

# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT *Overview*

**People are the greatest asset in any business. Good management of the human resources within your business is essential for maximising individual performance in alignment with the overall strategic goals. Put simply, if you look after the people they will perform well and the business will benefit.**

If we were being honest this is not something family farming enterprises have been all that good at traditionally. There are unique challenges for inter-generational businesses. Harmonious relationships sound ideal but at times constructive conflict is beneficial. Foundation documents that establish boundaries and keep interactions respectful are essential. *"Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children" Sitting Bull*

Effective communication is at the heart of a high functioning operation. If your only human resources are members of your family it is particularly important to have documented policies and procedures. People want to feel valued and that their contribution matters. It is worth putting the time and effort into demonstrating this through establishing and documenting transparent processes. The resources in this section are an extension of those developed for our family farming enterprises. We looked at what bigger companies do and modified their approach for our business. As our business grows and we employ more staff these foundation resources will be amended as needed.

If you've never formally discussed and documented leave arrangements, household maintenance budgets, payment of wages, accommodation or vehicle it is highly recommended you do so. This is particularly important if you have several families working together. When new family members join a business the transition is made all that more smoother when there is transparency. Processes should be questioned, modified and updated to ensure they are meeting the needs of all family members. **Zig Ziglar said: "You don't build a business. You build people, then people build the business."**

Important areas to review in your business include doing an annual skills audit, identify training opportunities and co-ordinating jobs to ensure people can take time away from the business to attend training. Wages and benefits need to be openly discussed as they would in any business. Many family members on rural properties are not paid award wages as the family is generally working hard to reduce debt and improve the capital position of the business. In such cases it is important to acknowledge the reduced income a person is receiving. The human resource management resources in this section are intended to be downloaded, adapted to reflect your practices and used to improve your business. The policy document is an example of what is used in our organic beef enterprise. It is intended as a guide only. You will do things differently in your business and that is what you must record to make the process meaningful. A few years ago we sat down and wrote a Family Charter (Constitution) that we continue to review and update where relevant. As our children, who are currently teenagers, grow we will amend the language and expand this document to reflect the stage our family business is at. **"Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."**

**Henry Ford**