

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDING PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS

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‘Career development and providing pathways to progress in the dairy industry’

How important is it to have a ‘Career’ in the Dairy Industry? What are the pathways on offer and do you know how to achieve the next step to progress your future?

It has never been easy to buy a farm, even for the generations before us, and it won’t be easy for yourselves either. Today there are a number of different options around. There is the share-milking system and then there is the equity partnership system. There is also a combination of both in some instances. There are those that are fortunate enough to have the right people around them to guide them and then there are those that are trying to achieve this on their own. All lead to great opportunities for the future and are great pathways, however all require on-farm experience to ensure you achieve this.

However many people still are unable to understand the skill level required to achieve the next progression step towards farm ownership. From entry level through to management and farm ownership the skills required are vastly different. We now are overseeing or running multimillion dollar businesses, that are technical and advanced, we have large compliance requirements that everyone needs to understand to ensure we are producing the finest quality goods and maximising profitability from our investments.

So what do we do and how do we help our future farmers understand what is required to progress to the next level.

Moving through the system ourselves, from starting our career in Taranaki, lower-order share-milking 110 cows on 45ha, to now running 1800 cows through two operations (one share-milking and one farm ownership), including two support blocks, we had to learn new skills and develop our existing skills. We were given the opportunities and were surrounded by good people to help us.

We decided that we wanted to be able to provide the same support for our employees. It was very important to us to see them succeed and provide them support and encouragement. However what we had found was that many were lacking an understanding of what was involved from a skill level to achieve that next progression step.

We have developed a number of ‘Impact Maps’. These maps are a detailed tool that allow our employees to understand each of the levels within our farming business. We have

also further developed higher level impact maps to show them what they need to achieve, to allow them to advance into management and share-milking positions.

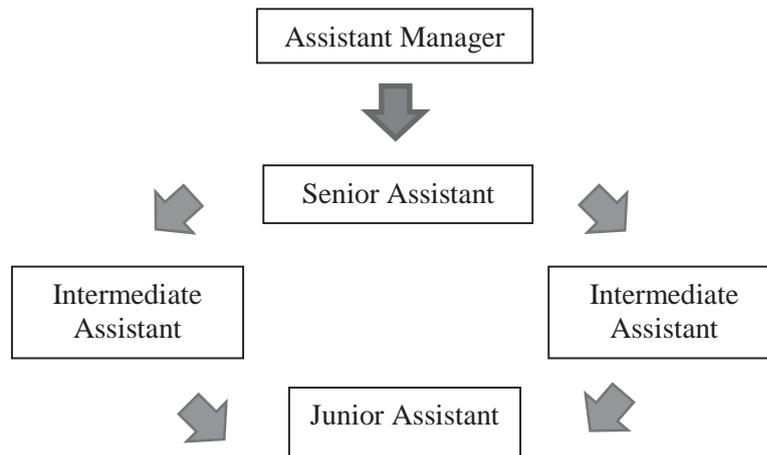
The Impact Maps focus on the following:

- Role Title
- Skills and Knowledge Required
- Application (How it will be used on job)
- Key Results
- Employee Goals
- Farm Goals.

Role title

It is important you look at your business and define all roles required for the particular farm in question. Then it is important to develop an impact map for each of these roles.

Example:



Skills and knowledge required

Focussing on the particular role in question, what is your skill requirement and expectation for that particular role.

For example: - Knowledge of calving and mating plans

Notes:

Application/How will it be used on farm

This is where you need to think about how you wish them to apply the skills, because applying the skills correctly for the role will ensure the outcomes you are wanting to achieve

For example: - Calving and mating plans: - Apply and monitor calving progress, identification of cows/calves and recording. Monitoring and assessing mating progress, identification and recording.

Key result

The application leads to a key result that the employee can focus on, thus providing the importance of applying this job correctly.

For example: - < 1% death rate at calving and submission rate of 95% in first 4 weeks of mating. This key result also aligns with the overall Employee Goal and Farm Owners Goal in this area.

Employee goals

Each of the skills applied lead to a key result, which also leads to a goal that the employee can focus on. So by aligning a goal around the skill the employee understands the true sense of 'Why' it is so important to do the task correctly and at the skill asked.

For Example: - maximising the number of cows milking and ensuring low empty rates.

