

## EMPLOYEE RETENTION - KEEPING THE BEST

**Rob McDougall**  
**Elite Swine Inc., Cold Spring Farms**  
**149 Brock Street**  
**Thamesford, Ontario N0M 2M0**  
**E-mail: Rob@coldsp.com**

**Direction:** It is critical that everyone in your business / operation commits to a common vision / mission for your operation. This message must be consistent and understood by all members of your team.

**Six Key Components:** The awareness of these “six pillars” as the foundation to build upon is a must for all involved within your production system to have long term success. These are as follows: health, genetics, feed, facilities, information and people.

**Critical Success Factors:** The following areas are some of which we have identified as key to long term people development within our system.

1. Recruitment
  - i. Reputation of the employer.
  - ii. Involve others in the hiring process.
  - iii. Be pro – active.
  - iv. Hire the “right” person.
  
2. Working Conditions
  - i. Treat all with respect.
  - ii. Install a culture of continuous improvement to develop all the capabilities of all the people.
  - iii. Never request anything done that you would not do yourself.
  - iv. Coming to work needs to be “fun”.
  - v. Importance of current health and safety programs.
  
3. Training:
  - i. Must be practical and informative.
  - ii. Short term / long term objectives.
  - iii. Practical / Theory.
  - iv. The ability to explain why it is important.
  - v. Manage the top – they will be your long term success.
  - vi. Something that is looked forward to – want to learn about their field.
  
4. Communication:
  - i. The ability to keep people “cranked up”.
  - ii. Two way.
  - iii. Open and honest.

- iv. Verbal, Written, Visual.
- v. Weekly staff meetings.
- vi. Good people managers are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to talk with workers (work related & personal).

5. Attitude:

- i. Manage to the top.
- ii. Empower the people.
- iii. The ability to get the “right people on the bus”.
- iv. Verbal, Written, Visual.
- v. Good people managers are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to talk with workers (work related & personal).
- vi. Start at the top – the manager’s attitude is extremely important – cannot be going through the motions.

6. Delegation:

- i. As the barns / farms have become increasingly larger it is impossible to do everything yourself.
- ii. Key to having people involved at all levels.
- iii. Plan your Work – Work your Plan.
- iv. Delegate Jobs – Don’t Dump Them.

7. Measure & Evaluate:

- i. Involves all members of the team.
- ii. Farm performance / individual performance / COP.
- iii. Annual / Semi Annual performance reviews.
- iv. Quarterly production reviews.
- v. Monthly production reviews.
- vi. Issues and or concerns must be documented and a course of action developed.

8. Promote from Within:

- i. Shows a commitment to your staff.
- ii. Known quality.
- iii. Planned development program.
- iv. Management has a plan.

9. Remuneration:

- i. Fair and reasonable pay scale within your sector. Do your own compensation survey through industry contacts, benchmarking surveys, etc.
- ii. A consistent and planned remuneration increase program that is based on responsibility and performance.
- iii. A bonus program that encourages improvement and rewards individuals (teams) for top performance.

10. Employee Recognition:

- i. A thank you.
- ii. Quarterly Awards.
  - a. Breeding Technician Award.
  - b. Farrowing Technician Award.
  - c. Extra Effort.
- iii. Annual Awards.
  - a. Top Performing Farm.
  - b. Most Improved Farm.
  - c. Breeding Technician Award.
  - d. Farrowing Technician Award.
  - e. Extra Effort Award.
  - f. Good Neighbour Award.
- iv. Special Events.

11. Involvement:

- i. Encourage involvement in related courses, seminars, tradeshow, industry contacts, magazines, newsletters, industry functions, etc.