Running Effective Team Meetings

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Running effective farm meetings

• Pulling together a group to work on a common focus
• Effective meetings are needed to make teams successful
• More heads are better than one
• A great team will perform beyond potential of individuals
• Collaboration builds culture of teamwork

The basic tools needed to run an effective farm meeting:

• Reason for the meeting | Purpose
• Set time | Prepare
  • Agenda
  • Start and finish on time
• Everyone involved understands their role | Participate
  • Facilitator
  • Note taker
  • Time keeper
  • Contributing member
• Action plan | Perform

The FOUR P’s

1. Purpose
2. Prepare
3. Participate
4. Perform
The Four P’s - Purpose

• How do we set the purpose?
  • Area(s) of opportunity come to our attention
    • From anyone on the farm
    • Bottom-up to Top-down
    • Both directions are important

✓ Foot Trimmer Example

The Four P’s - Purpose

• Needs to be:
  ✓ Clear
  ✓ Concise
  ✓ Simple
  ✓ Understood by everyone
• Why are we getting together – taking time out of our schedule?
• What will be our OUTCOME?
• What’s the FOCUS?
  • SET AGENDA

The Four P’s - Purpose

Two Types of Team Meetings:

Information Only – need to get everyone thinking in the same area. Developing a vision for the team. More inclusive of farm’s key employees.

Or…

✓ Key Players – push for what type of meeting is needed

Action – Very focused on specific issues. E.G. foot issue, we don’t need the crop people. Forage Meeting – we don’t need milker supervisor, etc.
The Four P’s - Purpose

- Agenda
  - Sets the guidelines, path, roadway for how we will get there
  - Keep the group on target – FOCUSED
- Having a Structure to the meeting is Vital
  - Keeps us focused and on time
  - Time limits on each topic

- Sets us apart from others
- Most recognized benefit

Poor Footbath Design

- Purpose
  Evaluate and address current lameness issue on the farm.

Agenda

- Review current footbath procedures
- Report from foot trimmer on current concern

Purpose

OBJECTIVE: We would like to have a more structured approach to breed performance/BCS of horses and height.
The Four P’s - Purpose

Reasons team meetings fail → do not fall into these traps:
- Inability to “get along”
- Failure to adapt
- “me only” syndrome
- Fear of the action
- Boring, boring, boring

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The Four P’s – Prepare

- Know the players
- Understand roles and responsibilities
- Facilitator gets us all to work together
- Farms businesses are complex, connectivity and collaboration are needed
  - Internally – key employees → all employees
  - Externally – outside consultants
- **We must have trust!**

✓ Foot Trimmer Example

The Four P’s – Prepare

- **Why** – was set in Purpose
- **Who** – people that will be the players
  - Facilitators – needed to get done
  - Note taker – keeps track of what needs to happen
  - Attendees – need to hear what is going to get done.

✓ Owner and/or Facilitator Picks the Players
The Four P’s – Prepare

• Set the tone for the meeting – “this is the safe zone”
  - Anything can be said here
  - The cost of candor is low
• Owner and Facilitator create this culture over time and with effort.

Stories:
- Ben at Crop Meeting
- Jose at Monthly Team Meeting

The Four P’s – Prepare

• Make goals achievable
  - Do not set goals hard to reach
  - Do not look at the same failures over and over again....
• Give the team win’s!
  - Give them resolutions to issues

- N Farm Story: Feed push up and dry matter of bunk

The FOUR P’s

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The Four P’s – Participate

Who – the people that will be the players

- Facilitators – drives the meeting STRUCTURE
  - Needs to prepare and then perform - DO IT
  - Can not be seen as driving their own agenda

- Note taker – keeps track of what needs to happen
  - Needs to pay attention
  - Helps keep on Track and Organized

*Being Facilitator and Note Taker – happens, but not ideal*
The Four P’s – Participate

Who – the people that will be the players

- **Attendees** – need to hear what is going to get done.
  - They MUST:
    - Maintain Focus
    - Contribute Ideas
    - Not shut anyone down or out
    - Use opportunity to build relationships with each other
    - Require WIN/WIN solutions
    - Be on Board and Support the decisions made by the group
      - Verbally Commit to do so
      - Own that decision

The Four P’s

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The Four P’s – Perform

- **Action Plan**
  - Set Date for Next Meeting
  - Perform the Action Plan
  - Follow-up
  - Follow through
  - Critique Meeting

- **Action Plan**
  - The Heart of it all!
    - Without it – wasted effort, waste of time
  - Name and Date assigned to each action needed
  - Set Date for Next Meeting
  - Perform the Action Plan
  - Execute!
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