

**Beyond Language Barriers: Building Safety Cultures Through Cultural Understanding**

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Department of Dairy and Food Science

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1

### WHO ARE the FARM Workers?

- 1/3 U.S. dairy farms employ **foreign-born** workers. These farms produce nearly 80% of the nation's milk
- Farms with more than **200 cows** usually hire one worker every 50-150 cows
- The dairy work force relies on **Latinos / Hispanics**
- **Country's second-largest ethnic group**, behind white non-Hispanics, are 18.3% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019)

25 different culture groups  
"Person of (fill-in-name of country) origin"  
COLOMBIA  
Hispanic / Latino

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2

### MIX of CULTURES Values & Beliefs

**ORIGIN**

- European descendants
- Indigenous descendants
- Central, S. America & Hispanic Caribbean

**VALUES**

- Family structure and relationships: *extended family concept*
- Art & music
- Proud of their heritage
- Food / Table

**RELIGION**

- African & Indigenous
- Catholicism
- Other Christian religions (Europe)
- Folklore

**EDUCATION**

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3

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<https://lpelc.org/archived-webinars/clear-communication-safer-operations-why-multilingual-manure-management-and-farm-safety-training-matters/>

## HOW ARE THEY CHARACTERIZED?

✓ Strength	⚠ Areas of Opportunities
<b>Loyalty and Commitment:</b> High dedication when they feel valued	<b>Indirect Communication:</b> They may avoid conflict out of respect
<b>Family Orientation:</b> Strong sense of community and team	<b>Difficulty Saying "No":</b> They accept excessive tasks
<b>Work Ethic:</b> Willingness to work hard	<b>Decision-Making:</b> They prefer to consult before deciding
<b>Respect for Authority:</b> They value hierarchy and leadership	<b>Present Orientation:</b> Less long-term planning
<b>Adaptability:</b> Flexible in the face of changes and new situations	<b>Concept of Time:</b> Flexibility can cause tension
<b>Effective leadership requires understanding and leveraging cultural strengths while addressing areas of opportunity with empathy</b>	

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4

## CHALLENGES

WORKFORCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural and societal differences</li> <li><b>Isolation</b></li> <li>Lack of trust</li> <li><b>Accessible information</b></li> <li>Embarrassment</li> <li><b>FAMILIAR Structure</b></li> <li>Levels of education</li> <li><b>Head nodding</b></li> </ul>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Health coverage</b></li> </ul> <p><b>80% do not have health insurance</b>, 53% have not seen a physician in the last 3 years &amp; 10% never have visited a physician</p> <p><b>Reasons for not seeking medical help:</b> from cost, lack of information, to a language barrier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Limited</b> language skills</li> </ul>

