



***The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library***

**This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.**

**Help ensure our sustainability.**

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search  
<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>  
[aesearch@umn.edu](mailto:aesearch@umn.edu)

*Papers downloaded from AgEcon Search may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

*No endorsement of AgEcon Search or its fundraising activities by the author(s) of the following work or their employer(s) is intended or implied.*

# RECRUITING AND TRAINING CO-OP EMPLOYEES



## Preface

The original "Recruiting, Training and Developing Workers for Farmer Cooperatives" was published in 1971 by Donald H. Cooper, then a Senior Research Specialist with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and Irwin W. Rust, of Farmer Cooperative Service (FCS), now Agricultural Cooperative Service (ACS). The same human relationship elements displayed then are still effective; however, information sources and regulations that affect the development of employees for local cooperatives have changed. Training programs have become more automated and sophisticated; and electronic devices are rapidly replacing older, less effective mechanical ones. These adjustments will help farmer cooperatives develop current programs for their most important asset-people.

# CONTENTS

JOB REQUIREMENTS .....	3
Kinds of Jobs .....	3
Job Analysis.....	3
Job Description .....	3
Need for Flexibility .....	3
Wages and Fringe Benefits.....	4
Organized Labor and Cooperatives .....	4
Civil Rights Legislation .....	4
Other Legislation .....	4
SUCCESSFUL RECRUITING .....	4
Principles of Recruiting .....	4
Locating Applicants .....	5
Hiring Those With Special Difficulties.....	7
Application Form .....	8
Checking Past Employment .....	8
Interviewing .....	9
Using Tests .....	10
Selecting and Hiring .....	10
TRAINING AND DEVELOPING.....	10
Orientation .....	11
On-the-Job Training .....	11
Group Training .....	11
Programmed Instruction.....	12
Outside Training.....	12
Learning About Co-ops .....	13
Maintaining High Morale .....	13
Evaluating Performance.....	13
Developing Executives .....	15
Retaining Good Employees.....	15
EVALUATING AND REVIEWING .....	15
APPENDIX A-Personnel Forms	
1-Job Analysis.. .....	17
2-Job Description .....	18
3-Application for Employment.....	19
4-Telephone Reference Check .....	23
5-Mail Reference Check .....	24
6-Score Sheet for Employment Interview Questionnaire.....	25
7-Rating Scale for Field Applicants .....	26
8-Performance Appraisal .....	28
9—Manager Performance Evaluation .....	37
1 O-Salary Review .....	44

# RECRUITING AND TRAINING CO-OP EMPLOYEES

Galen W. Rapp  
Cooperative Education Specialist

Personnel administration is an essential responsibility of management in a cooperative just as it is in any other business. It involves the entire management team-board of directors, general manager, and supervisors. Dealing constructively with personnel requirements reflects good management and contributes to the success of the whole enterprise.

Attaining the objectives of a cooperative business depends in large part on the capabilities, attitudes, and actions of its employees.

How cooperative employees feel about their jobs affects their work performance and their attitudes toward the organization. Their attitudes and actions can influence the opinion and patronage of members and the public.

The well-managed cooperative establishes effective policies and programs for recruiting, training, supervising, and evaluating employees.

While this is not an easy task for small cooperatives, new and inexperienced ones, or those isolated in rural locations, help is available. A considerable body of information exists on personnel administration for businesses. This may be obtained from such sources as colleges and universities, local libraries, trade associations, professional societies, State employment services, and the Small Business Administration (SBA).

Another source is larger cooperatives with well-developed personnel procedures and experienced staffs. Very little of this personnel know-how, some of it developed through years of trial and error, has been put into a form readily available to other cooperatives. Almost no literature exists for the personnel problems of cooperatives as such.

Many cooperatives have been forced by circumstances to hire and develop employees through informal methods, depending on whatever experience and good judgment the manager or other staff members happen to have brought to the job. This has been particularly true of cooperatives

whose plants and offices are away from the major labor pools.

For these reasons, Agricultural Cooperative Service (ACS) prepared this publication. It brings together principles, ideas, and experiences in personnel administration suitable for cooperative businesses of any kind or size. Although this publication may find its greatest usefulness in the hands of managers and professional personnel people on cooperative staffs, it is also useful for directors and others involved in hiring and developing cooperative employees.

## JOBS AND PEOPLE

A cooperative is a business-a special kind of business. The successful cooperative, like any successful firm, counts on its employees for a large measure of its success.

It is estimated that the 5,625 agricultural marketing, farm supply, and related service cooperatives employ more than 168,000 workers. In Fortune Magazine's 1987 list of the 500 largest industrial corporations, 15 regional and interregional cooperatives were listed. These cooperatives had work forces of more than 61,000. Some small local cooperatives, however, may have only two or three employees.

As for locale of co-op jobs, they ranged from the ultra-modern headquarters building of Sunkist Growers, Inc., in Van Nuys, CA, to isolated rural communities that over the years have become so small that only the cooperative and a cafe remain open.

Salaries of cooperative employees vary widely. Some chief executive offices of the top 100 cooperatives in the U.S. receive in excess of several hundred thousand dollars annually. At the other end of the scale are part-time untrained employees earning the minimum hourly wage. Some staff members have graduate degrees and regularly attend seminars to upgrade their skills while others are relatively unskilled and have received little on-

the-job training. Some cooperatives maintain strong personnel departments and provide a wide range of programs for recruiting and training while others have no department at all.

In most cooperatives, as with other businesses, the largest operating expense is for personnel. In addition to salaries and wages, these costs must include fringe benefits, hiring, and training.

### **Improving Understanding**

Young people coming out of high schools or universities to seek their first job usually have little or no information about cooperatives. Cooperatives need to improve member and public knowledge about themselves by doing the following:

*1. Maintain a Strong Member Relations Program.* See that members are well-informed. Member support can be contagious for employees and build loyalty to help management and overall operations.

If adult members understand their cooperative, their children will pick up understanding and interest in cooperatives. Such young people become one source of new employees.

*2. Build Sound Public Relations Programs.* Provide information about the special features of the cooperative way of doing business. This requires access to local newspapers, radio, and TV stations. It also requires working relations with community leaders and organizations of all kinds, and developing a youth program for schools and libraries. This sort of ongoing program helps give employees a feeling of security and pride in their jobs. It helps bring the best job applicants to the cooperative.

*3. Stress Employee Orientation.* Teach employees what cooperatives are and how they compare with other methods of doing business. Cooperative objectives and information about the cooperative's operations and place in the community are proper topics for staff meetings and employee news media.

It is especially important that employees know the basic facts about the cooperative because they are frequently called on to answer questions about it and about cooperatives in general. Employees can help improve the cooperative image if they have access to the right answers.

### **Competing for Employees**

Cooperatives in rural areas may have a problem finding qualified workers. Some cooperatives may be forced to compete for qualified employees with an urban firm that has a higher wage/salary scale. Cooperatives can overcome this problem partly by taking a new look at their personnel policies and practices:

*1. Re-examine Labor Needs.* Labor needs should be re-examined with an eye to raising productivity with fewer employees. For example, can some jobs be combined or some functions abolished? Can physical changes in the plant or office, such as automation, reduce workload? Are all employees producing at a reasonable level? Are some skilled or experienced employees performing tasks that recruits with less skill or experience could do? Would specialized training courses be worth their cost to enable employees to work more efficiently?

*2. Update Wage and Salary Scales.* If the cooperative is not fully competitive in employee pay scales, these should be upgraded. What additional fringe benefits can be offered with the least cost? Does the cooperative have a retirement, insurance, or bonus plan to help attract and hold key employees? Review of both of these should consider information gathered from a current labor market survey.

*3. Examine Turnover Rate.* Cooperatives should compare their rate of employee turnover with the experience of other businesses in the area and with national averages in similar types of firms. If the cooperative's turnover is high, exit interviews may help management find out why.

*4. Improve Recruiting Practices.* Try new sources or additional techniques for reaching potential applicants. Some of those listed in the section on successful recruiting should help.

*5. Guard Against Outgrown Personnel Practices.* In the early days, some businesses, including cooperatives, carried on personnel practices that now seem completely antiquated. These practices included low wages, overtime work without adequate compensation, nepotism, inadequate recruiting techniques, poor or no retirement benefits, dependence on employee devotion to the cooperative idea rather than emphasis on accepted employment practices, and reluctance to accept collective bargaining.

## **JOB REQUIREMENTS**

Personnel management starts with analyzing and defining the job to be filled, determining the qualifications for the job, creating a written job description and finding the person who fits the qualifications. Much more comes later, such as training and developing the employee; evaluating performance; and administering wages and job benefits, health and safety, records, and separations.

### **Kinds of Jobs**

Most of the jobs in larger cooperatives will resemble those in other large enterprises in the same line of business. The skill requirements for operating a fork loader, a billing machine, or a gasoline pump are the same for the cooperative as they are for any other warehouse, office, or service station.

It is vital, however, that the structure and characteristics of a member-owned cooperative be understood by its employees. Knowledge of cooperative principles and way of doing business is a desirable attribute for all employees, but especially those who come into contact with members and the public.