Farm goals

Each of the Impact Maps have several key 'Farm Goals'. All of the tasks we have asked the employee to do should align with these overall goals. The power of the 'Farm Goals' will emphasise the fact that every skill they learn and apply is valuable to the overall business.

For example: - achieving 500,000kg/ms, maintaining farm working expenses as low as possible.

The key outcomes achieved

The key outcomes of the impact maps are as follows:

- The employee has a clear understanding of their role in the farming business, and how they are a valued member of the team. This certainly helps create buy-in from all parties
- It allows the employee to see what skills they need to learn/develop to advance to the next level of progression in their career
- It allows both employee and employer to identify skill gaps for the position on farm
- It allows the employer to work with the employee to strengthen these areas.

- It becomes a fantastic interview tool/creates buy-in or alternatively identifies if the candidate is not suitable for the position
- You have a skilled team, happy work environment and good retention
- This all leads to increased productivity and profitability.

Notes:

Role	Skills & Knowledge Required	Applications / How will it be used on job?	Key Results	Employee Goals	Farm Goals
Junior Farm Assistant	<p>Understanding of milking techniques and udder health</p> <p>Basic understanding of animal health issues</p> <p>Cleaning procedures around Farm Dairy</p> <p>Operate basic farming equipment</p> <p>Knowledge of temporary and permanent fencing</p> <p>Operation of motorbikes and ATV's</p> <p>Knowledge of movement and operation of travelling irrigators</p> <p>Health & Safety</p>	<p>Cows milked correctly, checking for mastitis and any issues around udder health</p> <p>Not pushing cows to shed too quickly</p> <p>Identify and report lame cows or sick cows</p> <p>Daily cleaning of plant and vat</p> <p>Right tools for right jobs</p> <p>Set up and dismantle temporary electric fencing under instruction and supervision</p> <p>Trained efficiently on use of operation</p> <p>Supervised and buddied up with another team member. Irrigators moved slowly and safely</p> <p>Think and behave in a safe manner at all times</p>	<p>Low SCC</p> <p>No lameness</p> <p>Quick handling of sick animals</p> <p>Quality milk and well presented farm dairy</p> <p>Less tools going missing or damaged</p> <p>Secure feed allocation and animals</p> <p>No accidents, no broken equipment</p> <p>Set up correctly, less breakages</p> <p>Everyone returns home safely to family at the end of the day</p>	<p>Reduction in Animal Health costs</p> <p>Grade free and finest quality milk</p> <p>Reduction in replacement of tools</p> <p>Reduction of Vehicles Expenses</p> <p>Reduction of Irrigation costs</p> <p>No accidents on farm</p>	<p>ACHIEVE 520,000 KG/MS</p> <p>FINEST QUALITY PRODUCTS</p> <p>MAINTAIN FARM WORKING EXPENSES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE</p> <p>DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEMSELVES AND THE FARM</p> <p>EVERYONE RETURNING HOME TO FAMILY SAFELY EACH DAY</p>

Role	Skills & Knowledge Required	Applications / How will it be used on job?	Key Results	Employee Goals	Farm Goals
<p>Intermediate Farm Assistant/Assistant Herd Manager</p>	<p>Understanding of basic animal health issues</p> <p>Supervise milking of a herd</p> <p>Understand milk quality and complete shed routines</p> <p>Prepare paddock for a herd</p> <p>Knowledge of calving and recording</p> <p>Knowledge of mating</p> <p>Good operation of machinery</p> <p>Knowledge of adequately manoeuvring & setting up travelling irrigators</p> <p>Health & Safety</p>	<p>Detect and treat mastitis. Record in BOPF, animal health records</p> <p>Setting up dairy shed, undertaking basic milking routines</p> <p>Complete plant washes, wash vat, clean yards and shed</p> <p>Under instruction to management requirement</p> <p>Monitor calving cows, mothering up, carrying out easy calving and post calving care</p> <p>Cows checked and identified as in season. Handle bulls in the dairy herd.</p> <p>Competent use of machinery the way it was designed to be used. Right machine right job!</p> <p>Efficiently move and connect up irrigators in a safe manner.</p> <p>Think and behave in a safe manner at all times</p>	<p>Low SCC counts</p> <p>Maximising milk yield</p> <p>Quality milk and well presented farm dairy</p> <p>Fully fed cows now ensures quality feed for next round</p> <p>Rearing highest BW calves through correct identification</p> <p>High submission rate resulting in a high conception rate</p> <p>Jobs completed with minimal machinery breakage</p> <p>No breakages, efficient water use</p> <p>Everyone returns home at safely to family at the end of each day.</p>	<p>Maintain Quality Milk</p> <p>Grade Free</p> <p>Quality pasture, better utilisation</p> <p>Maintaining a high genetic herd</p> <p>Reduction of Farm Vehicle costs</p> <p>No accidents on farm</p>	<p>ACHIEVE \$20,000 KGM/S</p> <p>FINEST QUALITY PRODUCTS</p> <p>MAINTAIN FARM WORKING EXPENSES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE</p> <p>DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEMSELVES AND THE FARM</p> <p>EVERYONE RETURNING HOME TO FAMILY SAFELY EACH DAY</p>

