



## Labor Matters

By: Dairy Today: Labor Matters, Dairy Today

RSS



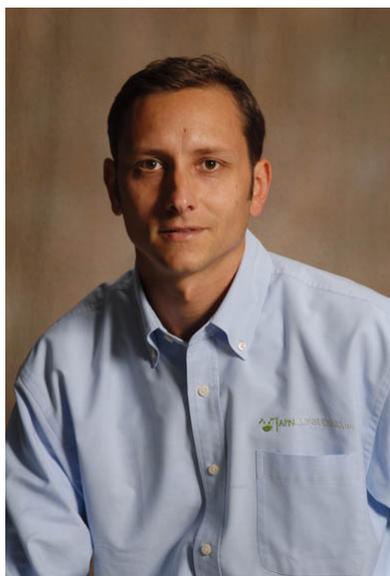
Experts cover today's key dairy labor issues and offer fool-proof techniques to optimize employee performance, satisfaction and longevity.

[« Previous Blog Posting](#)

## Start the New Year with Focused, Motivated Employees

NOV 30, 2012

Have you met with your team leaders, supervisors and middle managers to define next year's performance expectations and goals? Or done an individual performance review and discussed opportunities for growth?



By Felix Soriano, MS, PAS, APN Consulting, LLC

The New Year is almost here. Have you taken time out of your busy schedule to meet with your team leaders, supervisors and middle managers to define next year's performance expectations and goals? Also, this would be a good time to do an individual performance review and discuss opportunities for growth.

Discuss overall goals and expectations for your dairy first and then discuss specific goals for each area within the dairy that each one of your leaders/supervisors is responsible for. Discuss what needs to be done to achieve those goals, have them participate on that discussion, and finally develop a plan with your team on how to get there.

Finally, have your leaders convey these goals to the rest of the workforce. This can have a tremendous impact in people's will to excel (motivation) and will help them stay focus on the tasks that will lead to high performance.

**Also, if you didn't do a performance evaluation** with each of your leaders yet, this might be the time to do it. I always recommend using the Negotiated Performance Appraisal (NPA) developed by Dr. Gregorio Billikopf. Unlike the traditional approach, the NPA can help you jointly develop a plan for performance expectations and improvement with each employee. It will also allow you to plan on how to achieve those goals individually with each one of your team leaders. For more information on the NPA, read my article called "A useful appraisal tool" at [www.apndairy.com](http://www.apndairy.com).

The negotiated performance appraisal can be a great tool to use once or twice per year as a coaching tool with your employees. You will be able to improve people's skills, define goals and expectations for them, and develop a succession plan for your operation with your key employees.

**Always remember that your employees** are your most important resource. They are a key driver of your dairy's success or failure. Having these types of meetings with them will help you keep them motivated and focused on the tasks that will make your dairy more profitable.

Finally, having an outside consultant participating in these meetings can improve their efficacy. Asking your veterinarian, nutritionist, or consultant to participate can be of great help. The language barrier with some employees may be an issue though, so having someone with experience in running these meetings that can speak the native language of your key employees can be an asset.

*Felix Soriano, president and founder of APN Consulting, has more than 10 years of experience working with dairy*

producers and developing tools and programs to improve dairy performance and profitability. He has a Master of Science degree from Virginia Tech and received an Agricultural Labor Management Certificate from the University of California. Born and raised in Argentina, Soriano can relate and communicate very well with Hispanic employees to help bridge the communication and cultural gap between workers and managers. While working as a manager for a feed additive company, Soriano developed his leadership and supervisory skills. Now based in Pennsylvania, Soriano can be reached at 215-738-9130 or [apnconsulting@verizon.net](mailto:apnconsulting@verizon.net) or [felix@apndairy.com](mailto:felix@apndairy.com). Visit his website at [www.apndairy.com](http://www.apndairy.com).

[View all Posts from this Blog](#)

[Next Blog Posting »](#)

## COMMENTS

[Log In](#) or [Sign Up](#) to comment

No comments have been posted, [be the first one to comment](#).