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5

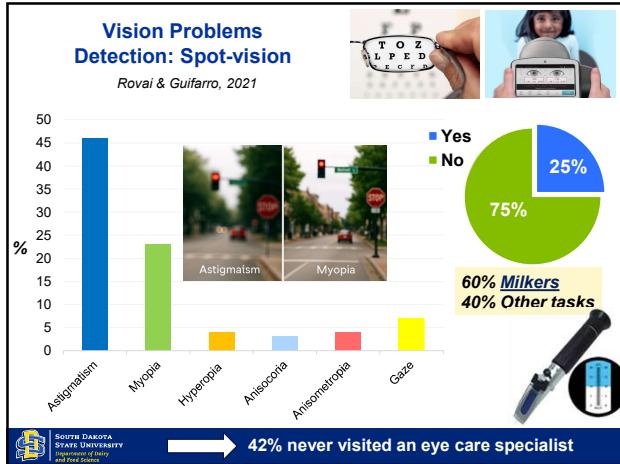
## WELFARE NEEDS: ANIMALS AND PEOPLE

Animals: The Five Freedoms	People: Hierarchy of Needs
<b>1. Hunger and Thirst</b> Access to fresh water and a diet that maintains full health and vigor	<b>1. Physiological Needs</b> Food, water, shelter, sleep, clothing, and general health
<b>2. Discomfort</b> An appropriate environment with shelter and a comfortable resting area	<b>2. Safety Needs</b> Security, stability, protection from harm, financial security
<b>3. Pain, Injury, and Disease</b> Prevention, rapid diagnosis, and treatment of injuries or diseases	<b>3. Love and Belonging</b> Friendships, family, intimacy, connection, sense of community
<b>4. Express Normal Behavior</b> Sufficient space, proper facilities, and companionship of the same species	<b>4. Esteem Needs</b> Self-esteem, confidence, achievement, recognition, dignity
<b>5. Fear and Distress</b> Conditions and handling that prevent mental suffering	<b>5. Self-Actualization</b> Reaching full potential, personal growth, creativity, fulfillment
<b>Animals and humans need basic survival, safety, social connection, and mental well-being to thrive</b>	

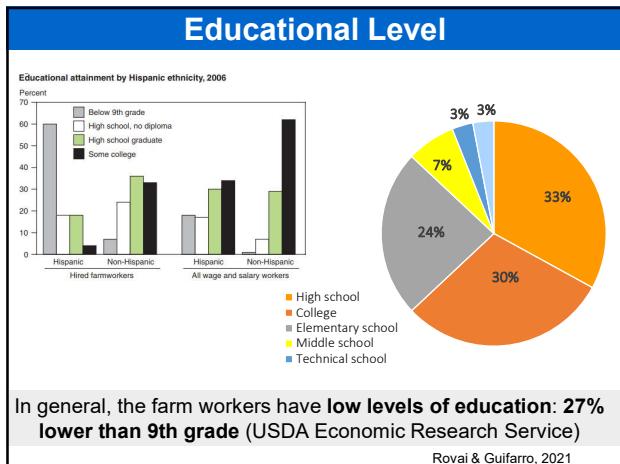
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7



8

**GENERACIONAL DIFFERENCES**

Generation	Birth Years (approx.)	Current Estimated Age (Jan 2026)	Key Characteristics for Training
Baby Boomers	1946-1964 (kasasa.com)	≈ 61-79 years	Loyal, practical; prefer in-person methods and formal recognition
Generation X	1965-1980 (Mental Floss)	≈ 45-60 years	Autonomous, value utility and flexibility in training
Millennials (Y)	1981-1996 (Pew Research Center)	≈ 29-44 years	Digital natives, collaborative; prefer interactive and purposeful learning
Generation Z	1997-2012 (beresfordresearch.com)	≈ 13-28 years	Very digital, visual; motivated by fast challenges, gamification, mobile
Generation Alpha	2013-2025 (Your Teen Magazine)	≈ 0-12 years	Still children, but relevant for future; visual and experiential learning will be key

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9

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CHALLENGES	
COMPANY	
<b>RETENTION AND PERSONNEL PROBLEMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High staff turnover</li> <li>2. Shortage of qualified personnel</li> <li>3. New employees quitting</li> <li>4. Loss of good employees due to ? better offers ?</li> </ul>	
<b>COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Communication problems</li> <li>7. Repeated errors at work</li> <li>8. Instructions that are misinterpreted</li> <li>9. Lack of communication between managers-workers</li> </ul>	
<b>PERFORMANCE AND ATTITUDE PROBLEMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Low productivity/not committed to quality</li> <li>12. Employees who don't follow instructions</li> <li>13. Employees who don't take initiative</li> </ul>	
<b>CULTURE AND MOTIVATION PROBLEMS</b> <b>MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE PROBLEMS</b>	

10

## JOB DESCRIPTION

- Prepare a detailed job description
- **A good job description:**
  - Lists all tasks associated with job
  - Describes wage scale
  - **Describes qualifications required from employees**
  - Describes chain of command (not more than one boss !)
  - **DESCRIBE EXPECTATIONS**