Role	Skills & Knowledge Required	Applications / How will it be used on job?	Key Results	Employee Goals	Farm Goals
Senior Farm Assistant/Herd Manager	Understand feed measuring and budgeting Understanding of feed budgeting and cow intake. Knowledge of calving and mating management plan.	Plate meter farm once a week Feed allocation to full feed cows Apply and monitor calving progress, identification of cows/calves, recording. Monitoring and assessing mating progress, identification and recording.	Accurate measurement of pasture Maximise and maintain animal production < 1% death rate at calving and submission rate of 95% in first 4 weeks.	Maintain Quality Maximising number of cows milking	ACHIEVE 520,000 KG/MS MAINTAIN FARM WORKING EXPENSES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE
	Knowledge of Animal Health Knowledge of Staff Management systems	Apply & monitor a preventative animal health programme Instruct others on job allocation, develop and train less experienced staff	Reduction of animal health issues Good time management and happy, safe team environment	Reduction of animal health costs Low turnover of staff	DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEMSELVES AND THE FARM
	High standard of manoeuvring/setting up travelling irrigators Health & Safety	Effectively move and connect up irrigators in a safe manner Think and behave in a safe manner at all times	No breakages, efficient water use Everyone returns home at safely to family at the end of each day.	Maximising water turn around and utilisation No accidents on farm	EVERYONE RETURNING HOME TO FAMILY SAFELY EACH DAY

Role	Skills & Knowledge Required	Applications / How will it be used on job?	Key Results	Employee Goals	Farms Goals
Assistant Farm Manager	<p>Knowledge and development of Staff management Systems</p> <p>Understanding feed budgeting and cow intake</p> <p>Understand feed measuring and budgeting</p> <p>High knowledge of calving and mating management plan</p> <p>High knowledge of Animal Health</p> <p>High knowledge of operation of machinery</p> <p>High standard of manoeuvring/setting up travelling irrigators</p> <p>Health & Safety</p>	<p>Apply & Instruct job allocation for all staff. Communicate well with Farm Owner/Sharemilker.</p> <p>Prepare Feed Budgets, Monitor feed wedge, apply feed allocation to fully feed cows.</p> <p>Regular weekly farm walks. Place meter and recording. Consultation with Sharemilker at all times.</p> <p>Consultation with vets/sharemilker, apply and monitor calving and mating plan. Assess progress.</p> <p>Apply and monitor preventative animal health programme. Identification of all common diseases.</p> <p>Maintenance carried out regularly and recorded.</p> <p>Effectively move and connect up irrigators in a safe manner</p> <p>Think and behave in a safe manner at all times. Show leadership and responsibility, always be aware</p>	<p>Accurate time allocation, systematic work plans that work well. Efficiently run farm.</p> <p>Maximise and maintain animal production</p> <p>Accurate measurement of pasture, maintain quality</p> <p>< 1% death rate at calving. Obtain a 95% submission rate in first 4 weeks</p> <p>Reduction of animal health issues. Healthy cows</p> <p>No accidents, safe and reliable equipment.</p> <p>No breakages, efficient water use</p> <p>Everyone returns home safely to family at the end of the day</p>	<p>Leading by example and gaining respect from other team members</p> <p>Maintain Quality</p> <p>Maximising number of cows milked, good genetic growth</p> <p>Reduction in animal health costs</p> <p>Reduction of Farm Vehicles costs</p> <p>No accidents on farm</p>	<p>ACHIEVE 520,000 KG/MS</p> <p>MAINTAIN FARM WORKING EXPENSES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE</p> <p>DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEMSELVES AND THE FARM</p> <p>EVERYONE RETURNING HOME TO FAMILY SAFELY EACH DAY</p>

