



# Performance Management

Discusses the management of work performances

- What is performance management
- Planning a performance management system
- Why performance management fails
- Establishing performance measures
- How to do a performance appraisal
- Coaching and training for improved performances
- Using performance management to improve retention
- Performance management examples

## 4.1 Performance Management

### Improving business performance through individuals

#### Why this is important

Performance management processes are designed to help both the employer and employee in their working relationship. Using performance management processes will:

- Provide a forum for improved communication between employer and employee
- Improve staff work performance and thus business performance
- Help staff understand the goals of the business
- Increase employee job satisfaction and motivation
- Identify staff training needs
- Provide a forum to deal with small problem areas for employers and employees and avoid them becoming large problems
- Assist in a fair and defensible dismissal for employees that under-perform.

#### This fact sheet will cover:

- What is performance management?
- Planning a performance management system
- Why performance management fails
- Establishing performance measures
- How to do a performance appraisal
- Coaching and training for improved performance
- Using performance management to improve retention
- Performance management examples

#### What is performance management?

Performance management is a tool:

- For ensuring that employees know what is expected of them
- To help them achieve (or exceed) those expectations.

In its broadest sense performance management is a tool that influences almost every part of a job.

#### Planning a performance management system

Planning a performance management system involves the following steps:

- Identifying the important components of performance
- Establishing performance measures
- The appraisal process
- Coaching.

## Identifying the important components of performance

Accurate measurement of an employee's performance can only occur if it is clear to both the employer and the employee what the job involves. Therefore, performance management starts with the employer planning what they want the employee to do and then deciding the standards to which the tasks should be completed. This information is identified in the staff planning process and is then fed into the job description and person specification (see Job Description 1.7 and Person Specification 1.8 Fact Sheets). Selection of the individual should also be based on these criteria. The steps in this process are outlined in the diagram below.



During the performance planning process, the employer and the employee must communicate and reach agreement on:

- The objectives of the job
- The standards to be met in the job
- Priorities and timeframes.

## Where performance management fail

Before setting up a performance management system it is useful to look at why such systems fail. One example of a performance management system is feedback processes- where the employee and employer meet to review, set new goals and discuss any key points in their work.

Primary reasons for failure in feedback processes include:

- Performance objectives may drive the wrong behaviour
- Unrealistic targets
- Objectives are set by the employer without any discussion with the employee
- The employee can't influence performance results
- No reward or reason on offer for meeting objectives (not necessarily financial reward)
- Poorly written performance standards or measures.
- Reviewing on a less regular basis which allows for habits to be created, employees to be unsure and missed opportunity to reinforce/celebrate success

Getting a performance management system right will take time and should involve input from employees and employers.

## Code of Conduct

A code of conduct should be provided to all employees to engage their awareness in their organisations value and proper practices throughout their workplace.

### Useful link:

<https://www.employment.govt.nz/workplace-policies/what-are-workplace-policies/>

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## Establishing performance measures

All performance targets and measures should be consistent with the expectations as described to the employee in their job description. Therefore, the job description is a good place to start thinking about appropriate measures.

Performance measures can be either objective or subjective measures and the choice of measure will depend on the desired outcome.

### What are objective measures?

Objective measures have an easily identified result and require no interpretation. They can include things like:

- Downgraded carcasses
- Scanning results (e.g. 170%) and lambing performance (e.g.125%)
- Financial results (EFS/ha)
- Wool production (kilograms of wool shorn per ha).

Objective measures are often written using the SMART template. This means they should be:

Specific - Is the objective clear?

Measurable - Is there a quantity attached to the objective?

Achievable - Can the objective be achieved?

Realistic - Is it possible to achieve the objective given other pressures?

Time-bound - What date does the objective have to be achieved by?

### What are subjective measures?

Subjective measures require a judgement to be made by the appraiser as to what standard of performance has been reached. Subjective measures are used to qualify attitudes and behaviours of the employee where they have a large impact on employee performance.

Areas where subjective measures can be used are:

- Cleanliness
- Stockmanship
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Enthusiasm
- Attitude.

With subjective measures it is vital at the planning stage that all parties agree on the measurements and have a clear understanding of the standards that are required.

### How to implement subjective measures

Many farmers feel uncomfortable using subjective measures because measurement is a matter of opinion. However, it is possible to use subjective measures accurately and consistently.

