

# Attract, Hire & Retain Farm Employees

## Cheat Sheet

### Attract & Hire

#### #1 Issue facing farms and just about every other industry... finding great talent

##### What Candidates Are Looking For

- Cultural fit
- See the impact of their work
- Work-life balance

The number one question we receive from candidates, “what’s the culture like...what is it like to work there?”

The number one question our farm clients struggle answering, “what is your work culture?”

##### What Farms Have to Offer Candidates

- Current trend of candidates moving to small to mid-sized organizations
- The ability to see how they contribute to the big picture
- Ability to work outdoors and have variety in their jobs
- Be part of an impactful industry

##### Keys to Attract The Best Candidates

- Focus on the candidate experience
- Speed up the process
- Ensure transparency with the role
- Market your opportunity – what’s the value proposition for the employee
- Offer competitive wages

##### Other Industries to Pull Top Candidates

- Great hires don’t always have to come from agriculture
- Think about industries that use similar skills, such as military, construction, and/or industrial

##### Job Postings & AgHires

- Post on AgHires
- Be specific on the job posting when talking about your farm and the role
- Know candidates will be looking to find you on social media and for your website

##### Impactful Interview Questions

1. What have been your favorite and least favorite roles and why?
2. Reasons for leaving one organization and moving to another.
3. If you could have changed anything about the last company you worked for, what would it be?
4. What are you naturally great at?
5. If we asked your co-workers what it is like to work with you, what would they say?

## Illegal Interview Questions

- Illegal questions are those that have the potential to place a company at risk for an EEOC discrimination lawsuit, avoid asking about age, race, gender, country of origin, religion, disability, marital or family status
- Common illegal questions
  - o What does your spouse do for a living?
  - o How many kids do you have?
  - o What church do you go to?
  - o Have you ever been arrested? (alternate: Have you been convicted of a felony?)
- Resources
  - o Missouri Dept of Labor: [https://labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights/Discrimination/pre\\_employ\\_inquiries](https://labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights/Discrimination/pre_employ_inquiries)
  - o Your local labor law attorney
  - o US Department of Labor

## Hiring Family?

- Define their role and structure, similar to hiring a non-family member
- Use outside compensation comparisons to determine the best wage
- Continue to hold structured reviews even with family

# Retain & Improve Workforce Performance

## Become an Employer Of Choice

Define what your culture is today and where you would like it to be and set clear targets as a management team on how to get there.

Strong work cultures include:

- Clear targets for the team (For the year and for each season)
- Constant feedback and structured performance reviews
- Opportunities for employees to grow and learn (pay for outside classes & seminars)
- Focus on team building activities (employee t-shirts, volunteering together)
- Appreciation (verbal and written praise)
- Shared understanding of total compensation (Sample Included)

## Ensure Strong Onboarding & Training with New Hires

- 30, 60, 90-day check-in

## Performance Reviews Process

Recommended to hold more structured discussions twice a year with employees

1. Have employees reflect and complete first
2. Management will review and add comments
3. Sit down to review together and discuss

\*Sample Performance Review Included

## Employee Terminations

No one should be surprised they are being terminated. If you have been giving constructive feedback on where they are falling short in their performance, they should not be surprised you are parting ways.

1. Prepare for the termination ahead of time
  - a. Determine timing, location, and who will be involved
  - b. Determine what you need to discuss with the employee, such as when their last check will be, how you are handling vacation time that wasn't used, if there is a severance (Typically one week to several weeks depending on how long they were employed. It's not a requirement, but a nice gesture as they move on to other employment.)
  - c. Determine what you need from them such as keys, tools, uniforms, truck, etc.
  - d. Talk with your local labor law attorney for advice prior to terminating
  - e. Have your talking points mapped out ahead of time
2. Be respectful while also to the point as to why they are being terminated and notify them today is their last day of employment. It's not up for debate, stay firm, yet polite on your decision.

## Performance Review Example

Employee Name:

Manager:

Date:

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### *Competencies that drive overall company performance*

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#### Define Competency One (what impacts the success of the farm the most)

- Details

#### Define Competency Two

- Details

#### Define Competency Three

- Details

#### Alignment With Our Core Competencies

*How do you feel your performance aligns with the core competencies? Where are you succeeding and what areas need a little work?*

Employee Comments:

Manager Comments:

#### Proudest Moments

*What are your proudest accomplishments this past year (since your start date)?*

Employee Comments:

Manager Comments:

#### Areas for Growth

*In what areas are you looking to grow this next year? Target areas for improvement?*

Employee Comments:

Manager Comments:

### Feedback For Your Manager

*In what areas could we better lead, coach, support you in your efforts? Additionally, where you are you looking for more training or to gain expertise?*

Employee Comments:

Manager Comments:

### Resources Needed

What resources, tools, training could we provide to help you reach your goals?

Employee Comments:

Manager Comments:

### Goals for Next Year

*Please come prepared to bring specific goals for next year and you will finalize with manager during the review.*

## Employee Total Compensation Example

Direct Compensation	
Annual Salary	\$54,000
Bonuses	\$5,000
Indirect Compensation & Benefits	
Paid Time Off (10 days)	\$2,000
401K or IRA with Company Match	\$1,620
Health Insurance	\$6,200
Dental Insurance	\$1,400
Vision Insurance	\$0
Truck	\$6,300
Auto Insurance	\$1,400
Cell Phone	\$360
Gas	\$1,200
Sides of Beef	\$1,200
Lunches	\$800
Housing and/or Utilities	\$0
Disability Insurance	\$0
Life Insurance	0

Total Direct Compensation                      \$59,000    (72%)

Total Indirect                                      \$22,480    (28%)

**Total Compensation                              \$81,480**