Role	Skills & Knowledge Required	Applications / How will it be used on job?	Key Results	Goals
Sharemilker/ Manager	<p>Planning Seasonal Management</p> <p>Responsible for overall running of farm</p> <p>Responsible for overseeing any contractors, eg Fertiliser, Grazing</p> <p>Responsible for financial control</p> <p>Responsible for Health & Safety of all visitors & Staff</p> <p>Responsible for all issues associated with Human Resource Management</p> <p>Answerable to farm owners/business partners, consultants and banker</p> <p>Ensuring farm is compliant eg effluent, water, Fonterra</p>	<p>Systems put in place for easy understanding</p> <p>Day to day Management directed down to senior staff</p> <p>Organise plan for fertiliser spreading. Organise dates, costs and monitoring with graziers. Deal to any concerns</p> <p>Monitoring of budgets to actuals. Dealing with accountants, bankers, lawyers and business partners</p> <p>Manuals up to date. Records maintained, reviewed regularly. Hazards identified, eliminated, isolated, minimised</p> <p>Monthly returns completed. Staff files up to date, record of hours, annual leave, kiwi saver, PAYE, any pay issues. Addressing concerns with staff. Good work procedures in place</p> <p>Excellent communication required with all parties at all times.</p> <p>Following all guidelines put in place by governing bodies</p>	<p>Procedures understood. Farm run efficiently to best on farm methods</p> <p>Instructions clear. Procedures carried out correctly</p> <p>Timely managed optimising production gains helping to reduce costs.</p> <p>Achieving KPI's. Business runs without cashflow limitations. Communication ongoing</p> <p>No Injuries, Staff fully informed</p> <p>Returns completed on time. No penalties. Staff happy, motivated and feel valued.</p> <p>Enables us to carry out our business profitably and efficiently. Ensure business is sustainable. Environmental, Sustainable and code of practice that market demands.</p>	<p>ACHIEVE 520,000 KG/MIS</p> <p>MAINTAIN FARM WORKING EXPENSES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE</p> <p>DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES TO TAKE OWNERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEMSELVES AND THE FARM</p> <p>EVERYONE RETURNING HOME TO FAMILY SAFELY EACH DAY</p>

As you can see by the ‘Impact Maps’ there is a huge variance in skill level required for each position. What we have found is that there is a real lack of understanding of the significant increase in the skill level required once you move into Management and Share-milking roles. Many focus on the operational day to day running of the farm and forget about what is required to actually run the business. A good example that we developed is explained below:

The following diagram outlines the operational and managerial skills required to operate a successful farm business.

