

Farm Management



10 QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL FARM TEAM

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Farm Management

The following are 10 qualities that successful farm teams exhibit.

After 17 years of observation, I've concluded few farm teams exhibit all 10 characteristics, but most demonstrate the majority of these characteristics. These qualities remain constant whether the team is all family or not.

These farm teams:

Have All Farm Team Members Sharing Common, Known Goals

This is the most critical of all the characteristics, for it is the foundation of the rest.

The farm must have a well-defined mission statement that tells everyone why that farm is in business. When creating the mission statement, include input from all team members. All team members must firmly believe and fully support this statement, and by having contributed they will believe

they have some ownership.

All team members know that each one is responsible for quality control, productivity, and profitability.

Exhibit Excellence In Communications

Each employee and especially management are excellent listeners. They care about each other's thoughts and feelings and they know what motivates each other.

Communication is not only from the top down, but from the bottom up. Communication is an ongoing priority and is encouraged both formally and informally. These teams stress communications at all times.

Have Family And Business In Harmony

Team members are active in their church, farm organizations, community and/or social group. They often have a hobby or some other avenue of release from the stress and strain of farming.

They take time out for themselves and their family: vacation, hunting, fishing, bowling, and/or attending a family reunion. Everyone knows their personal worth isn't tied to their farm operation.

They realize farming is not merely a way of life, but a way to support their family.

Team members support and encourage their spouse and family members, as well as fellow team members, to maximize the use of their talents. They are not like the family whose wife said "I don't know if I married a farm or a man. Just once I'd like to have a conversation and not talk about the animals, crops, machinery, mortgage, or other farm-related topic."

Are Profitable

The farm sets and meets goals for profitability, livestock and crop production, labor efficiency, cash flow surplus, amount of family withdrawals, and debt retirement. The goals set are specific, measurable, attainable, rewarding and timed (*smart*). Their progress is monitored regularly.

Remember, you can't make a non-profitable business profitable by underpaying your employees, especially family labor.

These teams consistently have a higher total farm production output per worker equivalent than the average. They find creative ways to compensate employees and often make use of productivity or quality based incentive plans that benefit both the owner and employee.

Have Shared Responsibility

The team captain defines the responsibilities and the authority of each employee. He defines and explains the "chain of command," or management structure to all employees.

The captain treats employees fairly and doesn't expect them to do something that they themselves wouldn't do. Employees are given

more responsibility progressively as they are ready to handle it. The successful team encourages all employees to take training to enhance their abilities, allowing them to share even more of the total responsibility.

Everyone is considered a working manager, not a managed worker. Everyone has the freedom to do their job the way that best suits them and the teams' goals.

Exhibit Leadership

Are very active and probably have leadership roles in their church, farm organizations, and/or community. All members have taken leadership training and take a lead in their given field of production.

Nurture

Team-Building

These teams make the most of everyone's God given talents and managerial abilities, and puts them in position to shine and succeed.

They recognize their personal limitations and work to the best of their ability within the framework of their abilities and other assets. Employees are treated fairly both financially and emotionally, yielding little employee turnover.

Have Fun

This could be number one on this list. The team enjoys each other's company. Remember, for many if it's not fun, then nothing else matters.

Have A Network Of 'Experts' That They Resource Regularly

Members don't have an "I know it all" attitude and are eager to ask other people's opinion about their approach to a common problem.

Members have a network of professionals that includes extension agents and specialists, bankers, veterinarians, feed sales representative, crop experts, accountants, and other farmers. Management regularly discusses farm situations with the network, especially when thoroughly researching a major change in their farm business.

Run The Farm Business On Business Principles

Decisions are made predominantly on how it will impact the farm financially, with little emphasis on feelings, traditions, or other nonfinancial considerations.

Teams are always looking to make the operation more energy, investment, and labor efficient. Teams are very aware of marketing and *do not* produce a commodity that they *cannot* market.

In summary, a farm that exhibits these 10 characteristics will have an excellent chance of not only surviving, but thriving in the changing business world of the twenty-first century.

The successful farm team realizes that there is no "I" in team and that each member has unique talents and strengths and weaknesses and is of infinite value.



