

Labor Relations Part 1 (or, Somebody Around Here Has To Do The Work!)

A. All people, because they are people, deserve respect; but this respect can be lost by what people do.

B. I look for two things in people:

1. Character: honest, trustworthy, reliable
2. Work ethic: does the person know how to work?

C. Things we try to do on the job:

1. Set people up for success
2. Instill self-confidence
3. Give people freedom to make mistakes
4. Train for new skills; everyone is cross-trained

D. Things we try to help people with:

1. I'm accessible to everyone for anything: problems on the job, things they would like to change
2. Help with the wrinkles in life: banks, school, police, taxes, etc.

E. We try to provide people with:

1. Full-time employment
2. Time off whenever they need it as long as we have advance notice
3. Vacation breaks with a guaranteed job when they come back
4. One week paid vacation after a year's work
5. Always take Sundays off and try to take half of Saturday off

F. Work organization

1. Everyone is responsible for his or herself. No one has the job of making someone work. Some people are explainers and will explain to others what needs to be done, but it is not their job to make people work. Because of this, not everyone is a good fit to work with us.
2. Only compatible personalities work with us; everyone has to get along.

G. Employee Training

1. I train the first one; the first one trains a few more; they train everyone else
2. What we are after is consistency. It has to be right every single time on every single project.

H. Interviewing People

1. What we are trying to figure out is: Is this person honest, trustworthy, and reliable? Do they know how to work? If yes, then we can train them to do whatever work needs to be done.
2. What work have they done in the past?
3. What kind of work did their parents do?
4. Schooling?
5. Any injuries, medical conditions, or State Industrial claims that would limit the kind of work they should be doing?
6. Anyone working here that they know?

7. The big question: If they could have any job they want in the world,
what would they like to do?
8. Hobbies, spare time activities?

Labor Relations (part 2)

A. How we find people

1. Some jobs are more difficult to find the right people for than others
(Supervisors! Anybody to take charge with a helpful attitude)
2. Notebooks full of names (this is different from Romney's "binders full of women")
3. Bounties
4. Word of mouth
5. Early spring vs. late spring hiring

B. What we are looking for

1. Honest, trustworthy, & reliable character
2. Teaching new skills vs. correcting old habits
3. Special skills are a plus for both employer and employee

C. The interview:

1. First 3 questions (English? How long in US? Last job?)
2. Next questions (Special skills? Why did you quit? Friends here?)
3. Almost everybody gets an interview

4. No application, no phone numbers please; we call you
5. Hiring within families: the good and the bad
6. Other considerations (AKA “profiling”: car, music, eye contact, interest, etc.)
7. Ray’s Famous Job Description – be honest about the work

D. Paperwork (I-9, W2, SS Card, etc.)

E. Trial period (for both us and for them)

F. Explanation of pay scales

1. Everybody who works is worth getting paid
2. Some jobs are worth more \$ than others (tractor, mechanic, construction, electrical, computer, language, supervisor, etc)
3. Money isn’t the only way you are paid on a farm
4. How to make payroll fit the season (bonuses, profit sharing)
(example: Ralph’s; Skagit Flats Farm)

G. New worker meetings: Things to know before you start work

1. Proper clothing is your responsibility (hot/cold/soggy)
2. How you are paid / How to log your hours
3. Time off / work breaks policies

4. Supervisors

5. What to do if you have a problem with work or coworkers

6. Termination policy (for you and for Ralph's)

7. Taking food home

8. Safety / first aid

9. Health / hygiene (for you, your coworkers, and the customer)

10. Be on time (what this means)

H. Retaining Employees (Year-round work; share with John DV)