



From the desk of Dr. Michelle Borek-Stine

February 1st, 2018

Culture as defined by Webster dictionary: the attitudes and behaviors that are characteristic of a particular organization.

A Culture of Excellence...what will it take to get your operation to this status?

Question number 1. What is in your employee/staff bathroom? Liken this statement to what is your wallet, for some you may be surprised to find there is no toilet paper. Much to our surprise, your employees surprise or other visitors surprise many times there is NO toilet paper OR paper towels. Yes, the downfall of excellence starts in your bathroom.

Question number 2. What is the foundation of a good team? Answer: Trust. Some carry toilet paper with them, others assume there is always toilet paper. For some people, trust must be earned, thus carrying an extra supply. For others, trust is given right away, hence the assumption toilet paper will be there. Now, what happens when that trust is gone or broken? Your team falls apart. Not just your entry level employees, this is your managers, your nutritionists, veterinarians and even family members will lose their ability to give 100% to the job when trust is broken. It is nearly impossible or takes a saint to continue to excel in conditions where the team member does not feel valued or trusted. One way to regain trust is to be vulnerable and clearly communicate. Put a sign on the door, NO TOILET PAPER \$13 milk or IF OUT OF TOILET PAPER TELL XXXX. The response no one told me is an excuse for poor trust, do they think you will actually put some in or hear, "it's not my problem."

Okay, enough with the toilet paper scenario but these areas are not to be forgotten in the quest for excellence. Cow comfort, Milk Quality, Fresh Cow Transition Ease, Air Quality, Feed Quality and Reproduction are all areas that are actively measured

and monitored. The things forgotten are clear honest communication, clear expectations, tone of voice and yes, the bathroom. Excellence begins at the top with the owner and trickles down through the entire operation. This is not only farming, this is all business. All businesses especially in Michigan right now are struggling with the shallow labor pool and poor prices. What sets you apart? What will make your farm be the one that has a culture of excellence?

Upcoming Workshop CowSignals: Identifying Lameness

Join us on Wednesday, February 21st, and Thursday, February 22nd for a two part CowSignals Workshop. Cost is \$125.00 and includes a notebook & lunch for both parts. Pre-registration is required with a commitment to both parts of the workshop. Limited to 12 attendees.

Part 1: Wednesday, February 21, 2018
1pm - 3pm TVS Meeting Room
CowSignals Presentation and discussion

Part 2: Thursday, February 22, 2018
1pm - 3pm On the Farm
Hands-on learning experience

CowSignals Concepts

Look: See, hear, feel and smell everything

Think: What are the causes?

Act: What is good? What has to be improved?

For more information, please visit thumbvets.com/events
RSVP to Katie at (810)376-2425, or
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