KNOWING YOUR EMPLOYEES AND MATCHING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES WITH THEIR STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS

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Session Objectives
- Understand the importance of engaging your employees through dialogue
- Explore ways to match responsibilities with employee strengths and interests

Knowing Your Employees
Discuss the following with someone from another company:
- I was raised to be a farmer and know how to run a business. Why should I spend more time getting to know my employees?
- I can handle the animals. I'd rather someone else handle the employees!
- The biggest challenge I have in working with employees is...

Principles of Leadership
- We rise to our level of incompetence.
- Many have no leadership training
- The bad news is that there are not enough good people leaders that are “born that way”.
- The good news is that specific skills can be developed and practiced with intentionality.

Peter Principle
Leaders who inspire engagement were rated higher by their employees on the following factors:
- Setting Goals
- Communication and Feedback
- Holding People Accountable
- Building Trust
- Providing Recognition

Carrot Principle

Research: Cornell University Dairy Leaders

Your Employee
1. Write down the name of an employee at your site.
2. Define 1-2 specific tasks he/she is responsible.
3. Determine the employee’s current level of ability and willingness to do the task.
4. How will you Dialogue with this employee, based on your assessment?

Discuss your answers with someone near you.
Three Key Strategies

1. **DEFINE** the goals, roles, and tasks
2. **DETERMINE** ability and motivation
3. **DIALOGUE** with the employee regularly

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1. **DEFINE the goals, roles, and tasks**

**Parlor or Milking Supervisor**
- Manage Performance of Each Employee; Set Goals and Give Daily Feedback
- Provide Training to Employees on Protocol for the Milking Process
- Communicate and Uphold Safety and Milk Quality Standards
- Manage Shift Schedule and Ensure All Roles Are Covered Daily
- Document Daily Amount of Milk, Temperature, and Time Milked

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2. **DETERMINE** ability and willingness

In determining their development level, you look at two things, based on the goal or task:

- **Current Level of Ability** – their skills, knowledge, and ability to execute on the task
- **Current Level of Willingness** – their motivation to do the goal or task, or confidence to do so.

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Your Highly Engaged Carlos

Carlos was hired four years ago as a milker and was always highly engaged. Three months ago, you promoted him to Parlor and Milking Supervisor. His work ethic is unparalleled and he has always solved problems on his own.

Two of your more experienced milkers resigned, and two others are complaining about Carlos being harsh and condescending to those who don’t meet his standards. You also have one new milker who is failing and had no training. To add to that, you are finding that this is impacting milk quality and it is impacting you financially. You provided no training when Carlos became a supervisor. Carlos called in sick for the past two days and just came in to let you know he arrived.

What do you do?

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**DETERMINE the Development Level**

**Document daily amount of milk and quality**
- Current Level of Ability
- Current Level of Willingness

**Manage Performance and Provide Training on Protocol**
- Current Level of Ability
- Current Level of Willingness

**ANSWER:**
- Ability – High
- Willingness - High

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**DETERMINE the Development Level**

**Document daily amount of milk and quality**
- Current Level of Ability
- Current Level of Willingness

**Manage Performance and Provide Training on Protocol**
- Current Level of Ability
- Current Level of Willingness

**ANSWER:**
- Ability – Low
- Willingness – Low or High
DETERMINE, then plan your DIALOGUE

Low Ability, High Willingness
- Appreciate their enthusiasm
- Lead with a short leash and much direction, stay engaged

High Ability, High Willingness
- Get out of their way
- Delegate responsibilities, check in

Low Ability, Low Willingness
- A terrible feeling, leads to disengagement
- Encourage and provide direction

High Ability, Low Willingness
- Listen more than talk to understand what is going on
- Discover, is it motivation or confidence; help them problem solve through inquiry

3. DIALOGUE w/ employee regularly

- Recognize that the development level is based on the task, not the person.
- Based on the development level, you dialogue accordingly.
- Don’t over-supervise the high ability, high willing level.
- Don’t under-supervise the low ability, high willing level.
- Make sure you properly assess the low willing, and know their ability.

So Then What Will You Do With Carlos?

Carlos was hired four years ago as a milker and was always highly engaged. Three months ago, you promoted him to Parlor and Milking Supervisor. His work ethic is unparalleled and he has always solved problems on his own.

Two of your more experienced milkers resigned, and two others are complaining about Carlos being harsh and condescending to those who don’t meet his standards. To add to that, you are finding that this is impacting milk quality and it is impacting you financially. You provided no training when Carlos became a supervisor, and he did not train the new milker. Carlos called in sick for the second day in a row.

What do you do?

But Wait

You have an employee who likely has the ability, but his knowledge does not match his interest?

Your Employee

1. Write down the name of an employee at your site.
2. Describe 2-3 specific goals or tasks.
3. Determine the development levels of each goal or task.
4. Discuss the three steps above with one other person.
5. Describe how you will Dialogue with this employee, based on your assessment.

Leaders who inspire engagement are typically rated high on...

- Communicate and listen effectively
- Establish clear, aligned goals
- Maintain accountability
- Build trust
- Reward/Recognize contribution and achievements – The Accelerator

Adapted From The Carrot Principle
by Adrian Gostick & Chester Elton
Leadership Impacts Engagement
Case Study Confirmation

- Supervisor behaviors accounted for 50% of employee engagement
- Leadership accounts for 20%

Take Away Messages

Your Role in Engagement

- What can you do to increase employee engagement?