on the skills of your present staff and to make clear to everyone what the company policy is on job expectations. It improves the efficiency of your company by saving you the time and money involved in dismissing one employee and hiring a new one. As an employer, the way you apply the progressive discipline process is the basis of your defence if an employee files a complaint of unjust dismissal.

### What kind of problems?

**Incompetence:**  
employee lacks the skills  
or ability needed for the

**Misconduct:**  
employee breaks rules for  
keeping the work place  
efficient and safe

## Dealing with Misconduct

Decide if the misconduct of your employee is minor or severe. Take into account factors like:

- Seriousness and/or frequency of the problem
- Employee's work history
- Effect on the organization

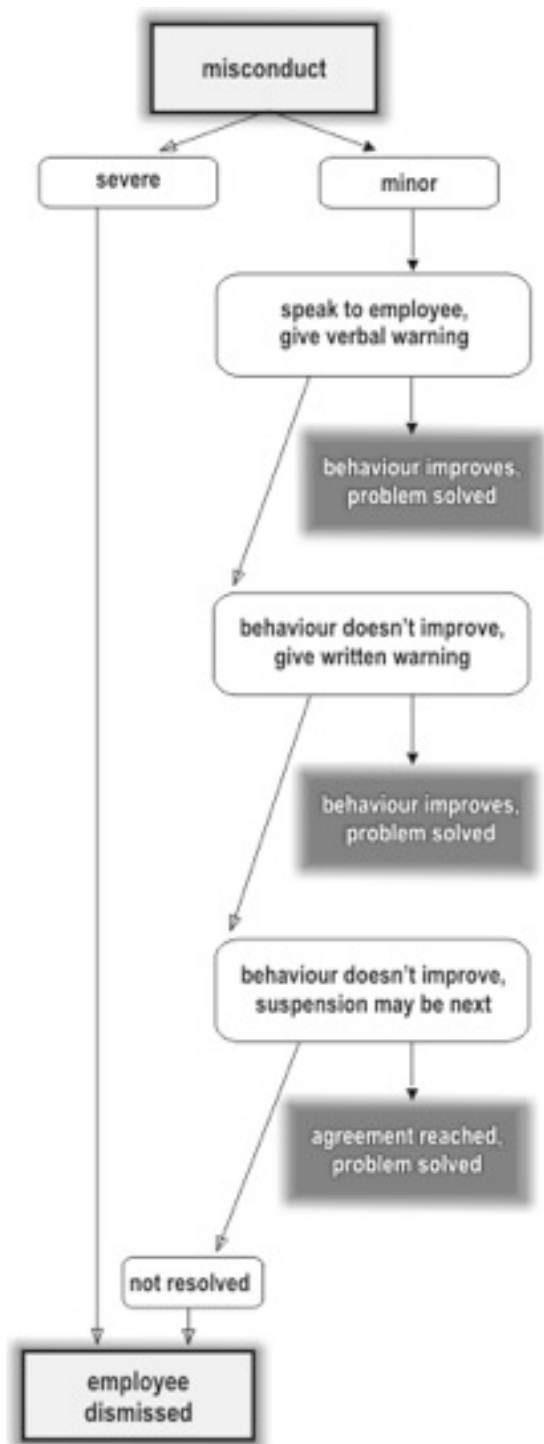
If the misconduct is **severe**, you may have just cause to fire the employee. You can dismiss immediately. This is called **summary dismissal**. However, you must act early. If you let the problem go on too long, you are **condoning** the behaviour and won't be able to use it later as a reason for summary dismissal.

If the misconduct is **minor**, speak with the employee face to face. Allow all sides of the story to be heard. Collect all the facts, including those given by witnesses. Review the job expectations with the employee. Outline the consequences if these expectations are not met. Although time consuming, it is important to keep a written record of these activities. If you both come to an agreement that the behaviour will be corrected—the problem is solved! However, if the behaviour does not improve, you may give the employee a written warning about possible suspension.

If the problem persists, you may now consider suspending the employee. When this action is taken, provide, **in writing**, the job expectations and future consequences if they are not met.

Once the suspension is over, try to come to an agreement that there will be no further misconduct.