In small town cooperatives, people readily identify employees with the cooperative. Here, knowledge and acceptance of cooperative principles and practices may share importance with job skills.

Recruiting is made easier and training more effective by standardizing job descriptions. In smaller cooperatives, the division of work functions are less clear because of the interchange of personnel between work areas. However, a current job description that reflects expected tasks is important for effective performance appraisal.

### **Job Analysis**

Job analysis is the process of determining the tools, equipment, and materials used; the special training, skills, aptitudes, judgments, and decisions required; the speeds and hazards involved; the conditions under which the work is performed; and the supervision required.

Job analysis breaks down the actions involved in the performance of a task. Identification items include the name or title of the job, the name of the department or other designation that locates the job, the relation of the job to others and chain of supervision. It describes personal characteristics, training and the kind of person

required to perform the job successfully. The end product of job analysis is the beginning of a job description. A form useful as a guide is included in Appendix A, Form 1.)

### **Job Description**

Preparing a job description based on the job analysis is the first step in filling a vacancy. The description spells out the following:

- The proper name of the position—the name should reflect the area of major responsibility;
- The specific department and location where the work is to be performed;
- Chain of supervision—who the position reports to and supervisory responsibility, if any;
- The overall goals and objectives of the cooperative or the specific department;
- The tasks with standards of expected performance—limited to 12 or less of the major functions; and
- A statement or statements of the interrelationship and external relationships expected by the employee.

Job descriptions are sometimes referred to as the minimum hiring requirements. They can be referred to when advertising for applicants, reviewing applications, and interviewing. (A form useful as a guideline is included in Appendix A, Form 2.)

### **Need for Flexibility**

Personnel management is an inexact science and no single pattern can be expected to fit all situations without modification. Personnel procedures must be flexible.

Cooperatives, like other businesses, tend to grow around the abilities and personalities of the people in them. Job requirements, recruiting, training programs, and effective use of employees requires some accommodation to the qualifications of persons on the staff.

Good personnel management also calls for flexibility to cope with situations involving groups of employees—union grievances, for instance, changes in the labor market, or changes in the volume of business handled by the cooperative.

Technological developments, for instance, can require a shift in work patterns, new job analysis and a radically different approach to hiring.

Managers and personnel directors-and the elected board members, also-must be alert to changes in technology or marketing. Rigidity against change and inadequate employee training can make the existing labor force obsolete. It can leave a cooperative behind the times and unable to keep up with its members' needs.

### **Wages and Fringe Benefits**

Cooperatives must pay both competitive salaries and offer competitive employee benefits to be able to recruit and hold qualified employees. A labor market survey of area businesses should be conducted no less than every 3 years in a stable economy. Greater frequency is necessary in times of rapid economy swings.

An effective employee benefits plan will give the employee and the employee's family some financial protection against loss of future earnings due to premature death or disability, heavy medical expenses from illness or accident, and financial insecurity after retirement.

Coverage provided under employee benefits plans is customarily designed to supplement such government programs as workmen's compensation, social security, and medicare.

It is the responsibility of the manager, with the assistance of any staff people who work on personnel matters, to help the board of directors review regularly the cooperative's schedule of salaries, wages, and fringe benefits. And action by the board to authorize necessary changes should have the highest priority.

### **Organized Labor and Cooperatives**

Boards, managers, and personnel people must be familiar with such labor-related factors as union practices, collective bargaining, current labor legislation, and court decisions.

Information is available from the National Labor Relations Board, 1717 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20570, as well as from 52 regional and resident offices.

### **Civil Rights Legislation**

Cooperative boards, managers, and personnel staff also need to be familiar with provisions of Civil Rights Legislation. Information can be obtained from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2401 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20507, or the nearest of 12 field offices of the Commission.

### **Other Legislation**

A number of Federal and State laws relate to pay scales, hours of employment, working conditions, and other matters. The wise cooperative employer will be acquainted with all legislation that can in any way affect business operations.

## **SUCCESSFUL RECRUITING**

Effective personnel recruiting is finding the best person for the job. A simple objective, surely, but one involving all sorts of complications. Complicating factors over which cooperatives have little control include distance from a labor market, a tight labor market, legal restraints on hours and types of work for women and children, and cultural patterns, usually of a local nature.

### **Principles of Recruiting**

However, a few basic principles, if followed, will enhance recruiting effectiveness:

- The first principle in recruiting employees is to be thoroughly aware of any complicating factors of which the cooperative has no control and find exceptions to what seem to be prevailing situations or to devise offsetting compensations for them. The cooperative may have more options than the manager or the board realize at first glance.

The geographical handicap, for instance, might be overcome by developing and upgrading existing employees for hard-to-fill positions and making replacements in the lower grades from local hiring.

In some instances, it may be worthwhile to arrange transportation for recruits living some distance from the cooperative or provide local housing or other inducements for a move into the local area.

Recruiting in a distant labor market might be undertaken by contacting a cooperative manager or other qualified agents in that location.

If jobs are going begging for lack of qualified employees, the manager may have to intensify the cooperative's on-the-job training program and do more hiring at the entrance level.

Other possibilities are realigning work and responsibilities to increase efficiency, hire more part-time employees among retired persons and homemakers with spare time, and recruit handicapped persons and those heretofore considered unemployable.

- The second principle in recruiting employees is to improve the internal factors over which the cooperative has control. These include the cooperative's image and reputation, offering competitive wages and working conditions, hiring a personnel officer or staff, institute an employee training and development program, and maintain high visibility through contacts with other organizations and educational institutions.
- The third principle in recruiting is to be certain that hiring practices are firmly based on policies the board and manager understand and support.

In many cooperatives, the board determines personnel policy in consultation with the manager. This policy is published in a personnel manual so any member or employee can refer to it. A published policy will help avoid misunderstanding. The manual can be updated from time to time to fit changing needs.

Federal, State, and local legal requirements for safe working conditions must be observed. Familiarity with these laws and practices by managers, personnel directors, and supervisors must be encouraged.

- The fourth principle of recruiting is advance planning. An alert manager does not wait until a vacancy occurs before recruiting for the position. Retirement, and even resignations, are usually known in advance. This provides opportunity to search for the best possible replacement.

The alert manager will also consider well in advance possible replacements for the unplanned resignation or untimely death of a key member of the staff so that most or all of the recruitment efforts are confined to entry level positions.

In larger enterprises, an analysis of personnel records yields a pattern of job separations, permitting manpower requirements to be forecast. This kind of advance planning ties in to a continuing program of recruiting. Better employees can be obtained when replacements are anticipated 6 months or more in advance. The cooperative is then under no pressure to hire the first applicant and can find the best person for the opening.

## Locating Applicants

Hanging out a "Help Wanted" sign is the most obvious way to recruit new employees. It also is least satisfactory. Other methods and sources include:

- Hiring from within, or from suggestions by employees;
- advertising in local newspapers;
- public or private employment offices;
- schools or colleges;
- other cooperatives or a regional with which the association is affiliated;
- professional societies, trade associations, civic, farm, labor, and other organizations; and
- special sources of employees such as minors, the elderly, handicapped persons, women, those of minority groups, and "unemployables."

**Hiring from** Within Filling vacancies from within the cooperative by promoting qualified employees and then turning to outside recruiting for the lower grade or entrance level jobs has many advantages. It is the least expensive method and it is fast. It represents a lesser risk than bringing in an outside recruit at a higher pay level. It encourages present employees, improves staff morale, and reduces turnover.

The method can be used successfully also for lateral transfers. It does, however, have some disadvantages. Too strict adherence to promotion from within can produce an ingrown staff lacking in youth and fresh ideas. Carried to extremes, firms would deprive themselves of the cross-fertilization of ideas from outside.

For a successful promote-from-within policy, management must maintain a current file of employee skills and must advertise upcoming vacancies within the cooperative. This

gives each employee the opportunity to apply for the vacancy on the basis of qualifications.

**Suggestions *from Employees*** For many years, small enterprises recruited for vacancies by using names suggested by employees. Savings and other advantages of encouraging employees to suggest names for recruiting are obvious. However, a danger is that this procedure produces inbreeding and the formation of cliques in the staff.

**Advertising in Newspapers** Even if hiring from within is successfully practiced, some jobs cannot be filled by such methods. This is especially true for lower-paying, entry-level jobs and, at the other end, specialized positions requiring a higher level education and professional training.

Classified help wanted ads are generally placed in local newspapers for lower paying jobs while display advertisements are used for more specialized positions. A small cooperative with an occasional vacancy places a job-opening advertisement only when a vacancy occurs. A larger cooperative with a continuing recruiting program may advertise on a regular schedule.

Advertising can be "open," giving the name and address of the cooperative, or "blind" with a box number. The open ad yields more applicants and at the same time advertises the cooperative's existence in the community. All applications responding to "open" ads should be acknowledged. Any ad should be worded to sell the cooperative to job applicants who can pick and choose from a number of job offers.

Some cooperatives regularly advertise job openings in employee newsletters. This kind of recruiting strengthens the cooperative image and promotes employee stability.