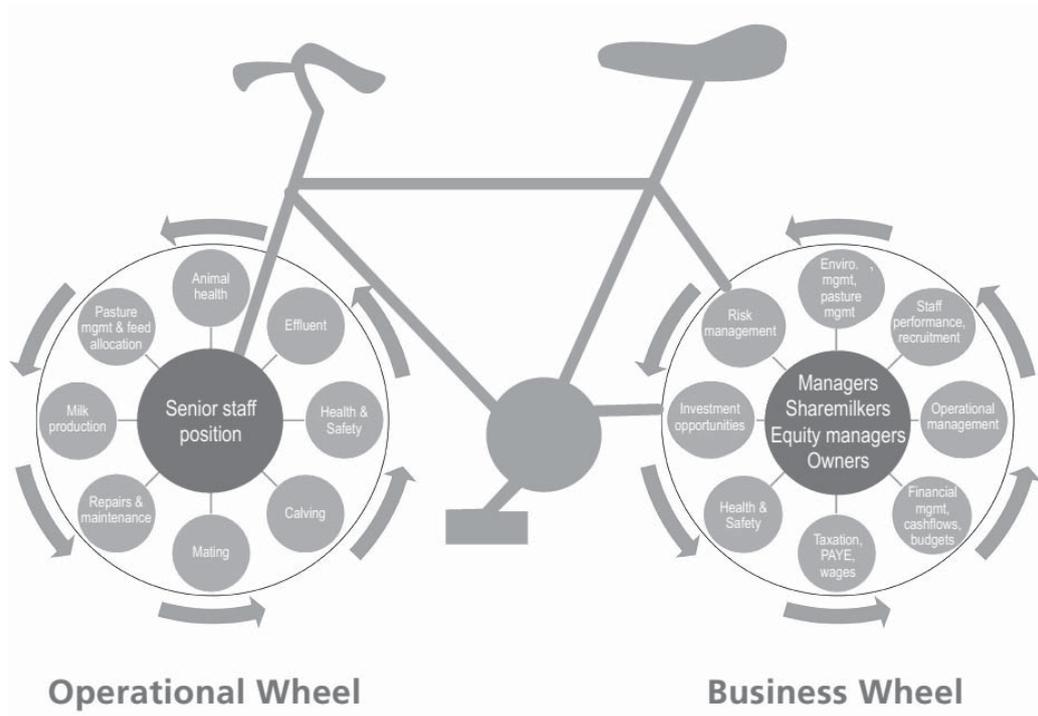
The Operational Wheel: Picture a bicycle, and imagine the front wheel of your bike. In the middle is the hub. This is the role ”Senior Assistant, eg 2IC or herd manager”. Around the hub are spokes that balance the wheel. Each of these spokes represents a skill on the farm. These are essential skills that you must know to be a fully skilled Senior Assistant. If you have all these skills you now have a complete “Operational Wheel”. You can provide the operational tasks on a dairy farm.

The Business Wheel: Now imagine the back wheel of your bike. This wheel has the cogs and a chain to drive the operational wheel. To enable this to happen once again imagine the hub in the middle. The hub represents the Farm Owner/Sharemilker/Manager. Out from the hub are the spokes that balance the wheel, however each of the spokes this time represent different skills required to drive the business. These are essential skills that you must know to be fully skilled and knowledgeable to be a Farm Owner/Sharemilker/Contract Milker/Manager. If you have all these skills you now have a complete “Business Wheel” and this wheel will drive the chain which will enable the bike to move forward. In business terms it will mean a successful operation.

As you progress from farm staff through to farm manager and onto business ownership via sharemilking or farm ownership, your skills set needs to grow. It is important to identify what skills you need to learn now to prepare yourself for the next step ahead in your career.

Notes:

Operational Wheel/ Business Wheel



Implementation

Implementation starts from the interview stage. Once the role you are offering is defined you utilise the 'Impact Map' that fits best. This map becomes a key discussion during the interview and you are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The process focuses on the positive and is about working together to identify the skill gaps. Then it is about developing a plan to help them develop those skills and also give them a focus for the future. What we have found is that employees now can see the steps required to advance, so they become more engaged and motivated.

As the employer we are able to focus on these key skills for the position. This will be through a combination of off-farm training through Primary ITO, DairyNZ, discussion groups, technology, our local vets and on-farm training.

We are able to review progress and look at opportunities for the future during our performance reviews. If we do not have a position available we will do our very best to help them look for the next progressive move.

Employee success

We have had a number of employees move into the roles of Management, Contract Milking and Sharemilking. For us this is hugely satisfying and we continue to support them through their journey.

Past employee Lizzy Grant joined our team as a 17 year old, from a sheep and beef background. Lizzy was employed with us for a three year period starting as a junior employee and advancing very quickly into a senior employee. She was a highly motivated young lady with great vision and passion to succeed. Lizzy moved into a role as Lower order share-milker with her partner and now at 25 they have advanced very quickly into a herd owning 50:50 sharemilking position milking 800 cows. Lizzy advises that the 'Impact Maps' have played a key role in her development to date.

Summary

The above presentation focuses on a tool we developed for **our** business. Our reason for developing this tool was to provide information around a clear career development programme for our employees. We felt there are many different options available today unfortunately there is a large gap in identifying the key steps to progression. Although this is our way, it does not mean it is the only way, but we do believe if a career plan is written it certainly gives your employees something to focus on.

Notes: