Employee Management for the Swine Industry

Instructor
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Description of Employee Management for the Swine Industry: (1 credit)
Effective employee management in swine production units. Principles, policies, and practices related to hiring, development and retention of employees, as well as fundamental organizational management.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
Describe written and oral communication skills needed to be an effective manager in the pork industry.
Practice skills needed to be both a leader and team member in a multicultural workforce.
Prepare a job description, interview potential employees, and evaluate potential and current employees.

Justification for the Employee Management for the Swine Industry Course:
Most students never have opportunity to take a formal course on basic employee management while attending college, yet this is considered one of the most important aspects of a manager's job. The purpose of this course is to give students a background in employee management for the swine industry.

Course Organization:
This course will be delivered via distance education. This course is comprised of 16 topics and a project that will be completed in a 16-week period (August 25 through December 19, 2014). Because the last two weeks concentrate on the final project, some weeks you will be responsible for more than one topic. Each class week will begin on Monday morning at 8 a.m. (Eastern). All activities assigned for that week need to be completed by that Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. Late work will not be accepted unless cleared by the instructor PRIOR TO the deadline.

Each topic will include a short online presentation to introduce it. Handouts of the powerpoint slides will be available for download. There will also be graded activities (assignment, discussion post, quiz, etc.) associated with each topic. The purpose of the activities is to expand,
enhance and apply your learning for each module. They also serve to help you keep up with the course. Because this course is 100% online, it is very easy to let it slide if you aren’t careful.

Activities:
Each topic will have an activity (quiz, discussion post, case study, etc.) that you will need to complete. These activities are listed with each topic in the Schedule of Topics pages at the end of this syllabus and are on the Scholar Calendar as well. Specific instructions for each activity will be given with that topic. Don’t wait until the last minute to complete the assignments; Murphy’s Law works especially well on technology when you have a deadline!

Course Project:
The course project is worth 200 points. Throughout the course you will work on components of the project (worth 125 of the 200 points) which at the end of the course will be combined into a Swine Caretaker Employee Package (worth the other 75 points). Components of this package include a cover sheet, a job description, job application, potential interview questions, a one-week orientation/on-boarding program, an employee incentive program, a development plan for the first year, and professionalism and ethics statements. You will have the opportunity to work on this package and receive feedback on this project throughout the course.

Examinations:
One quiz will be given the second week but all other points are earned through other activities and the course project.
Two Forums will be available throughout the course:

News and Notes – Sometimes we all come across interesting information and articles about the pork industry. Please use this area to post any news that you think would be beneficial for the entire class. You can also post news about yourself in this area.
Q and A – If you have any questions about assignments, content, etc., please place them in this area. More than likely other students will have the same questions and may have answers. I will try to answer these questions within 24 hours. Additional Forums associated with the course modules will be added most weeks. They will be open for posting for one week but can be reviewed for the rest of the course. Some of these are required while others are optional (extra credit). Make sure you complete the required ones!

Grading:
Points are assigned on the following basis:

Item Points
Online Quiz 25
Project 200
Homework Assignments 100
Forums 175
TOTAL 500
Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

**Grade Percent Points Grade Percent Points Grade Percent Points**
A 93 – 100 465-500 B- 80 – 82.9 400-414 D+ 68 – 69.9 340-349
A- 90 – 92.9 450-464 C+ 78 – 79.9 390-399 D 63 – 67.9 315-339
B+ 88 – 89.9 440-449 C 73 – 77.9 365-389 D- 60 – 62.9 300-314
B 83 – 87.9 415-439 C- 70 – 72.9 350-364 F < 60 <300

**Week 1**
1. **Introduction to the Course**
This week will help everyone get settled into the course.
**Activity:** Introduction Forum posts (25 points)

**Week 2**
2. **Legal Basics**
This topic provides an overview of employment law (in the US – it can be very different elsewhere!), which is foundational for managing employees.
**Activity:** Quiz (25 points)

3. **Worker Health and Safety**
Worker health and safety are important in the pork industry. This topic will provide you with basic knowledge on worker health and safety programs for production units.
**Activity:** Forum post on worker health and safety consideration (25 points)

**Week 3**
4. **Recruitment and Selection**
Recruiting and selecting employees is a part of a manager’s position within an organization. This topic will walk you through proper recruitment and hiring procedures, including interview techniques.
**Activity:** Part of Final Project – Create a job description, job application, and potential interview questions for a Swine Caretaker position within a pork production operation (25 points).