**Public Employment Offices** For many jobs, particularly at semi-skilled levels, employers turn to State employment services. These have offices in all the larger cities and branches in many smaller communities. They can be an especially productive source of candidates for jobs, because all workers drawing unemployment compensation must register as seeking employment.

Prospective employers can keep unsuitable applicants to a minimum by being specific in listing job requirements. Registering with the local employment office usually will give the cooperative access to applicants in nearby

communities. This is particularly useful if the job opening proves hard to fill.

**Private Employment Agencies** Private employment agencies are operated for profit and charge a fee—often amounting to the first month's pay. Sometimes the employer pays the fee, more often the employee.

A reliable firm locates applicants and does the initial screening if the cooperative supplies sufficient details about the vacancy it wants to fill. It is wise to check with a Better Business Bureau before contacting one of these agencies.

Also available are mutual, non-profit hiring agencies subsidized by a group of businesses. A cooperative with extensive needs for new employees over a continuing period should consider this possibility.

**Local School Sources** Many jobs with businesses could be filled as well or better by recruits from high schools, trade schools, or private business schools.

Managers and personnel directors of cooperatives will find it helpful to get acquainted with local school officials and let them know of the cooperative's personnel needs.

This is also an excellent way to get part-time help and give young people an early familiarity with a cooperative.

Another excellent source of part-time and emergency help is the distributive education and vocational agriculture programs under way in many high schools and vocational schools. Often young people in these programs need part-time employment or school release-time employment. Those on a 2-year training program for skilled jobs, with a part of this program consisting of 2 or 3 months of summertime work, may be available. These programs are excellent sources of part-time help and give management a good opportunity to observe the employee's ability. When their formal training is completed, they are already well oriented and ready to go to work at full production.

**Colleges and Universities** Personnel recruiting from the Nation's colleges and universities has become a competitive, highly sophisticated, and somewhat expensive activity.

Many larger corporations seeking trained young people for engineering, scientific, and administrative careers maintain special college-recruiting departments to enlist the most promising graduates. Often this type of

recruiting is not to fill a specific job but to ensure companies of a continuing inflow of future technicians, managers, and executives.

On-campus interviews that offer high starting salaries, a wide variety of fringe benefits, and the promise of management development programs, put this type of recruiting beyond the reach of many cooperatives.

Some cooperatives go to smaller, less prominent colleges-perhaps one in the same part of the State where the cooperative is located.

Some cooperatives work through a friendly faculty member aware of the needs of a cooperative and employment opportunities it has to offer.

Some smaller colleges and universities have summer work programs in agribusiness. These programs usually begin in the junior year and end in the senior year. Similar programs are offered by junior colleges and area vocational technical schools. Cooperatives should look into these programs as a potential source of help and future employees.

**Other Cooperatives** Employees of other cooperatives are another source of experienced help. This is not to suggest personnel raiding, but to point out that changes in services offered by a particular cooperative or a shift in its internal organization may result in some employees becoming surplus or preferring a new start in some other enterprise.

It is also natural to expect that employees who demonstrate outstanding ability should be interested in joining an enterprise where their skills have the greatest room to develop. There are instances, also, of employees who do not work out well in one job situation but respond favorably to a different environment.

**Regional Cooperatives** Some regional cooperatives have recruiting and screening programs to assist their locals. Regionals have better access to the larger labor markets and sources of employees. They are acquainted with employees in their local cooperatives who are moving to a higher paid position in another.

**Other Businesses** A manager or personnel director who is an active member of civic, farm, or professional organizations has opportunities to learn of employment changes in various businesses in the community. Newspapers are also a good source for this information.

These sometimes offer recruiting opportunities for the cooperative.

Also, if a cooperative has a favorable community image, it may receive a good many inquiries from employees of competing firms who are interested in making a change.

### **Professional Societies and Trade Associations**

Many professionals belong to national associations, which normally have local chapters in the larger cities. Some publish for their members periodicals containing a section of position wanted and help wanted ads.

Some professional societies also offer placement services for members. The maintenance of professional standards by these organizations ensures the qualifications of referrals obtained from them. In a few larger cities, the staffs of professional societies help locate candidates for vacancies. Their offices are listed in the telephone directory.

Similarly, there are trade associations for livestock producers, supermarkets, rural electric systems, and a wide variety of other agricultural, commercial, and industrial interests, including cooperatives. They generally provide some personnel assistance.

**Labor Unions** Collective bargaining agreements in some lines of work and in some areas constitute an important source of workers. The ability of unions and their members to locate and recruit employees has been well demonstrated. This will be especially helpful in small towns and rural areas. Managers and personnel directors of cooperatives need to be informed about aspects of labor law and the practical advantages as well as the problems involved in collective bargaining and management-union relations.

### **Hiring Those With Special Difficulties**

Identifiable categories of individuals within the population face special difficulties in obtaining employment.

Minors-Child labor and minimum wage laws, designed to protect the very young against exploitation, tend to discourage the hiring of minors under any circumstances. Employers who become familiar with protective labor laws and any local measures find many opportunities for placing young people. This is especially important for cooperatives with a special stake in attracting the interest of a new generation to the advantages of cooperative enterprise.

The Elderly-Older people are often more reliable than younger workers and have many years of valuable experience. When labor is in short supply and inflation works special hardship on people depending on retirement income, it makes sense to hire senior citizens. Part-time employment and positions calling for mature judgment rather than physical exertion are important considerations here.

**Handicapped Persons**-Studies of productivity consistently report that absenteeism, accident rates, and job turnover are lower for handicapped workers.

Placed in suitable jobs, persons who are crippled, blind, deaf, mentally retarded, or otherwise handicapped demonstrate equal or above average productivity.

Non-veteran handicapped persons can be recruited best through the State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Program offices in various State or district offices in larger cities or through the State Industrial Commission in the State capital.

**Women**-It should not be necessary to consider women as a special source for labor recruiting. Nevertheless, many cooperatives are in rural communities where hiring practices have not progressed to the point where they take into the consideration the availability and competency of women to do an excellent job, including supervisory and staff positions. Many women who held jobs before marriage and have now raised their children are again seeking outside employment.

**Minorities**-Certain minority segments of the population in terms of religion, race, or national origin still face employment handicaps in some localities, despite laws designed to establish equal opportunity. Cooperatives have a special advantage here because they often emphasize in their basic principles and bylaws a person's worth without regard to these prejudices. Cooperatives willing to make the effort may be able to fill some of their job vacancies from a special recruiting effort among minority groups.

**Hard Core Unemployed**-Until recently, many persons who dropped out of school or had no training whatever were regarded as unemployable. Government and private efforts have been made to train these "unemployables" for jobs. Some city-based cooperatives and a few in rural areas are participating in these programs.

## **Application Form**

A carefully designed application form helps identify qualified applicants and weed out unqualified applicants. It saves time and expense in interviewing or investigating such applicants.

The completed application form should furnish enough information to reveal an applicant's ability to do a particular job with a minimum of training as well as to adapt to the working situation and become part of the cooperative's team. Information unrelated to preliminary selection can be obtained at the time of interview or later.

The application form should include name, address, telephone number, social security number, education, details of previous employment or experience, and references.

The form should be brief, easy to read and understand, and provide ample space for writing in the data requested.

The applicant should completely fill out the form, enabling adequate followup to check the applicant's record. Neatness, handwriting clarity, and conciseness may indicate fitness for certain types of work, especially office jobs. (See Appendix A, Form 3, for a sample form.)

Distortions, falsification, and errors can be reduced if the applicant knows the information will be checked.

## **Checking Past Employment**

The applicant's work record and personal reference indicated on the application form should be checked by telephone or letter of inquiry. In hiring supervisory personnel, it may be worthwhile to check one or more references in person to gain opinions not likely to be expressed by telephone or mail. Checking the applicant's school record can sometimes be useful.

Former employers should be asked specifically about the applicant's length of employment, work performance, attitude, safety record, absenteeism, ability to work harmoniously with others, reasons for separation, and any other information that would help determine qualifications. A former employer usually does not wish to reduce an ex-employee's chances for another job and may avoid mentioning unfavorable aspects of the work record.

References usually are personal friends of the applicant. An inquiry merely asking for an opinion as to the applicant's job performance ability or character invariably brings a positive response. However, if specific questions are asked, the reference, even though a personal friend, usually hesitates to give a misleading answer. References from community residents who are known to be responsible give a measure of assurance in hiring.

Form 4 in Appendix A lists useful questions for a telephone check. Form 5 is used to check references by mail. These can be used as guidelines for your own forms.

## **Interviewing**

Interviewing is one of the more important phases of the selection process. The personal interview generates information not available from other sources used and will have greatest value if they are standardized, conducted by a trained interviewer, objective, and planned in advance.

**Planning the Interview** The interview should cover points of information determined well in advance. This enables the interviewer to consider the applicant's answers, rather than being diverted by formulating questions. In addition, the well-planned interview will include advance determination of specific leads to be explored with each applicant. Leads may be based on the information contained in the application form, scores from any tests given prior to the interview, and responses to reference inquiries.