An important component of successfully using subjective measures is that the person appraising the employee is knowledgeable of and/or has observed the behaviours concerned. It is also important that the behaviours that constitute good performance be well defined and described to the employee.

For example, a subjective measure could be set up for tidiness. To make it a useful measure that both employer and employee understand, the definition of tidiness needs to be expanded on. In this case the measure of tidiness can be further described by more specific behaviours which have less room for interpretation such as:

- House lawn mown weekly
- Gates closed
- All household rubbish to be kept in bins with closed lids
- Tools returned after use.

In effect, each of these behaviours should be rated to get an overall impression of "tidiness".

Some tools that can help in rating behaviours include:

- Check lists and written guidelines such as a Code of Conduct or House Rules
- Check lists provide a set of statements that describe good performance.

For example:

Tidiness (Tick all statements that the employee performs consistently)

Overalls clean daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tools returned after use	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gates closed	<input type="checkbox"/>
House lawn mown weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Forced choice statements

Forced choice statements ask the assessor to choose the standard at which the employee is performing. Using this technique, it is preferable to have the same person assessing all employees for consistency purposes.

For example:

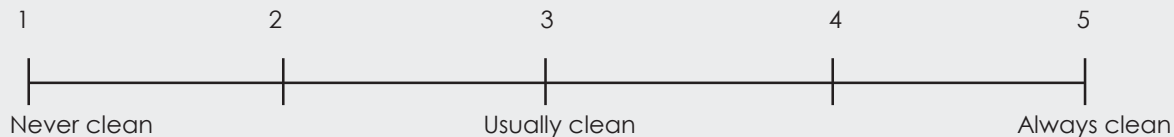
Tools returned after use (Tick the statement that most accurately describes employee's performance)

Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almost always	<input type="checkbox"/>
Always	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Ranking systems

Ranking systems also ask the assessor to choose the standard at which the employee is performing. Like forced choice statements, it is preferable to have the same assessor for all staff.

For example, the woolshed is always cleaned and tidied within 2 days after use (Circle the number that most accurately describes the employee's performance)



For examples of complete performance management plans refer to the Performance Appraisal Examples 4.1.1 & 4.1.2.

## How to do a performance appraisal

The process of measuring employee performance is called a performance appraisal and this process is the basis of a performance management programme. The formal performance appraisal process should follow this format:

1. The employee rates their own performance independently of the employer
2. The employer rates the employee's performance
3. Employer and employee meet within seven days and aim to agree on a performance rating. Any points of disagreement are noted and the agreed ratings are signed and a copy is given to the employee for their own records
4. Plan the way forward together, including training and coaching required in the future
5. Keep a record of discussion for future reference.

Step 3 of the process is very important as it identifies the opportunities for training and development that will help build on employee performance. It should not focus solely on performance deficits! This opportunity should also be used to discuss the goals and aspirations of the staff member to identify how the job can help to meet their needs for the future. This is very important if staff retention is a goal.

As a rule of thumb 80% of the performance appraisal will focus on the year ahead and only 20% will focus on what has happened during the past year. By using this ratio, more time is spent on looking forward rather than dwelling on the past. This ratio provides a much more motivating and positive experience for both parties.

Try to make performance review time something to look forward to – not something to dread! Many employees enjoy the personal attention from the boss.

## Coaching and training for improved performance

Coaching leads on from the performance appraisal process where areas for employee growth or improved performance have been identified. Coaching establishes a game plan as to how growth or improvement in employee performance can be achieved (see Training and Development Fact Sheet 4.8).

Coaching is a less formal version of performance appraisal; identifying development opportunities and performance deficits as they arise, meaning feedback is more immediate. As a result of ongoing coaching, issues that arise in a performance appraisal should never come as a surprise to employer or employee.

### Coaching is a relatively simple three step process:

1. Identify need
2. Plan training process
3. Monitor progress.

In many farm situations coaching happens regularly as the employer and employee work together on a daily basis, however the ability to coach staff does not always come naturally and sometimes needs to be formally planned.

## Managing non-performance

If an employee is consistently under-performing something needs to be done about it! Research shows that where a manager tolerates non-performance, other high-performing team members are more likely to leave.

## Analysing performance shortfalls

Often when performance targets are not met it is difficult to know where the problem lies. Using the performance analysis flow chart on the next page can help isolate the cause of the performance shortfall.