**Week 4**
5. **Compensation and Benefits**
Fair compensation is important for attracting and retaining employees. This topic will discuss the factors (including, but not limited to, location, benefits, and other employment opportunities in the area) involved in computing compensation for employees.
**Activities:** Part of Final Project – Create an Employee Incentive Program based on a production goal (25 points).

**Week 5**
6. **On-boarding**
On-boarding includes initial training but it is also about making a new employee feel welcome. This topic will walk you through the components of a good on-boarding process.
**Activity:** Part of Final Project – Create a one-week orientation/on-boarding program for a newly hired Swine Caretaker(25 points).
Week 6

7: Training and Development
Training and developing employees for their current and future positions is an important responsibility for managers. This topic will provide you with information on creating a training and development program for your employees.

Activity: Part of Final Project – Write a training protocol for a task a new employee needs to learn (25 points)

Week 7

8: Workplace Communication
Communication skills are important for every occupation and are very important in the diverse U.S. pork industry. This module will cover writing, speaking skills, and appropriate means of communication in the workplace.

Activity: Forum post on the biggest barrier to effective workplace communication (25 points)

9: Team Dynamics and Positive Team Culture
Every team is diverse and learning how to manage a team with many dynamics can be difficult for new managers. At the same time, creating and keeping a positive team culture helps retain and attract high performing employees. This topic will discuss how to manage a team with many different dynamics. It also provides information to help build and keep a high level of positive energy in a team.

Activity: Take the Myers-Briggs type personality instrument and post your reflections in the Forum area (25 points).

Week 8

10: Performance Management
Providing feedback to employees is important for both performance management and employee development but can be an intimidating task for a manager. This topic will cover tools and steps in managing, motivating and providing feedback to employees on a consistent basis, realizing that each company will have their own protocols for conducting performance management.

Activity: Forum post on the benefits and challenges of performance management in a pork production facility (25 points).

Week 9

11: Discipline and Termination
Disciplining and possible termination of employees is something that every manager might have to deal with at some time. This topic discusses the steps to be taken in that situation.

Activity: Case study on disciplining an employee (25 points)

Week 10

12: Conflict Management
Practicing effective conflict resolution is important for everyone working in the swine industry. This topic will provide participants with practice and skills needed in resolving conflicts that may occur within swine operations.

Activity: Case study on conflict management in a pork production unit (25 points)
Week 11

13: Retaining Employees
Employee retention, especially of your best, most desirable employees, is a key challenge in the swine industry. This topic will give you tips and strategies for keeping good employees.
Activity: Case study on keeping employees in a pork production unit (25 points)

14: Managing and Appreciating Diversity
The swine industry in the U.S. is very diverse. This topic will provide you with skills that are needed while managing individuals who come from different backgrounds.
Activity: Forum post on considerations while managing a diverse team (25 points).

Week 12

15: Professionalism and Ethics
Ethics and professionalism should be the core of any business. This topic will teach you about business ethics and professionalism that should be used within any business.
Activity: Part of Final Project – Create professionalism and ethics statements for swine caretaker employees (25 points)

Week 13 Break

Week 14

16: Family-Owned Business Management
Many swine units are owned within families. It can be difficult when family managers are now managing other family members. This topic will provide tools in managing family members within an agriculture operation and touch on handling generational changes in family-owned businesses.
Activity: Forum post on considerations for managing family-owned businesses (25 points)

Week 15 and Week 16
Complete your final project.