The following paragraphs list some characteristics that may be developed in the personal interview, depending on the nature of the position being filled.

It is helpful to group the items of information under three headings: (1) technical qualifications; (2) managerial qualifications, and (3) personal characteristics.

### *1. Technical qualifications*

- Is the experience shown on the candidate's application important to the job you are going to fill?
- Is the candidate's knowledge adequate in the areas needed to do the job?
- Is the candidate primarily a technical expert or a manager?

- To what extent is the candidate's background and work experience important to the job?

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate in relation to job criteria?

### *2. Managerial qualifications.*

- Does the candidate have basic management skills. Can the candidate supervise a group, relate to several activities at one time, delegate authority, and organize activities and people?

- How large of area or range of activities could be supervised?

- How effective is the candidate under deadline pressures?

- How much ability in budgeting and personnel planning is displayed?

- Is the individual a motivator of people and activities?

### *3. Personal characteristics*

- Would the candidate be effective in contacts with members, and technical, educational, media, and professional groups?

- Would the individual be effective in selling ideas or products, apply the right style in the proper situation, and advance ideas without being offensive?

- How well does the candidate hold up under pressure in a controversial setting?

## ***Conducting the Interview***

When conducting an interview:

1. The interview room should be private, well-lighted and convenient; the applicant should have a comfortable chair next to the interviewer's desk, which should be free of clutter.

2. Set a definite time for the interview. Both the interviewer's time and the applicant's times are valuable. Plan the interview so as not to waste it. Use adequate time to gain a good impression of the applicant's ability-perhaps 15 minutes to an hour, depending on the

importance of the job to be filled-but do not prolong the interview needlessly.

3. A courteous and friendly attitude by the interviewer puts the applicant at ease and gives the applicant a good first impression of the cooperative. Use vocabulary to fit the job under discussion and don't talk down to the applicant.

4. The interviewer should be looking for the following areas to be covered: early years, education, work experience, family, and recent time.

What do you know about the cooperative? The applicant should know something about the products handled, size of business, services offered, people, skills, image, goals, and history.

Could the applicant make a definite contribution to specific cooperative goals? Look for past experience that represents success in solving problems for a past employer or related experience in training programs.

Before closing the interview, explain the cooperative's objectives, employee policies, and advantages of working for the organization but don't oversell the job. In most cases, an experienced applicant will ask these questions either directly or indirectly during the course of the interview.

**Interviewer's Appraisal** Before the next applicant comes in, make notes on the applicant just interviewed. Base opinions of the applicant's qualifications, characteristics, and personality traits on what the interview reveals. How will the applicant affect employee morale and fit into the cooperative? Notes ought to be sufficiently comprehensive to give a full picture of the applicant.

It is good policy in filling the most important positions to have at least one other person interview applicants. This could well be the immediate supervisor for the employee who will fill the vacancy. Information obtained during the interview should be kept confidential.

It is not wise to make a commitment on hiring the first applicant; others to be interviewed may be better. All interviewers should be informed of the decision after all interviews have been completed.

Sample interview records are included in appendix A, Forms 6 and 7. They can serve as guidelines in

conducting the interview, in recording the results, answers and evaluation of the answers, interviewer impressions, judgment, and evaluation.

**Pre-Screening** Screening of applicants before the interview will save time. High school counselors in small communities are usually willing, for a small fee, to provide appropriate vocational or aptitude tests to assist in proper job placement. Local employment agencies will also provide this service. A number of regional cooperatives offer this service to locals.

### **Using Tests**

Tests are more effective in predicting failures than in predicting success. They should rarely be used and only as an additional tool for selection. A test used should be specifically designed to reflect the characteristic to be explored and recognized as valid only for that purpose. It should be of reasonable difficulty in relation to the candidates who will be tested to avoid bunching at either end of the scale.

Finally, it should count less than 40 percent in making a selection, leaving the rest to past experience and education of the applicant and the judgment of the interviewer.

Tests are given for learning ability, manual dexterity aptitude, clerical skills, or knowledge of a particular trade.

### **Selecting and Hiring**

After all interviews have been completed, the information obtained on each applicant must be evaluated. A department head or key personnel should also review the information and offer opinions as to the best qualified applicant. The applicant selected should be informed promptly. Some cooperatives require the successful applicant to take a pre-employment physical exam. In some instances, hiring is contingent upon the applicant passing the physical.

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPING**

Training and developing employees involves both formal and informal processes.

Ideally, a formal training program involves orientation, on-the-job training, group training, and often outside training. Informal training includes information on co-ops,

day-to-day supervision, and a periodic performance evaluation.

## **Orientation**

The new employee must be introduced to the job, working environment, and fellow employees. This orientation process affects how well the new employee adjusts to the job and ultimately how successful the tenure with the cooperative will be. Orientation should provide information the employee must have to perform the job well, answer questions to save time and trouble for the supervisor and fellow employees later on, and prevent or reduce the chance of grievances or resignations.

From the employee's standpoint, orientation should create a favorable but realistic impression of the cooperative and of the job, establish a sense of belonging, and offer a sense of assurance that the employee can cope with the job and move ahead.

The person responsible for the orientation should do it in a friendly and welcoming manner. The new employee should be introduced to other employees and, where circumstances warrant, to cooperative directors. The program and objectives of the cooperative, its reason for being in business, its special nature as an economic institution, and the importance of each employee in developing and maintaining good member and public relations should all be reviewed.

The organizational structure-how and where the new employee fits into the pattern-should be discussed, along with lines of supervision and communication.

The employee will also learn the policies of the organization, with particular reference to hours of work, regular and overtime pay, vacation and sick leave, and employee welfare benefits. Also, during the orientation period the new employee should be given a set of selected written policies of the cooperative.

## **On-the-job Training**

In small businesses, initial training for new employees may vary from a few hours to several days, depending on the experience of the employee and the complexity of the work.

A supervisor or a senior employee who has developed teaching techniques usually conducts the on-the-job training in larger cooperatives.

Some advantages of on-the-job training over formal training are that it is more economical, permits production to continue during the learning period, and it is more realistic.

To prepare induction training, supervisors have found it helpful to first break the job down into its various steps. They do this in writing after actually performing each task. The trainer should explain how a task is accomplished and why the task must be performed in a certain way. If this is not done the employee may be tempted to take short cuts or change procedure in a detrimental way.

A supervisor should have the ability to do the job before undertaking the training of new employees. He or she must know the methods and procedures and how they are used.

## **Group Training**

Group training sessions are especially applicable for job relations training when the purpose is to promote better relationships among employees, between the employee and supervisor, between the employee and the cooperative, and particularly between the employee and the cooperative's patrons.

Group training also can be used to teach new methods to several employees at a time, or give employees additional knowledge that helps prepare them for promotions and transfers to other types of work.

Development of staff members can be encouraged by carefully prepared presentations on supervisory techniques, public relations, information about cooperatives, effective communication, safety practices, practical economics, and many other subjects.

Literally hundreds of films for training purposes are available for loan, rental, or purchase. A catalog of U.S. Government training films is available from United World Films, Inc., 1445 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10029. Several regional cooperatives produce video cassette tapes for training and product information purposes. These may be purchased for a nominal fee. If the cooperative doesn't own a video cassette player, one may be rented from a convenience store or an audio visual dealer in most larger communities.

Factory representatives generally are available to present information on products handled by the cooperative. Manufacturers often provide instructors to demonstrate how to use and maintain their office equipment and plant machinery.

Many land-grant universities supply instructors to visit nearby cooperatives to give talks or demonstrations on subjects useful in employee training and development.

Other large regional cooperatives have a complete training library and listing of training aids that are available for use by the locals.

To ensure employee attendance and maintain goodwill, training sessions should be held during working hours, though this may not be possible for smaller cooperatives. If employees are trained outside the normal work day, in most cases they need to be compensated at regular rates of pay. Wage and hour regulations should be reviewed before proceeding.

### **Programmed Instruction**

Programmed instruction is a technique for which a program (usually written) takes the place of an instructor. The program leads the employee through a set of statements and questions (specified behaviors) designed and ordered to make it more probable that the employee will respond in a desired way.

Programmed instruction is an example of what is called the systems approach to training. This is because it requires the writer (of the program) to go through the steps of a system to develop the program.

Programmed instruction is used in a wide variety of subject matter fields, from technical to liberal arts. It is often used in correspondence study courses. It has a special advantage in that the employee may take the training without needing to be in a classroom or working situation. The employee need not turn in or mail in work for review and grading. The feedback supplied by the program gives the employee instant knowledge of progress.

Programmed instruction may be carried on with the aid of a teaching machine and the program in book or pamphlet form. Several self-help programs on the market use personal computers.

Many of the larger American corporations and the Federal

Government use programmed instruction. Cooperatives interested in using programmed instruction may find suitable programs available from correspondence schools or bookstores.

### **Outside Training**

Many firms supplement their own training efforts with conferences, seminars, or classroom instruction at public schools, business colleges, universities, or industry institutes.