**Enfoque en Seguridad**

Entrenamiento en Manejo Básico de SEGURIDAD y PRIMEROS AUXILIOS





11

## Mutual Understanding for Effective Leadership

<p><b>What Managers Need to Understand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture and <b>previous experiences</b> of workers</li> <li>• Language and <b>communication barriers</b></li> <li>• Continuous <b>training needs</b></li> <li>• Importance of <b>recognition</b></li> <li>• How to <b>identify leads/supervisors</b> in chain of command</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Workers Need to Understand</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Organizational structure</b> of the business</li> <li>• Decision-making process</li> <li>• Why <b>organizational hierarchy</b> exists</li> <li>• How to <b>escalate problems</b> appropriately</li> <li>• Available <b>growth opportunities</b></li> <li>• What metrics/<b>results to meet</b></li> </ul>
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12

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## PROTOCOLS

**Milking Routine / Rutina de Ordeño**

**Milking Protocol / Protocolo de Ordeño**

**Milking**

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13

## MESSAGES

**Zero Tolerance for Animal Abuse**

**Cero tolerancia para el abuso de animales**

**Using the wrong translation, the message could be completely different from the desired action**

14

Treatment Protocol	Protocolo de Tratamiento
Respiratory	Respiratorio
Bronchial: 1cc/100 kg repeat treatment 48hrs later	• Se 1cc/100 kg
Nebul: 0.05cc/100 kg repeat treatment 48hrs later	• Repetir tratamiento después de 48 horas
Penicillin: 2.5cc/100 kg	• Se 2.5cc/100 kg
Streus:	
Electrolytes only in between feedings 10 hrs apart	• Solo entre alimentaciones 10 horas aparte
Novel Infection: Don't stop milk feedings	• No dejar las alimentaciones con leche
Penicillin: 5cc/100 kg twice a day for 5 days	
Excimer: 2cc/100 kg	
Cystidil: 1 treatment	
Anti: 1cc/100 kg - 15cc/100 kg w/ 5cc penicillin/500 mg penicillin - 5cc amikacin/5cc ceftriaxone orally	
Bleeding:	
Probiotic Paste: Mineral oil - 1 part	
Mycoplasma (dry eye) Ears:	
Baytril: 5cc/100 kg repeat treatment 48 hours	

**AI is a useful tool to get the message across to employees**

**Note: Give it to an employee to quickly read it through**

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15

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## TRAINING / MEETING APPROACH

- **Short sessions (SS)**
- Small groups (e.g., different shifts)
- Have at least one monthly meeting / every semester
- **Hold the meeting even if everything is OK!**

**Train – retrain – refresh – train – retrain – refresh**

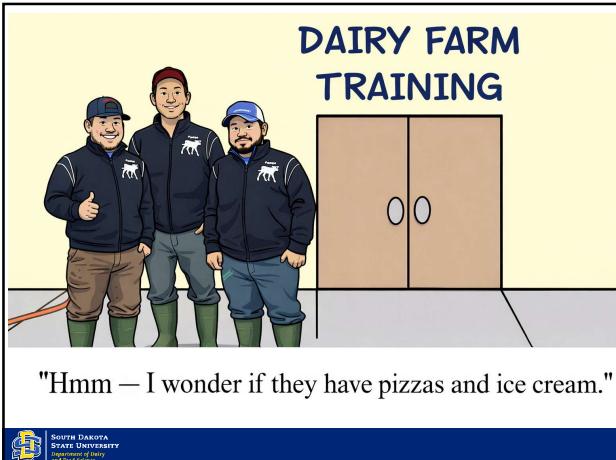
- Consider the **literacy of the group**
- **Ask questions:** encourage participation & discussion

- Show what to do or...
- Show what not to do!
- Explain “why” we do what we “do”
- Have them explain in their own words

- Follow-up
- Feedback
- Train the trainer



16



17

## BODY LANGUAGE



- Hands clasped or together
- Leaning forward toward the table
- Arms resting on the surface
- Body oriented toward speaker

**Suggests:** active listening, engagement, engagement, attentiveness, or interest in the discussion

- Crossed arms and leaning back
- Cell phone use
- Body turned away from instructor/materials
- Minimal eye contact

**Suggests:** defensiveness, or a closed-off attitude, or a comfortable resting position. **Need to shift approach!**



Went from engaged/thoughtful → potentially uncertain or surprised → **less engaged**