## Interpreting the performance analysis flowchart

### Is the poor performance a skill deficiency?

Can the person actually do the task that is required? If not, training is required. If yes, why are they not doing it?

### Is performance punishing?

Is the employee being punished in some way for performing to a high standard? For example a conscientious staff member who always finishes tasks first may be "punished" by being given extra work to fill in the remaining time available. The solution is to remove the punishment and replace with a reward such as time off for working efficiently.

### Is non-performance rewarding?

Is the employee rewarded for under-performing? For example, an employee may turn up late for work and other staff have to cover for them. But then they all get lunch at the same time. The solution in this case is to arrange for a consequence for turning up late.

For example, staff member A turns up late for shearing which means the ewes are late getting to the shed. This impacts on the shearers and other staff members. Consequences: Staff member A only has 15 minutes for lunch, rather than the half hour others have, and is sent off to bring in the next mob. Or, send the other staff home at the end of the day and ask staff member A to stay back and tidy up - on their own, to make up for lost time not worked in the morning.

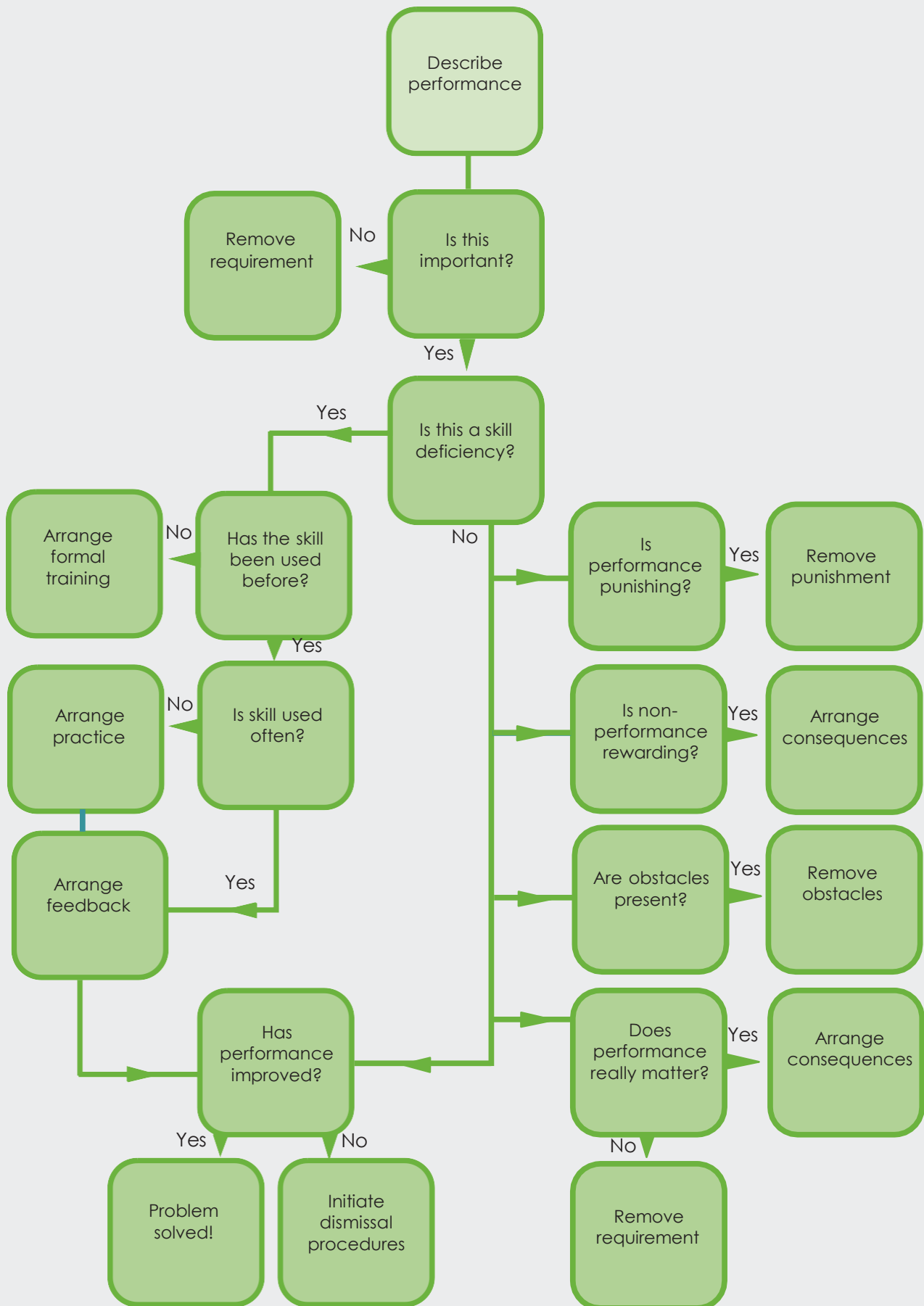
### Are obstacles present?