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1a CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

1979 Case 450B dozer, has bad crank, \$5000. Call 717-386-2945.

1985 Case 580 Suepr E, extend-a-hoe, 4x4 w/cab, 4500 hours, good rubber, \$25,000 OBO. 717-456-7316; 410-452-9821.

1991 Eager Beaver 9HDB tandem axle trailer, \$4500. Call 717-386-2945.

1991 Ford 455C loader backhoe, low hrs, \$23,000/obo; 1992 10 ton tilt trailer, elec. brakes, \$4,900. (717)872-5393.

1994 Case 1840 skidsteer loader, 1300 hours, excellent condition, \$14,000. (301)371-5500.

20+4 Case Trencher w/ cable plow, \$2900; Galion hydrostatic 4-6 ton roller, \$1900; pull-behind vibratory roller, \$2000; 10,000 GVW trailer, \$1750; derrick digger on Ford diesel chassis, \$6500; landscape box, \$300; Mott mower \$350. OBO for any. 610/488-7658.

JUST ARRIVED. 2 CA, DBH 46A S/N Dozers w/ straight blades, good engines. Both units up and running. Will sell whole or dismantled. BALANDA EQUIPMENT P.O. Box 407 RT 29 Palm, PA 18070. 1-800-322-8030

9-ton Jersey trailer, \$2500. 609/965-6164.

'94 JD310D+ JCB215, 4WD backhoes, \$44K/ea; 185 dsl air compressor skid, \$3K; PTO trencher \$2K. 302/998-9563.

580 Case backhoe parts. (609)853-7372.

'77 Mack log truck. '79 Int tri-axle log truck w/Prentice loader. Bell Feller buncher Franklin 170 skidder. M&M sawmill. Fulghum chipper Morbark debarker. Peto air-ride. 381nt rear-ends. 350hp electric motor Clearfield, (814)672-3196.

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Air compressor, 50hp, electric, Worthington w/ tank/cooler/starts. \$2950. 717/354-3105.

Allied 8700B hoe-pac tamper, fits backhoe, \$1,500. (301)371-5500.

Backhoe unit. Full power-16foot reach, digs 11feet deep. Mounts (easily) and operates from bed of one ton pick-up. Asking \$5500 for unit w/truck. Bargain! (717) 547-2451 (717)547-0869.

Bucyrus Erie 45C, 30 ton, hydraulic truck crane, good condition, \$30,000 (410)358-9730.



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CRAWLER DOZERS

1991 JD 450G, lever steer.....\$40,000
1991 JD 550G Pedal Steer, 2000 hrs.....\$43,000
1979 JD 850 tilt blade.....\$29,500
1986 JD 850B Tilt blade, excel. cond.....\$55,000

WHEEL LOADER BACKHOES

1995 JCB 210S, 4x4x4, cab, extendable dipper, 600 Hrs..\$36,500
1988 JD 210C ROPS.....\$22,500
1988 JD 310C w/cab.....\$25,000
1982 JD 410, cab, fair cond.....As Is \$8,500
1985 JD 410B, cab, extendable dipper.....\$21,000
1986 JD 410C cab, 4x4.....As is \$23,500
1992 JD 410D cab, 4x4.....\$51,000
1984 JD 510B, cab, new hyd. pump.....\$26,500
1985 JD 515B with cab & side shift Backhoe aux. Plumbing...\$17,000

TRAILERS & TRUCKS

1986 9-ton Tag-A-Long, good cond **SOLD**.....\$1,850
1968 Mack R Tractor 237/5 Speed.....\$5,500

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1981 JD 555, ROPS, 4&1, B/H mounting, clean.....\$24,000

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1986 JD 70 w/blade.....\$24,500
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Toyota skid steer loader buckets.....POR
3 Yd. 444E Material bucket, new.....\$2,400
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ATTACHMENTS

Dresher PC-19, asphalt profiler, set up for skid steer loader, 19" width.....\$7,600
JD forks for 350 loader.....\$1,000
93A Backhoe.....\$3,500
9300 Backhoes, Good Condition.....\$4,500
Toyota Model 630, Trencher for Toyota Skid Steer.....\$3,850
Winch for JD 450C w/log arch.....\$6,000

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