Some cooperatives pay for such correspondence courses in job-related fields. Cooperatives may find the expense a good investment in grooming employees with the potential to move into higher positions on the staff.

Many cooperative employees gain outside training at professional institutes, technical training conferences, and meetings of cooperative leaders. Among organizations offering training opportunities are the following:

American Institute of Cooperation  
50 F St., NW  
Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20001

National Cooperative Business Institute  
1401 New York Ave., NW  
Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20005

National Telephone Cooperative Association  
2626 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20037

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association  
1800 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20036

Farmland Industries, Inc.  
P.O. Box 7305  
Kansas City, MO 64116

Agway Inc.  
P.O. Box 4933  
Syracuse, NY 13221

Land O'Lakes, Inc.  
P.O. Box 116  
Minneapolis, MN 55440

Cenex  
P.O. Box 43089  
St. Paul, MN 55164

## **Learning About Co-ops**

Cooperatives must train employees in member relations and cooperative principles and practices.

“Every employee a cooperative ambassador” would be a good motto for every cooperative to adopt. As cooperatives expand in the territory they serve, the member-owners become further removed from the business institution they own and that serves them. For most members of a large cooperative, the only contact is with the clerk at the counter, the truck driver, the cashier, or who answers the telephone. To the average member, these are the voices of the cooperative. If employees do not understand the organization’s objectives, structure, background, and operations, they are unable to answer members’ questions or contribute to members’ appreciation of their cooperative. Every employee must feel that projecting a favorable cooperative image is the employee’s personal responsibility. The employee needs to be imbued with the idea that the more successful the cooperative is, the better chance the employee has for a promotion within the cooperative or for a better job in some other cooperative.

For assistance in locating appropriate training material about farmer cooperatives, contact:

Agricultural Cooperative Service-USDA  
Information & Education Staff  
14th & Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250

## **Maintaining High Morale**

Establishing and maintaining high morale among employees at all levels is vital to bringing out the best in employees. High morale contributes to loyalty and favorable attitudes toward the cooperative.

Proper emphasis on human relations promotes good morale among employees. Winning employee loyalty and inspiring good employee attitudes reduces employee turnover and inspires them to be self-starters and act in a positive way.

Employees want to feel they are a part of the operation. These feelings are necessary among peers as well as

supervisors. Some of the practices that establish good human relations and high employee morale are well-planned, communicated and understood work assignments, equitable distribution of workload, job assignments according to abilities, and more responsibility with experience.

**Leadership and Supervision** The objective of a good supervisor is “getting things done through and with other people.” Good leadership is necessary to reach this objective. Good supervisors will see that employees support and enforce policies established by the cooperative. They will see that employees’ talents are used in the best way. Good supervisors understand people and know they are the most important asset of the cooperative. Quality supervisors respect their employees, look out for their best interests, and give credit when credit is due.

**Styles of Supervisors** Some supervisors use a person-to-person approach or line everyone up against the wall each morning and give out work assignments. The most effective supervisors use a team approach. This style yields the most employee productivity and the greatest job satisfaction for the employee.

The team approach takes more planning on the part of the supervisor. It requires that employees be informed about their work and what are the expected results.

It requires delegating the correct amount of authority to the employees and then holding them responsible for their activities. Evaluation and followup are important functions in this style. Most employees respond favorably to this supervisory style, because they are reaching a level of self-achievement. However, the final responsibility for acts or decisions can never be passed. The supervisor is responsible for the end result of the activities.

## **Evaluating Performance**

**Employee Performance Appraisal** The supervisor should approach performance appraisals with the thought, “How can I help you do your job better?” Employees should view this session from the perspective of being able to relate their goals for advancement and review ideas for making their job more productive. The sessions will give employees an evaluation of how the supervisor views their job performance.

The session should be scheduled well in advance. Both

have planned the day's activities so the session will not be interrupted. Probably no longer than one hour is necessary, if well planned. The session is held behind closed doors in comfortable facilities. Both parties must feel free to be candid and truthful. Recent copies of the employee's job description must be available for review along with the goals and objectives established at the last session. Both participants should have thoroughly reviewed the job description and given thought to current status of planned goals and objectives, with suggested plans of adjustment if necessary.

Actual session activities include a review of the tasks listed in the job description and an agreement reached on what changes need to be made if necessary. Progress made on last year's goals plus a measure of the quantitative values in the goals should be discussed. A "give and take" session will reveal if the goals were valid and, if not, why they weren't attainable. Goals and objectives for the next year should be established. These should be agreed upon by both the employee and the supervisor. Review personnel and company policies and clarify any misunderstanding. The employee may express ideas and make suggestions in these areas.

If adjustments are going to be made in the overall wage and salary or changes in fringe benefits, these need to be discussed. The actual adjustment of salary or wages for the individual employee is not discussed in this session. This adjustment is made in a later session after the supervisor has had time to evaluate the session and possibly review all adjustments in relation to the cooperative's operating budget.

Performance appraisals should be held at least once a year. This session doesn't replace the need for day to day contact between the supervisor and employee nor the need for a free exchange of information. For the new employee, the session should be no later than the end of the sixth month. This review should straighten out any misunderstanding about the tasks assigned to the position or the goals assigned to the tasks. If both parties agree that either the employee is not suited for the job or cannot perform the assigned tasks, termination at this point is advantageous to both rather than waiting a full year.

**Concluding Session** A good performance appraisal session is "give and take" on the part of both, but when completed, both should have a positive (team) feeling. If there is a disagreement, these should be resolved and a plan of action determined before the session ends. The areas that need improvement should be documented, their

satisfactory goals stated, and a time set to review the suggested improvements in the employee's performance. Supervisors should keep in mind they are assessing the employee's performance in the job, not the individual. (Sample forms useful as guidelines are included in Appendix A, Forms 8-10.)

**Looking at Work Habits** A discussion of performance appraisal and job duties lead into looking at work habits. Are the most efficient work methods used? What are the employee's characteristic ways of tackling problems, dealing with people, and handling tools and knowledge?

Evaluating employee work habits is useful for predicting areas of future success. For the less than satisfactory employee, evaluation of work habits may uncover the source of difficulty.

**Personality Factors** In judging an employee's personality in relation to work, the supervisor must recognize the need for having the required skill and experience in human relations to evaluate personality factors in the employee.

Certainly supervisors need to be aware of the employee's personal traits. Such characteristics as honesty, promptness, industry, and attitudes toward fellow workers are important and frequently critical factors in the job situation.

The full skill of the supervisor is called upon in seeking to correct deficiencies in behavior on the job without causing the employee to suffer a loss of self-esteem or arousing antagonism.

Here again the easiest path is through a discussion of the job requirements and how they fit into the total needs of the organization. If possible, the employee should be led to recognize his or her own responsibility for certain performance factors.

**Evaluation Problems** Most people dislike being judged or rated according to standards they had no part in determining and with which they may even disagree. The mechanics of the rating classification are easily overemphasized and can crowd out the human relationship. To counter this, the employees should be made to feel that the supervisor has a genuine interest in them as individuals and concern for their welfare on the job. The coaching role of the supervisor in developing the abilities of employees must, in the long run, be based not

so much on periodic reviews as on daily two-way communication and exchange of ideas.

**Planning for the Future** Many cooperatives help employees plan for the future by adopting a policy of promotion from within wherever possible. Posting job vacancies encourages employees to prepare themselves for promotion by learning additional skills. A program for the employee's development depends in part upon performance in present work assignments and indicated ability for more important assignments. A responsibility frequently overlooked in cooperatives is the need to train and develop replacements at the supervisory level. As existing supervisors move on to new and larger responsibilities or leave the organization, trained replacements should be readily available to fill vacancies.

### **Developing Executives**

Management development is a program to train personnel with executive potential. It increases ability to perform the basic functions of management (planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling) and thereby helps provide executive manpower as required. Such training is usually designed to give a broad perspective of the purposes and functions of the organization.

Managers of cooperatives can improve their own capacity for larger operations and increased responsibilities through a development program. They can see that qualified personnel participate in training activities and gain experience in all phases of the cooperative's activities. Such participation is valuable by making it possible for the cooperative to function properly when the manager is absent.

To develop management potential, key personnel should become members of management organizations and attend meetings. When practical, personnel should attend short courses in business management at colleges and universities.

Through weekly staff conferences with all key employees, management matters and problems confronted during the past week should be discussed. During these conferences, pose pending management matters and solicit suggestions. Periodically, have key personnel with other key people and the manager during consultations, considerations, decisions, board meetings, or other activities.

When the manager feels that key personnel have gained sufficient knowledge to handle managerial affairs, key

personnel can be appointed in rotation to take charge when the manager is absent. Of course, the manager would not appoint anyone as acting manager until the board of directors has been fully acquainted with the training program for key personnel and has authorized the manager to make such appointments.

### **Retaining Good Employees**

Programs for recruiting and training good employees must be accompanied by a conscious effort to keep those employees on the payroll.