You are now in a better position to decide whether the last resort of dismissal is warranted.



There are a number of factors to consider in applying the progressive discipline process to cases of either incompetence or misconduct. For example:

- Was the misconduct intentional?
- Is the employee accepting responsibility for his/her actions?
- Was the infraction an isolated incident?
- Is this a long-term employee?
- What is the work history of the employee?

See Labour Standards Pamphlet 8, [Unjust Dismissal](#), for more examples.

### Employer Checklist for Progressive Discipline

**Incompetence:** Employee lacks the skills or ability to do the job.

- Set out clear, reasonable job expectations in company policy.
- Communicate clearly job expectations to all employees.
- Bring unacceptable work to the attention of the employee promptly.
- Provide reasonable supervision, training and instruction.
- Give reasonable warning that failure to meet these expectations could result in dismissal.
- Allow for time and opportunity to meet the job expectations.
- As a final step in the process, if no improvement, dismiss the employee.
- **Keep complete written records.**

**Misconduct:** Employee breaks rules for keeping the work place efficient and safe.

### Mitigating and Aggravating Factors

- Give the employee the opportunity to tell his/her story about the misconduct.
- Collect all the relevant facts surrounding the misconduct.
- Give a verbal warning.
- Give a written warning.
- Suspend the employee.
- As a final step in the process, dismiss the employee.
- **Keep complete written records.**

This publication is provided for information only. For interpretation and application purposes, please refer to Part III of the Canada Labour Code (Labour Standards), the Canada Labour Standards Regulations, and relevant amendments.

### **Questions? Get the answers!**

Contact your HRSDC - Labour Office who will advise you of your rights and obligations as an employer.

You can order additional copies of this publication, indicating the departmental catalogue number LT-116-03-07, from:

Publications Services

Human Resources and Social  
Development Canada

140 Promenade du Portage

Phase IV, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor

Gatineau, Quebec

K1A 0J9

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Cat. No.: MP43-345/13-2007

ISBN: 0-662-66787-5

## APPENDIX F: HEALTH AND DENTAL PLAN OPTIONS

### A. Individual Insurance Plans

- Extended Health Care Benefits
- Dental Benefits
- Coverage for Prescription Drugs, Physiotherapy, Massage, Chiropractor, etc
- Insurance protection for emergency expenses
- Plans are designed for each individual

### B. Group Benefit Packages

- Life Insurance
- Short and long term disability insurance
- Extended Health Care
- Prescription Drugs
- Dental Benefits
- Customized plan for the business – groups of one or more

### C. Private Health & Welfare Trusts

- Designed for business owners – sole proprietors, partners and owners of incorporated companies
- Facilitates business owners to pay health and dental expenses in a tax-efficient and cost effective manner
- Extended health care & dental expenses become tax deductible
- Eligible expenses include prescription drugs, chiropractor, massage therapy, crowns, orthodontics, laser eye surgery, etc.
- No medical questionnaire
- Use in combination with an insurance plan



## **APPENDIX G: BENEFITS**

### **Benefits to employers and employees in establishing a flexible health and dental plan**

- Attract and retain quality employees –essential in today's business environment
- Tax effective form of compensation
- No payroll taxes, tax free to employees
- Premiums / deposits are fully tax deductible
- Protects employees and families from rising health and dental costs
- Insurance protection against emergency expenses
- Offers protection with regards government cutbacks
- Options to arrange life, disability and critical illness insurance within a cost effective plan
- Establishes a company policy to offer benefits to current and new employees

Requesting quotes:

- To receive the best service and selection, contact one broker and they will 'shop' the market for you. Your broker will offer you various quotes on the plans of your choice.

Individual companies that may offer quotes for individual insurance, group benefit plans & trusts:

#### Individual Insurance Plans

- Group Medical Services
- Manulife Financial
- Great West Life
- Pacific Blue Cross
- RBC Life

#### Group Benefit Packages

- Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance
- Manulife Financial
- Great West Life
- Sunlife Financial
- Empire Life

#### Private Health and Welfare Trusts

- HUB Financial
- Olympia Trust