Are there obstacles to staff doing the tasks? For example, is the employee not strong enough to lift gates back into place or are resources limiting, such as tools not being available to perform the task properly.

### Does performance really matter?

Sometimes there are no consequences (either positive or negative) for performing well or poorly. The solution is to arrange consequences. If performance doesn't really matter then remove the performance requirement. If non-performance continues despite fair and reasonable efforts to help the employee raise their performance, then it may be necessary to terminate their employment. This is a difficult decision but one that must be made.

## Performance analysis





## Using performance management to improve retention

Formal performance appraisal meetings and coaching sessions can also be used as a chance to talk about the goals and aspirations of the staff member. When an employee is able to work towards their own goals as a part of their employment, this increases job satisfaction for the employee.

Sharing the employee's goals and aspirations will help the employer or manager get an idea of where the staff member is heading. This includes issues such as how long they would like to stay, whether they are happy with their role, and where they see themselves in the future. This can help the employer modify the job to meet the needs of the employee, or to plan for "healthy" staff turnover in a harmonious manner that does not threaten the business operation.

Using performance management to share goals of the employee and goals of the employer can improve the ties between an employer and an employee and have a positive impact on employee retention (for more information on using performance management to improve retention see the Retention Fact Sheet 5.1).

## What are the benefits to me?

- Improved employee performance
- Greater accountability from staff for their work
- Identification of staff training needs
- Better relationships in the workplace
- Improved employee motivation, job satisfaction and retention in your business.

### What do I do next?

- Do a job analysis of each employee's job
- Write up performance measures for 10-12 key areas of each employee's job
- Discuss and reach agreement about the performance measures with each employee
- Start formally measuring employee performance and start talking!

## Useful references

*Powerful performance appraisals – How to set expectations and work together to improve performance*, Karen McKirchy

*Human Resources Kit for Dummies*, Max Messmer

## Useful links

Problem solving: <http://www.era.govt.nz/>

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## 4.1.1 Example – Performance Appraisal: Head Shepherd

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Head Shepherd</b>															
<b>Strategic business focus</b> (A short statement reflecting farm goals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operate a profitable and sustainable farm business</li> <li>Maximise production by fully utilising resources available</li> <li>Achieve 130% lambing</li> <li>Have all staff complete ATV and tractor training within their first 3 months in employment with us.</li> </ul>															
<b>Purpose of position</b> (A short summary of the role)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The position of Head Shepherd is designed to assist the Farm Manager in the day to day running of the farm</li> <li>This position has particular responsibility for stock work</li> <li>This position is also responsible for assisting with farm repairs and maintenance and weed control</li> <li>From time to time the Head Shepherd will be required to take charge of daily operations in the absence of the Farm Manager.</li> </ul>															
<b>Reporting lines</b> (Who does the person report to and who reports to them?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Head Shepherd reports to the Farm Manager</li> <li>The Head Shepherd will be required to supervise one shepherd and casuals as required.</li> </ul>															
<b>Hours of work</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Approx dates &amp; number of weeks</th> <th>Hours/week</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Lambing</td> <td>1 Aug - 14 Sep 6 weeks</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Docking - Topping</td> <td>15 Sep - 18 April 32 weeks</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Scanning-Lambing</td> <td>19 April - 1 Aug 8 weeks</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Average:</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Period	Approx dates & number of weeks	Hours/week	Lambing	1 Aug - 14 Sep 6 weeks	60	Docking - Topping	15 Sep - 18 April 32 weeks	50	Scanning-Lambing	19 April - 1 Aug 8 weeks	35	Average:		45
Period	Approx dates & number of weeks	Hours/week														
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Average:		45														
<b>Special requirements</b> (Any unique requirements of the job)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must have a good quality team (5-7) of working dogs.</li> </ul>															