**Incentive Programs** Several years ago, Agricultural Cooperative Service conducted a survey with farmer cooperatives to determine types of employee incentive programs used. From some 5,000 replies they found that about two-thirds of the cooperatives used some type of incentive program. More farm supply cooperatives had incentive programs for employees than marketing cooperatives. Information on consumer cooperatives indicates no uniform policies or practice on incentive programs.

Employee benefit packages are being widely used, providing special insurance and retirement annuities for employees who continue their service on the cooperative's staff. The cooperative bears most, if not all, of the cost of such plans.

### **EVALUATING AND REVIEWING**

No matter how good policies and procedures are, they must be adhered to if they are to be of any value-and they must be kept up to date. Cooperatives of all sorts have found that established methods and procedures may become inadequate or obsolete as business grows and volume of work increases. Without a periodic review, performance may become lax. Confusion in direction may develop. Workload piles up and accomplishments bog down. Employee morale and the business suffer.

As times and management techniques change, policies, methods and procedures need updating to conform to changing conditions so the cooperative will advance with the times. The cooperative's manpower needs should be re-evaluated by the board and manager regularly. This should be part of a long range projection in the cooperative's overall planning. Many cooperative boards require the manager to submit an updated 3-year program annually. The coming year is presented in more detail than the ensuing 2 years.

Such a review and projection examines manpower requirements, staff turnover, recruiting techniques, training program, salary scale (by category only), and the whole range of employee benefits and incentives.

Cooperatives that do this on a regularly scheduled plan report they get better results in employee relations than they did when they handled staffing without scheduled evaluation and review.

Most business consultants consider people an organization's most valuable asset, and staffing as a critical function of management. Therefore, care of human assets should command at least as much attention as is directed to other physical assets.

A cooperative's management of human assets has two fundamental elements. One comprises recruiting, selecting, and placing qualified people in the cooperative. The other involves continuous and progressive education and training programs.

## **AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS**

Agricultural Cooperatives: Pioneer to Modern, CIR 1, Sec. 2

Cooperatives in Agribusiness, CIR 5

Manager Holds Important Key to Co-op Success, CIR 16

Employees Help Co-ops Serve, CIR 17

Guidelines Co-op Employees Need, CIR 18

Cooperative Management, CIR 1, Sec. 8

Cooperative Education and Training, CIR 1, Sec. 10

A copy of each of these publications may be obtained from :

AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE SERVICE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
14th & INDEPENDENCE AVE, SW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20250

---

## Form 1 -JOB ANALYSIS

**Position:** Mixer and Feed Mill Operator

**Department:** Feed

**Position Objective:** To operate all milling equipment.

### A. Duties and Responsibilities

1. Operate controls to draw ingredients from bulk bins to mixers in accordance with formulas.
2. Obtain and dump bagged ingredients in mixers.
3. Meter and dump liquids in water.
4. Dispense drugs as required and maintain inventory controls.
5. Change grinder screens as required.
6. Start, stop, and check operation of hammer mill.
7. Line up grinding.
8. Maintain all necessary operating records.
9. Balance and adjust all scales at least weekly.
10. Sweep and clean up mixer area once a day.
- 11.** Dust off equipment once a week.
12. Make out all tickets.

### B. Skill Requirements

1. Must have mechanical aptitude.
2. Must have a high school education or equivalent.
3. Must understand all mill policies and operating procedures.
4. Must understand feed programs.
5. Must be knowledgeable of drugs and their uses.

---

## Form 2-JOB DESCRIPTION

Feed Mill Employee

### **A. Association Objective**

To render maximum service through a well-managed, soundly financed, and democratically controlled cooperative established to improve the economic condition of members and patrons.

### **B. Reporting Relationships**

Reports to: Feed Mill Supervisor

### **C. Personally Responsible for the Following Activities**

1. Dumps ingredients in feed mixer.
2. Assists in bagging feed.
3. Assists with housekeeping of mill and premises.
4. Assists with minor maintenance.
5. Waits on customers in a prompt, courteous, and efficient manner.
6. Helps with the unloading of incoming freight.
7. Assists other employees in the performance of duties assigned to the (location/facility).  
It is understood that employees should strive to do this at all times and should not have to be directed by supervisor.
8. Attends meetings as directed by supervisor.
9. Returns tools, equipment, and vehicles to their designated place after using them in the performance of duties.
10. Performs such other activities as directed by supervisor.

### **D. Coordination and Communication Relationships**

1. To lend full assistance for the growth and progress of the (location/facility) and the cooperative.
2. Other Employees-To cooperate with and do my part to build good employee relations and high morale.
3. Patrons-To serve and to help them see the necessity for farmers uniting and actively supporting the cooperative.
4. To promote goodwill and seek every opportunity to develop understanding and acceptance of the cooperative's plans, programs, and objectives.

---

### Form 3—APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

1. Print Last Name      First      Middle

---

2. Social Security #

---

3. Number and Street Address,      R.D./Box

---

4. City      State      Zip Code

---

5. Telephone No.

(      ) -

---

6. Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

7. Citizen of U.S.: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. Position Desired: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Earnings Expected \$\_\_\_\_\_

10. Date Available \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

11. Who referred you to this cooperative? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Are you a former employee of the cooperative? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

13. Relatives employed by this cooperative \_\_\_\_\_

## Education

School	Name and Location	Dates Attended	Dipl/Degree	Major
Grade			Y e s _   No _____	
Secondary				
College				
Business/Trade				
Extra Curricular Activities				
Hobbies				
Office machines you can operate:				
Words per minute: Typing			Shorthand	
Would you be willing to leave your present home community for a satisfactory employment opportunity?	Y e s _   No _____			

## Experience

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Type Business \_\_\_\_\_

Starting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Starting Salary \_\_\_\_\_ Reason for Leaving \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\$\_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Name \_\_\_\_\_ May we contact? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Type Business \_\_\_\_\_

Starting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Starting Salary \_\_\_\_\_ Reason for Leaving \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\$\_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Name \_\_\_\_\_ May we contact? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Type Business \_\_\_\_\_

Starting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Starting Salary \_\_\_\_\_ Reason for Leaving \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_\$\_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Name \_\_\_\_\_ May we contact? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any other experiences, skills, or qualifications you feel would especially fit you for work with this cooperative? \_\_\_\_\_

## References

(Please List Three)

Name	Address	Occupation
------	---------	------------

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List organizations you belong to, excluding those the name or character of which reveal the race, creed, color, national origin or ancestry of its members. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Official positions, if any, you have held in organizations listed above. (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize this cooperative to investigate all statements contained in this application. I understand that misrepresentation or omission of material facts will be cause for dismissal.

Your signature \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date of interview / \_\_\_\_\_ /

Interviewer's comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

## Form 4-PHONE REFERENCE CHECK

**(Contact two or more former employers if possible)**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ I work for xyz cooperative, and I have been reviewing the application of (applicant name) for a position with us. (Applicant name) has indicated employment with your firm. We believe (applicant name) has the qualifications we are seeking, but before we make a final decision we need to know a few details of (applicant's name) work with you.

Name of person giving information \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Phone -( )

Firm name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you employ the applicant? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How long was the applicant your employee? Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months \_\_\_\_
3. What was his/her assignment?
4. Was applicant's work satisfactory? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. If no, where was applicant deficient? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Why did applicant leave your employ? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Would you rehire (applicant name)? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_. If "NO" where was (applicant name) deficient?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Was applicant ever absent, except for illness or vacation?  
Often \_\_\_\_\_ Seldom \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_
9. Did applicant have any supervisory or administrative responsibility?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did applicant's assignments involve responsibility for company funds?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If "Yes" did you have any shortages? Yes - \_ No \_\_\_\_\_
11. Did applicant have any personal problems that might affect work?  
Financial \_\_\_\_\_ Domestic \_\_\_\_\_ Excessive gambling \_\_\_\_\_ Drugs or alcohol \_\_\_\_\_
12. Applicant reported earnings of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per (month-year) when leaving your firm.  
Is that amount correct? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
13. In your judgment what were applicant's strongest characteristics?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Weakest characteristics? \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date of interview \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

---

## Form 5—MAIL REFERENCE CHECK

To: (Individual listed as reference)

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

The person named below has applied to us for a position as (Job Title) \_\_\_\_\_. This individual has named you as a reference and has authorized us to address this inquiry regarding character and qualifications. We would appreciate your evaluation of this individual by inserting check marks in the spaces below and submit any comments you wish to make.

