

Planning for the future

Planning for the future is about understanding the diversity amongst people on the farm. The business needs to have goals that are able to be fulfilled by its people such that they can also achieve their own personal goals.

If the two do not match up, the outcomes for the business and its people are less likely to be achieved.

For most dairy farm businesses, transferring both the day today business management role and asset ownership is at the heart of planning for the future. However, there are no recipes which will suit every dairy business or the people in it.

It's important to have all stakeholders involved in the decision making process. Planning for the future may include business owners; family members, who are involved in the day to day operations of the business; off-farm family members; employees or people who have a business connection, such as lessees; share farmers; or management employees.

There are 4 focuses that are important for individuals to understand and strive to achieve:

- **Being in the right role:** having a role that is suited to a person is a great start for job satisfaction. It is very difficult for someone to perform in a role that they are not suited to. Matching skills to roles is only a start, the challenge is to provide someone the role they want and nurture them in that role so that they perform to their potential.
- **Education and career development:** we all have different learning needs at various times in our working lives. Dairy farming is no exception in terms of the learning potential that it offers. There are many internal and external opportunities for people in farm businesses to learn. Also, it is valuable for people to be given the flexibility outside work to be able to train for roles that may be unrelated to their job but still important to them.
- **Reward and wealth creation:** we all wish to be recognised and rewarded for what we do. Appropriately, rewarded performance entuses people to continue to perform to the benefit of the business. Reward can also lead to wealth creation that ultimately provides options and quality of life to people. These are all part of what is required for a sustainable farm business.
- **Work-life balance:** the ultimate measure of success in our lives. We can enjoy the fruits of our hard work though financial returns. However, time to spend with people close to us, to enjoy our activities outside farming and to be able to help others, can only be achieved through having time away from work. There is no rule of thumb that suits all – it's important for a farm business to recognise this essential requirement and to organise the workload and support such that [work-life balance](#) is achieved most of the time.

Each of the people who work within the farm business will have their own priorities in these areas.

To be able to achieve these goals, there needs to be recognition by the business of these personal goals and evaluation of progress in achieving them that is part of the performance review process.