Responsibility areas/tasks/duties	Level	Performance measure	Employee rating	Employer rating	Agreed rating	Additional comments
<b>Shearing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up equipment for shearing</li> <li>Clean and maintain the woolshed plant and equipment to the standards outlined in the farm policy manual.</li> </ul>	A	• Reports on time for shearing	5	4	4	Ewes arrived at shed late for main shear, insufficient emptying time. Well dagged. Wool clip standards met. Difficult spring meant it was hard to fully feed all stock. Losses a credit to his good management.
		• Sheep consistently presented for shearing to required standard	5	5	5	
		• Woolshed is consistently maintained to the required standard.	5	5	5	
<b>Animal health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and treat stock according to the farm policy manual</li> <li>Keep record of all treatments administered</li> <li>Identify other animal health problems and report to the Farm Manager.</li> </ul>	R	• Stock are treated with the correct amount of product and within the required timeframe, at all times.	3	4	4	Jim needs some training and support around antibiotic use with lambed ewes. Does not have confidence in process and therefore needed help from Farm Manager.
		• Treatments are recorded correctly in farm records.	3	4	4	
<b>Machinery maintenance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake daily checks on frequently used machinery (e.g. quad bikes) as outlined in the maintenance schedule</li> <li>Undertake monthly machinery check as outlined in the maintenance schedule.</li> </ul>	R	• Daily machinery check completed	4	3	4	More care should be taken with daily motorbike checks.
		• Monthly machinery check completed.	4	4	4	
<b>Weeds</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake weed control as directed.</li> </ul>	R	• No weeds to reach flowering stage. This includes ragwort, nodding thistle, scotch thistle and wingtip thistle.	3	5	5	Jim has been conscientious with weed control. His low self score indicates he has high standards in weed control – but he has met the standards.
<b>Support of relief staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct and support relief staff in their duties in the absence of the Farm Manager.</li> </ul>	A	• Casual staff are happy to return to the property.	5	5	5	Jim is good at getting along with others and creating a harmonious working environment.
<b>Stock</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and implement stock movements</li> <li>Undertake regular checks of stock to minimise losses and identify potential issues.</li> </ul>	A	• Clean musters	5	3	3	
		• Ewe losses are 7% or less	3	5	5	
		• Losses of young stock (including lambs) below 15%.	4	3	3	

Level: R = Responsible      A = Assists

Rating:                      1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Unacceptable performance

Acceptable performance

Exceptional performance



## Training and development required

How can your Farm Manager help you to improve your job performance?

- Jim would like to learn how to do feed budgeting

### Actions

- Enrol in PrimaryITO Production Management course
- Accompany Farm Manager on the monthly farm walk
- Prepare a monthly feed budget and check with the Farm Manager
- Prepare a grazing plan each week and check with the Farm Manager.

## Amendments to be made to job description

What needs to be changed in the job description to more accurately reflect the work carried out in the job?

- Jim has to become responsible for managing twinning ewes to maximise lamb survival.

## Any points of disagreement remaining after discussion?

Staff member to complete

-----  
Staff member's signature

-----  
Manager's signature

-----  
Date

-----  
Date

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## 4.1.2 Example – Performance Appraisal: Farm Manager

<b>Job title</b>	<b>Farm Manager</b>																	
<b>Strategic business focus</b> (A short statement reflecting farm goals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve 300 kg/ha of meat and fibre (carcass weight and wool) in a profitable cost effective and sustainable manner</li> <li>Operate a profitable and sustainable farm business</li> <li>Maximise production by fully utilising resources available</li> <li>Control the cost of production to achieve a system that is sustainable</li> <li>To utilise our time efficiently by creating systems which enables staff to get on with the job without the need for significant management input.</li> </ul>																	
<b>Purpose of position</b> (A short summary of the role)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To take responsibility for the day to day management of the farm to achieve our livestock production and performance goals.</li> </ul>																	
<b>Reporting lines</b> (Who does the person report to and who reports to them?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Farm Manager reports to the Farm Owner</li> <li>All other farm staff report to the Farm Manager.</li> </ul>																	
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Average:		47																
<b>Special requirements</b> (Any unique requirements of the job)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must have a good team of dogs.</li> </ul>																	