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Title) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

QUALIFICATIONS	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	REMARKS
1. Diligence	_____			
2. Honesty	_____			
3. Enthusiasm	_____			
4. Stability	_____			
5. Courtesy	_____			
6. Health	_____			
7. Ambition	_____	_____		
8. Initiative	_____			
9. Dependability	_____		_____	
10. Friendliness	_____			
11. Satisfactory service?	_____			
12. Self control	_____			
13. Cooperation	_____			
14. Customer needs	_____			
15. Attitude	_____			
16. How long was applicant in your employ?	_____			
17. Reason for leaving your employ?	_____			

Please use back of form for further comments you wish to make.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

---

## Form 6-SCORE SHEET FOR EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of Applicant\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Married Y N \_\_\_\_\_ Children\_\_\_\_\_

How was applicant obtained? Referred by\_\_\_\_\_

Answered ad\_\_\_\_\_ Through school \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Patron referral \_\_\_\_\_ Employment service \_\_\_\_\_

References:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Quality	Desirable answers	Undesirable answers
Customer needs	_____	_____
Ability to size up	_____	_____
Ambition	_____	_____
Curiosity	_____	_____
Friendliness	_____	_____
Honesty	_____	_____
initiative	_____	_____
Mechanical aptitude	_____	_____
Orderliness	_____	_____
Originality	_____	_____
Self control	_____	_____
Versatility	_____	_____
Interest in field	_____	_____
	Total	Total

Your evaluation of applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Disposition:

Hired: \_\_\_\_\_

Would have hired, but applicant decided against \_\_\_\_\_

Will hire as soon as we have opening \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant does not meet standards for job: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## Form 7-RATING SCALE FOR FIELD APPLICANTS

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/19  
Date

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Evaluate and mark the areas of the rating form in one of the categories good, fair, or poor. Impressions are most objective if registered immediately after the interview session.

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
<b>Aggressiveness</b>	Tactful in conversation	Fairly aggressive	Just sits and listens
<b>Appearance</b>	Makes fine impression	Good enough to get by	Makes a poor impression
<b>Attitude</b>	Ambitious in future	Average interest in future	Merely wants a job
<b>Character</b>	Confident and inspiring	Seems all right	Definitely doubtful
<b>Education</b>	Just right for our line	Adequate	Too much or too little
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	Forceful and eager	Average	Doesn't seem to care
<b>Expression</b>	Direct, clear and fluent	Average voice and fluency	Poor voice & expression
<b>Finances</b>	Has done very well for age	Average	Poor money manager
<b>Health and Energy</b>	Abundant energy	Should be able to keep up	Not much vitality
<b>Home and Social Life</b>	Seems well adjusted	Average	Unsocial & undomestic

<b>Business Knowledge</b>	Better than average	Average	Little or none
<b>Leadership</b>	executive qualities	May or may not develop	None apparent
<b>Manners</b>	Pleasing& appropriate	Passable	Lacks social sense
<b>Maturity</b>	Serious & thoughtful	Average	Immature for age
<b>Mental Alertness</b>	Reacts quick & intelligent	Average	Not impressive
<b>Personality</b>	Just our type	Should fit in	Definitely unfavorable
<b>Poise</b>	Pleasant & self-assured	Average	Fidgety & ill at ease
<b>Sales Experience</b>	Excellent for our work	Adequate	Inadequate
<b>Stability</b>	He/she will wear well	Should be average	Seems to be a "floater"

comments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Recommended for employment

\_\_\_\_\_ Not recommended for employment

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed

---

## Form 8-PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current Date \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Date \_\_\_\_\_

Performance appraisal is the process of evaluating an individual's work relative to the responsibilities and activities defined in the job description. Performance is usually evaluated for a specific time period, normally 1 year. Performance can be measured objectively only if the supervisor and the employee have reached an agreement, prior to the evaluation period, as to what will be expected of the employee. The questions what, how, and when responsibilities will be accomplished must be answered to serve as a basis for the appraisal.

After the supervisor and employee have discussed the employee's job description or expected duties, they should determine the criteria on which the employee's performance will be evaluated. There are 15 suggested performance appraisal factors listed on the following pages.

The supervisor and the employee should assign the performance appraisal factors to 1 of 3 categories. Five factors should be assigned to each category. The five most important factors should be indicated by placing a 3 on the line next to those factors. The five less important factors should be indicated by placing a 2 on the line next to those factors. The five least important factors should be indicated by placing a 1 on the line next to those factors. All 15 factors must be used and assigned a number 3, 2, or 1.

The assignment of a factor to a category should be based on the relative importance of that factor on the job. The employee should participate with the supervisor in ranking the appraisal factors. This provides the employee with a clear understanding of the factors the supervisor will use in appraising performance and the relative importance of each factor.

Factor ranking should be reviewed annually or as changes occur in the job that would change their relative importance. The employee should be involved in any change to maintain awareness of how performance will be measured.

The completed form should be sent to the individual who scores the performance appraisal form. This form is used in scoring procedure and should be maintained in the scorer's files.

## Performance Appraisal Factors

Rank each of the **15** factors with the numerical classification of either 1, 2, or 3. Five of the factors will be ranked in each numerical classification.

- ACCURACY-The absence of mistakes during the performance of work duties.
- ALERTNESS-The ability to comprehend instructions quickly and recognize changing conditions.
- ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY-The faithfulness in coming to work daily and conforming to the work hours (Arriving and leaving work at the designated time and conforming to work breaks and lunch schedules.)
- ATTITUDE-An individual's outward behavior displayed in job performance that may indicate mental state when performing the job.
- COURTESY-The polite attention an individual gives other people.
- CREATIVITY-The talent of having new ideas, finding new and better ways of doing things and being imaginative.
- DEPENDABILITY-The quality of performing jobs or following directions with minimal supervision.
- DRIVE-The desire to attain goals, to achieve.
- FRIENDLINESS-The sociability and warmth an individual imparts in behavior towards customers and other employees.
- JOB KNOWLEDGE-The information concerning work duties an individual should know for a satisfactory job performance.
- MAINTENANCE AND HOUSEKEEPING-The care an individual uses toward maintaining equipment and clean work area.
- PERSONAL APPEARANCE-The personal impression an individual makes on others (cleanliness, grooming, neatness, and appropriateness of dress on the job)
- PHYSICAL FITNESS-The ability to work consistently throughout the normal day with only normal fatigue (energy and alertness).
- QUANTITY OF WORK-The amount of work an individual does in a work day.
- STABILITY-The ability to withstand pressure and remain calm in crisis situations.

## Performance Appraisal Procedure

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Date \_\_\_\_\_

The following points should be considered when completing this performance appraisal form:

**TIME**--The appraisal process should occur consistent with each appraisal period within a specified time period.

**PRIVACY**--The supervisor should complete this form without distractions or interruptions.

**SUPERVISOR ATTITUDE**--The supervisor's attitude toward the employee, personality, or other matters should be as nearly neutral as possible. The supervisor should devote a completely conscious effort toward the employee's work record only. No other matters should distract the supervisor's thought process.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**--The supervisor should review the employee's job description and other materials to refresh memory of what is being measured. The supervisor should form a mental picture of the employee's work for the appraisal period being considered.

**COMPLETING THE FORM**--The supervisor should mark and "X" on the rating scale that most nearly describes the performance of the employee. Each factor should be considered separately and independent of all other factors.

The tendency to rate an employee high, low, or average on all factors should be avoided.

After completing the form, submit it to the designated individual for evaluation.

This form should not be discussed with the employee in detail, but rather should be used as a guide for preparing for the discussion with the employee at a formal review meeting. After the formal review meeting, this form should be placed in the confidential employee personnel file.

## Performance Appraisal Worksheet

ACCURACY-Absence of mistakes during the performance of work duties.(Check only one)

- Makes frequent errors. Must check almost all work for errors.
- Careless worker. Makes more errors than the average worker.
- Usually accurate. Makes only an average number of mistakes.
- Precise worker. Makes minimum number of errors. Very little checking of work required.
- Consistently accurate. No checking of work required.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

ALERTNESS — The ability to comprehend instructions quickly and recognize changing conditions.(Check only one)

- Has difficulty understanding instructions. Does not recognize changing conditions.
- Requires more than average explanation of instructions. Slow to recognize changing conditions.
- Grasps instructions and recognizes changing conditions with average ability.
- Quick to understand instructions and perceives most changing conditions.
- Exceptional keen and alert. Quickly recognizes changing conditions.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY-The faithfulness in coming to work daily and conforming to the work hours. Consider arriving and leaving work at the designated time and conforming to work break and luncheon schedules. (Check only one)

- Often absent without good excuse and/or frequently arrives late or leaves early.
- Somewhat lax in attendance and/or conforming to scheduled work hours.
- Normally present and on time.
- Consistently maintains work schedules. Very prompt. Regular in attendance.
- Exceptional attendance. Normally ready to begin work at designated time and works until quitting time.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

ATTITUDE-An individual's outward behavior displayed in job performance that may indicate mental state when performing the job.(Check only one)

- Behavior is negative. Individual appears to dislike the job.
- Behavior could be improved.
- Behavior is satisfactory.
- Behavior is above average.
- Individual appears to demonstrate enthusiasm for all phases of job performance.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

COURTESY---Polite attention an individual gives other people

- Blunt; discourteous; antagonistic.
- Sometimes tactless.
- Agreeable and pleasant.
- Always polite and willing to help.
- Inspiring to others in being courteous and pleasant.
- Inspiring to others in being courteous and pleasant.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

CREATIVITY---The talent of having new ideas, finding new and better ways of doing things and being imaginative.