18

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19

## Cultural Differences Examples

Employee's behavior	Your perception	What it really means
<b>Stands close to you</b>	Trying to make me uncomfortable	Customary to stand close to someone
Waves hand toward you, palm down	Waving hello	Please come over here
<b>Nods head up and down</b>	He understands me	I may not understand, but I won't interrupt because it is rude

- It is not always a good idea to have a worker from the dairy do translations or training, especially if he/she was not hired to do such a job
- Asking a worker to translate/teach for other fellow workers could create an environment of animosity in the workplace

20



21

The archived presentation is available at: [www.ohio.edu/people/robert.schultz/teaching/2010-11/2010-11.html](http://www.ohio.edu/people/robert.schultz/teaching/2010-11/2010-11.html)

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**Pozo/Laguna de Estiércol: Peligros y Medidas de Seguridad**

**Riesgos Inherentes:** Espacios confinados con riesgos de asfixia y envenenamiento  
Crucial tener ventilación adecuada

**Gases Peligrosos y Mortales**

- Dóxido de carbono**
  - Más pesado que el aire y se deposita sobre el estiércol
  - Incendio e inodoro
  - Polvo y polvo
- Metano**
  - Más ligero que el aire y se deposita sobre el estiércol
  - Incendio e inodoro
  - Riesgo de explosión, avata chispas, incendios, también provoca asfixia

**Ammonia:**

- Más ligero que el aire
- Respiración al oxígeno en el borde de una estructura de almacenamiento de estiércol
- Irritante para los ojos y el sistema respiratorio

**Sulfuro de hidrógeno:**

- Más pesado que el aire y se deposita sobre el estiércol
- Altamente venenoso, huele a huevo podrido
- Irritante y paralizante de los nervios, incapacidad para respirar

**Pozo de Estiércol: Peligros y Medidas de Seguridad**

**Protocolos de Seguridad**

- Solo personal capacitado debe ingresar a los pozos de estiércol
- Respiración al oxígeno en el borde de una estructura de almacenamiento de estiércol
- Señalización del petróleo
- Plan de acción en caso de emergencia
- Mantener el área libre de riesgos

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22

**Safety and Emergency Response Training for Hispanic Dairy Farm Employees**

Topic	Pre (Blue)	Post (Red)
Accident Causes	~45	~65
Torso Reason	~60	~80
Torso Application	~70	~85
CPR Application	~40	~55
First-Aid	~65	~85
Zoonosis	~20	~70
biosecurity	~60	~70
Animal Handling	~45	~60
Animal Handling	~75	~85
Manure Risks	~30	~35

■ Manure management risks posed a greater safety concern, with only 25% awareness even after training.

**South Dakota State University Animal and Food Sciences** Villamediana & Rovai, 2024

23

**FOLLOW-UP / FEEDBACK**

- Feedback, Recognition, and appreciation for their work

● Return of information about the result of a process or activity; evaluative response. Share success with the employees!

24

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**The Three Leadership Competencies**

**Emotional Competence**

- Ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own and others' emotions
- Self-awareness
- Emotional regulation
- Empathy
- Social skills

**TQ**  
**Technical Competence**  
Specific knowledge and skills necessary for the job

- Professional experience
- Specialized skills
- Sector knowledge
- Continuous training

**IQ**  
**Intelligence**  
Ability to reason, solve problems and learn

- Critical thinking
- Analysis and synthesis
- Decision making
- Problem solving

**Effective leadership requires the balance of all three competencies**

25

# EMOTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

## TEAMWORK and PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

- EDUCATING  
*is an ART*
- PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
*is an ART*

*Limits, needs, individual or collective recognition are managed...*



### STUDIES WITH TEAMWORK:

- 50% of things that happen are seen, discussed and can be changed
- Unforeseen events are variables that don't depend on us

### BASIC PRINCIPLES:

**OBSERVE,**  
**ASK,** and  
**LISTEN**

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26

**IT ONLY LOOKS SAFE BECAUSE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING AT !**

27

The archived presentation is available at: [www.ams.org/amsmta/2012/001](http://www.ams.org/amsmta/2012/001)

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28

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