Responsibility areas/tasks/duties	Level	Performance measure	Employee rating	Employer rating	Agreed rating	Additional comments
<b>Shearing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take responsibility for the shearing process</li> <li>Train, support and supervise farm staff.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wool clip standard maintained</li> </ul>	5	4	4	
<b>Stock</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and implement stock movements</li> <li>Plan and implement grazing rotation base on feed budgeting plan</li> <li>Plan and utilise management tools (e.g. scanning, feed budgeting and Nitrogen).</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve 500 kg meat &amp; fibre/ha</li> <li>Achieve minimal carcass downgrades</li> <li>Clean musters</li> <li>All stock fully fed</li> </ul>	5 5 3 2	5 5 3 5	5 5 4 3	<p>Particularly poor pasture growth prior to 1st June - led to pasture cover of 1000 kg DM at June 1</p> <p>At Sept 5 pasture cover was 1150 due to poor start</p> <p>Achieved 568 kg meat &amp; fibre/ha – well done. Very few carcass downgrades this year.</p>
<b>Feed management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan the grazing programme for the year</li> <li>Monitor the feed supply on farm at all times and compare against the feed budget</li> <li>Manage deviations from the feed budget.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve pasture cover budgets:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- June 1 - 1100 kg DM/ha</li> <li>- Sept 15 - between 1200 &amp; 1400 kg DM/ha</li> </ul> </li> <li>Prepare monthly feed budget and forward to owner</li> </ul>	3  4	4  4	3  4	<p>Feed budgets were established during winter which helped us achieve good production despite the poor start.</p>
<b>Animal Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor stock health regularly</li> <li>Treat all animal health problems as soon as possible</li> <li>Contact a vet for other assistance.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blood tests taken July 1 and August 20</li> <li>Deaths in ewe flock &lt;2%</li> <li>Lamb losses &lt;15% from scanning</li> </ul>	3 2	4 3	3 3	<p>Blood tests taken, and results acted upon. Deaths in ewe flock were at 3%.</p>
<b>Mating</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the mating programme as agreed with the employer</li> <li>Check condition of sires prior to mating.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% or better calving percent</li> <li>140% or better lambing percent (survival to sale)</li> <li>Less than 5% empty ewes at scanning</li> </ul>	4	4	4	<p>82% calving due to high cow losses at calving. Disappointing result, but mating was managed reasonably well despite cows being slightly underfed.</p>



Responsibility areas/tasks/duties	Level	Performance measure	Employee rating	Employer rating	Agreed rating	Additional comments
<b>Reporting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to the farm owner monthly on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Production</li> <li>- Feed cover</li> <li>- Variations from the previous season</li> <li>- Repairs and maintenance</li> <li>- Supplies required.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly reports received by owner by the last day of each month</li> </ul>	4	5	4	
<b>Staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and select staff in consultation with farm owner</li> <li>Plan and allocate work within team</li> <li>Prepare an annual roster for time off and notify owner of relief staff requirements.</li> </ul>	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full complement of staff on-board throughout the year</li> <li>Roster prepared and displayed on sheep and beef wall and forwarded to owner by June 15</li> <li>Performance reviews completed and forwarded to owner.</li> </ul>	3 4 3	3 4 3	3 4 3	Repeated trouble finding casual staff. Farm owner had to fill in twice. Roster made, but owner not fully informed of changes.
<b>General</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure compliance among staff with health and safety policies</li> <li>Liaise with contractors where necessary</li> <li>Liaise with farm advisor to set farm policy and seasonal management policies.</li> </ul>	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zero serious harm accidents occur</li> <li>All staff wear protective clothing where appropriate</li> <li>Attend monthly visits with farm advisor and implement agreed strategies.</li> </ul>	5 5 5	5 4 5	5 4 5	

**Key**

Level: R = Responsible    A = Assists

Rating:                    1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Unacceptable performance                    Acceptable performance                    Exceptional performance

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## Training and development required

How can your manager help you to improve your job performance?

- Request for training in staff recruitment and selection, and performance management

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## Amendments to be made to job description

What needs to be changed in the job description to more accurately reflect the work carried out in the job?

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## Any points of disagreement remaining after discussion?

Staff member to complete

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Staff member's signature

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Manager's signature

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Date

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Date

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## Useful references

*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen R. Covey

*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, Sean Covey

*The Idiot's guide to time management*, Jeff Davidson

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