

Employee Intake and Onboarding on the Farm and Ranch

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Objectives

- Why is it important?
- What is onboarding?
- What's in an onboarding plan
- Job duties/ descriptions
- Training



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Why is it important?

- Hiring is difficult right now
- Reduce time-to-productivity
- Faster integration
- Higher retention



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Hiring is Difficult

- Employee's Market
- Lack of Applications
 - Lack relevant experience
 - Lack of hard skills
 - Lack of soft skills



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Training

- Time needed to properly train
 - Regardless of experience
- Generally, several weeks to months to reach full potential
- Strong onboarding processes increase productivity by over 70%



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Hard to Keep "Good" Help

- What is their first impression of your operation?
- Build rapport
- Onboarding strategies increase retention by 82%
 - Higher retention
 - Lower turnover



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Work Environment

- Keys to Success for any employee
 1. Know who to go to for questions
 2. Understanding processes and procedure
 3. Expectations for performance
- *In an atmosphere of disrespect and impatience, the tendency is to hide the need for help.*



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What's in an onboarding plan

Initial welcome

General information and procedures

Work time and pay

The job

Your philosophy



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Organizational structure

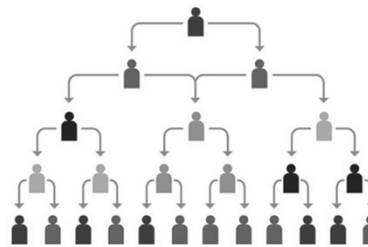
- Flat



Courtesy of University of Wisconsin

- Hierarchal

Hierarchical Organizations



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What's included in a job description

- Title
- Job summary
- Outline core duties
- Necessary skills and experience

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Sample job description

- Crop production team member
- **Nebraska Family Farms** is a large row crop operation located in Anytown, NE. We grow corn and soybeans in Northeast Any County. We run a progressive agricultural operation that uses some of the newest precision ag technologies and practices available. We are family-owned and value our employees like part of our extended family
- **Job duties** include but are not limited to:
 - manage precision agriculture equipment and ensure accurate collection of data in field
 - perform light maintenance on equipment and work around the shop
 - operate farm equipment, including tillage, nutrient application, sprayers, tender trucks and harvesting, as well as use of onboard computing systems
 - operate tractor-trailers related to logistics of grain and agricultural inputs
 - utilize technology in farming practices on every trip across our farm
 - perform light maintenance of equipment, including oil changes, changing wear points, light welding and working on implements
 - maintain clean working area in shop, on grounds and in tractors
 - follow farm safety guidelines and training



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- **Skills and experience**
- 3 to 5 years of production agricultural experience required
- willing to work long hours during planting and harvesting — during planting and harvesting seasons, it is not uncommon to work long hours; outside of that, we typically work 40 to 45 hours a week with occasional weekends
- demonstrate a general knowledge of agronomic management practices as well as willingness to learn and ability to use the technology associated with modern equipment and record keeping
- knowledge of mechanical operation of agricultural equipment, including routine maintenance and repair
- ability to work as a team and assist others, depending on the task at hand
- effective communication with colleagues and with management, including the ability to develop a productive and cooperative relationship with others
- valid driver's license required, CDL preferred
- ability to lift 50 pounds routinely and heavier lifts less frequently, with assistance available
- driven personality, desire to succeed and a team player with a positive attitude



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Sample job description

- Ranch Hand/ Technician/ Team Member
- **Nebraska Ranch Family** is a medium sized cow-calf operation located in Anytown, NE. We focus on breeding and genetics of the calves we produce. We are a family-owned operation and value our employees like they are a part of our extended family.
- **Job duties** include but are not limited to:
 - Provide a variety of basic agricultural duties to support production activities at a cow-calf operation.
 - Provide general care and husbandry for approximately 600-800 cattle.
 - Maintain machinery and fences
 - Assist with pasture management
 - Assist with the collection data to be used in herd improvement
 - Irregular hours during calving season and work in inclement weather required. Travel between pastures and facilities required.



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- **Skills and experience**
- High school diploma plus one year beef livestock production experience required; equivalent education/experience considered.
- Precision, accuracy and attention to detail necessary.
- Must have a valid driver's license
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of agricultural management practices as well as willingness to learn and ability to use the technology associated with modern equipment and record keeping
- Ability to work as a team and assist others, depending on the task at hand
- Effective communication with colleagues and with management, including the ability to develop a productive and cooperative relationship with others



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Training/ Onboarding

- Preboarding
- Day one/ week one
 - Welcome
 - General information and procedures
 - Hours and pay
 - The job
 - Safety



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Don't forget

- Goals
- Performance indicators
- Work culture
- Ongoing check-ins
- Revisions and improvements as necessary



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Labor Shortage

- H2-A
 - allows individuals from foreign countries to fill seasonal agricultural positions left vacant by American workers
 - Helped fill the need for labor since 1986
 - 5.3 months average

 - Language Barrier?
 - Have a language app downloaded
 - Learn some essential phrases



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- H2-A Costs
 - Applications & Filing Fees
 - Consulate Fees
 - Transportation to and from home country
 - Room & Board
 - Surety Bond
 - Cover liability



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Other Considerations

- Insurance
 - Workmans Comp
 - Liability
 - Health Insurance

- OSHA Compliance
 - 10 or fewer employees partially exempt
 - Still important to provide safe environment regardless of size



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Questions?

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