

From the desk of Dr. Jarrett Gordon

January 1, 2020



Wow! Another new year has begun! I want to share some principles from an on-line search for developing a “culture of excellence” in your business.

First, remember that change is inevitable. Especially for our clinic, there has been tremendous change over the last year in our staff. While it’s hard to say good-bye to people, new faces have brought new perspectives and energy to our team. The same may be true for your dairy. Think of the faces that are no longer present. Think about the changes in milk haulers, milking schedules, farming practices that had to adapt for so much mud, and simply the timing of harvest due to the weather patterns. Change can be very difficult to handle, yet it tends to challenge us to move in a positive direction that we otherwise wouldn’t have experienced. These statements might seem vague, but it is the mindset about change that creates new opportunities. If you see change as a good thing, your brain will find the golden nugget of positivity in/through the challenge.

Next, in developing a culture of excellence in any business, you need to have a vision. (Vision statement, purpose statement) Why are you doing what you do? This is not an easy task to accomplish, but in the same way you make resolutions for your personal life goals at New Year, it is a good time to ponder the “WHY” in your business and help give direction to every aspect of your dairy farm operation. Why do we use the parlor routine that we do? Why do we milk 3x/day? Why do we keep our calves? Why do we overstock our barns? Why do we harvest our own feed? Why do we call the vet when we do? Why do we sell cows? Obviously, this list could go on and on. The answers simply help to clarify what is most important to your dairy business.

Once you have clarified your vision, you can help create a culture of excellence in each aspect of your operation by allowing employees



to feel empowered to be the best in their respective roles. It really starts with the leadership and trickles down through your organization. If the employees realize how important they are in helping to reach a particular goal and have the encouragement of management, they will strive to be the best. Let’s use producing quality milk as an example. If one of your goals (visions) is to produce quality milk (let’s say SCC at/under 100,000 consistently), how many different employees contribute to the solution? The pusher/scrapper is very important. Raking stalls as they bring up cows makes for clean beds as the cows return from the parlor. Don’t forget the alleys! We see puddles on many farms that cause essentially every cow to get her teats dipped in manure while coming to and returning from the parlor. Clean cows coming to the parlor helps the milkers do better at milking clean teats. The parlor routine greatly influences both teat cleanliness and flow rates/milkout times. There’s the person refilling stalls with sand to keep cows clean and comfortable, and the farm manager who decides how many cows should be in each group. We know the BANK really tries to make this decision for you). As you can see, there are no lone rangers. Everyone’s job is connected to the overall goal.

So how do you empower employees to accept and accomplish the “vision?” Owners/managers must encourage employees at each step along the way. More often than not, words of affirmation/encouragement mean more than a monetary bonus. (but don’t disregard cash bonuses either). Allow employees to feel involved in decision-making. Have a suggestion box where employees can anonymously give input/feedback. If an employee sees one of his/her ideas being implemented, you can bet it builds loyalty and commitment to your business! Bring your happy



face to work. Leave the foul language at the door. Don't keep

"downer" employees around. They drag the whole team down. Allow flexibility in schedules when possible to allow for family needs. Be highly collaborative, allowing everyone to improve together. Develop the strong employees into managers. Those behind them will gain hope that "I can move up the ladder!" This leads to much less turnover of employees. These are just a few ways to make your business better. See what you can come up with! Happy New Year!



BACKORDERS

LA 200 – 100ml & 250ml
Tylan
Sulfadimethoxine
Polyflex – Allocation only
LA Penicillin

UPCOMING MEETING

January 29th at 1:30 p.m. & 5:00 p.m. there will be a Dairy 4.0 Discussion on the new changes needed to maintain compliance. There will be no charge for this meeting.

REMINDERS

- Be sure to check VCPR forms to make sure you're updated, otherwise please let your doctor know so they can be updated!
- Interstates & VFD's need a 48 hour notice or there will be a \$25 rush fee.
- We have some 250ml Excenel on our clinic shelf.



Wishing you all a safe and happy new year from all of us here at Thumb Veterinary Services!

Again, we want to thank you for your continued support over the last year, and can't wait to see what the next year has in store!

LAST BUT NOT LEAST.....



**HAPPY RETIREMENT
DR. GARY COLLINGS!**



Wishing you the best on your new chapter and hope retirement treats you well! We are going to miss you!