- Rarely has a new idea. Unimaginative.
- Occasionally comes up with a new idea.
- Has an average number of new ideas.
- Frequently suggests new ways of doing business.
- Continually seeks new and better ways of doing things. Imaginative.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

DEPENDABILITY---Quality of performing jobs or following directions with a minimum of supervision.

- Unreliable. Requires close supervision.
- Sometimes requires prompting.
- Usually performs tasks with reasonable promptness.
- Reliable. Requires little supervision.
- Requires minimum supervision. Extremely reliable.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

DRIVE---Desire to attain goals, to achieve.

- Has poorly defined goals and acts without purpose. Puts forth practically no effort.
- Sets goals too low. Puts forth little effort to achieve.
- Has average goals and usually puts forth effort to reach these.
- Strives hard. Has high desire to achieve.
- Sets high goals and strives incessantly to reach these.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

FRIENDLINESS--- Sociability and warmth an individual imparts in behavior toward customers and other employees.

- Very distant.
- Unfriendly but friendly once known by others.
- Friendly; sociable.
- Very friendly, sociable, and outgoing.
- Extremely sociable and friendly. Excellent at establishing good will.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

JOB KNOWLEDGE--- Information concerning work duties that an individual should know for a satisfactory job performance.

- Poorly informed about work duties.
- Lacks knowledge of some phases of work.
- Moderately informed. Can answer most common questions.
- Understands all phases of work.
- Has complete mastery of all phases of job.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

MAINTENANCE AND HOUSEKEEPING---Care with which an individual uses and maintains equipment and the cleanliness of work area.

- Careless with equipment and/or has a disorderly or dirty work area.
- Somewhat careless with equipment. Work area could be cleaner or better organized.
- Normally keeps work area orderly and/or clean. Average care in use of equipment.
- Quite conscientious using and maintaining equipment and keeping a clean, orderly work area.
- Displays exceptional care using and maintaining equipment. Work area is always clean and orderly.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

PERSONAL APPEARANCE--- Personal impression an individual makes on others (cleanliness, grooming, neatness, and appropriateness of dress on the job)

- Very untidy. Poor personal appearance.
- Careless about appearance.
- Generally satisfactory personal appearance. Clean and neat for this job.
- Careful about personal appearance. Above average for this job.
- Very well groomed. Projects an excellent appearance.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

PHYSICAL FITNESS---Ability to work consistently throughout the normal work day with only normal fatigue (energy and alertness)

- Tires easily. Poor physical condition for this job.
- Frequently slows down because of fatigue.
- Meets the physical requirements of this job.
- Energetic. Seldom tires.
- Excellent physical condition. Shows no sign of tiring.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

QUANTITY OF WORK---Amount of work an individual does in a day.

- Does not meet minimum requirements.
- Does just enough to get by.
- Volume of work is satisfactory.
- Industrious. Does more than is required.
- Superior work production record.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

STABILITY--- Ability to withstand pressure and to remain calm in crisis situations,

- Goes "to pieces" under pressure. Is "jumpy" and nervous.
- Occasionally "blows up" under pressure. Is easily irritated.
- Has average tolerance for crises. Usually remains calm.
- Tolerates most pressure. Good tolerance for crises.
- Thrives under pressure. Really enjoys solving crises.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

OVERALL EVALUATION--- In comparison with other employees with the same length of service on the job.

- Definitely unsatisfactory.
- Substandard but making progress.
- Doing an average job.
- Definitely above average.
- Outstanding.

SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL SCORE\_\_\_\_\_

## Action Plans

Major weak points are---

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

and these can be strengthened by doing the following:

Major strong points are---

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

and these can be used more effectively by doing the following:

Rated by \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Performance Appraisal Scoring

The supervisor should mark only one performance level for each appraisal factor. If more than one or no level is marked, it must be corrected by the supervisor.

The following example indicates the number of points associated with each performance level.

### Performance Level Values

\_\_\_\_\_ **-2**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **-1**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **0**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **1**  
“**X**”  
\_\_\_\_\_ **2**

Using the Performance Appraisal Factor form, determine the ranking-one, two, or three-of the factor. Multiply the ranking of the factor by the performance level value, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, indicated by the supervisor's mark. Place the score for each factor in the “SCORE” area of the appraisal form. Total the scores and compare with the following chart.

### Score-Rank Table

	“TOO” “LOW”	‘BELOW AVERAGE			AVERAGE			ABOVE AVERAGE		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
SERVICE	0-6	7-11	12-19	20-26	27-35	36-44	45-51	52-55	56-58	59-60
CLERICAL	0-6	7-13	14-18	19-27	28-56	37-44	45-50	51-55	56-58	59-60
SUPERVISOR	0-6	7-10	11-18	19-25	26-33	34-43	44-49	50-54	55-57	58-60

### Performance Scales

Rank of 1 -Unacceptable  
Rank of 2-Poor  
Rank of 3-Marginal  
Rank of 4-Acceptable  
Rank of 5-Standard  
Rank of 6-Good  
Rank of 7-Excellent  
Rank of 8-Superior  
Rank of g-outstanding

19 out of 20 employees better performers  
9 out of 10 employees better performers  
4 out of 5 employees better performers  
3 out of 5 employees better performers  
Employee at average of all employees  
Better than 3 out of every 5 employees  
Better than 4 out of every 5 employees  
Better than 9 out of every 10 employees  
Better than 19 out of every 20 employees

---

## Form 9—MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

### Summary Sheet

(See attached for detailed ratings)

This form is to be filled out annually, whether an increase is given or not, within 60 days after the audit of the cooperative. Appraisal must be completed and approved by all the board of directors before an increase can be effected.

Manager Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date / / -

Signatures \_\_\_\_\_  
(Director Review Committee)

Place the proper numerical value beside each area evaluated using the following scale.

1. Not acceptable
2. Below desired levels
3. Average or typical
4. Above average
5. Outstanding

**A. Operations and control**

Increase in sale volume  
 Internal control and operating costs  
 Production per employee  
 Appearance of facilities

**B. Financial management**

Financial planning  
 Accounts Receivable control  
(Average Day's Sales in Receivables)  
 Inventory turnover  
 Net margins

**C. Board relations**

Recommendations and presentations  
 Management and board coordination  
 Reports on operations

**D. Membership and Community Relations**

Membership communications  
 Community relations

**E. Supervision and personnel management**

Personnel policies  
 Hiring and employee development  
 Employee attitudes  
 Employee appearance  
 Delegation

**F. Management tools**

Use of management tools

## A. OPERATIONS

1. Increase in sales volume (Directors should recognize unusual or localized situations clearly beyond any control by manager. Three-year average of total commodity sales should be used. Where current year figures are available, include them as part of average -otherwise, use most recent 3 years for which data are available.)

One of lowest in area in percentage of increase. Little or no programming.  
 Percent increase below area average. More planning programming needed.  
 Percent increase about equal to general co-op average in area. Good programming  
 Greater percent increase than area average. Some special programs.  
 Outstanding in area in percent of sales increase and sales programming.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Internal controls and operating costs

Excessive costs and shrink. No system to control losses and costs.  
 Some looseness in controls. System needs tightening up.  
 Average shrink. Makes good use of statements and audits.  
 Good systematic controls. Problems and shrink at a minimum  
 Excellent system of controls and auditing. Very low shrink, costs well in line at all times

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Production per employee - ratio of annual department sales volume to number of employees or production per hour.

More than 50% below standard.  
 10% to 50% below standards.  
 About equal to standards.  
 Up to 50% above standards.  
 More than 50% above standards.

Minimum standards per employee are:

<input type="checkbox"/> Bulk Petroleum	<input type="checkbox"/> Hardware
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/> Meats
<input type="checkbox"/> Feed	<input type="checkbox"/> Produce
<input type="checkbox"/> Fertilizer	<input type="checkbox"/> Service station
<input type="checkbox"/> Groceries	<input type="checkbox"/> Grain

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

(Standards may be established by: Your Auditor, Extension Service at State university or regional cooperative.)

4. Net Margins (Directors should recognize unusual or localized situations clearly beyond manager's control. Condition of cooperative earnings at time manager was selected should be kept in mind. Three-year average normally should be used in rating to give better measure of results than any one year.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Poor results getting no better or even worse needs prompt attention.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Results below average somewhat too often, no noticeable trend to improve.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Results are OK-normally up to area average, or improvement toward that level.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Good results either above area average or real trend in that direction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exceeds board expectations-consistent leader in area averages, or outstanding improvement much better than anticipated.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Appearance of Facilities

- \_\_\_\_\_ Very unattractive appearances well below good competition.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Needs some sprucing up on painting identification, lighting or housekeeping.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Average.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Good appearance-up to good competition-identification and lighting up to date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Best in town A-I painting, identification, lighting. Excellent housekeeping program.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

## B. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. Financial Planning

- \_\_\_\_\_ No fiscal plans on day-to-day emergency basis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sometime caught "unaware" with emergencies hard to overcome.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Average-emergencies avoided or met quite easily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Above average financing programs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sound policies and long-range programs. Financial arrangements in advance of needs.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Accounts Receivable Control (Average Days in Sales)

- \_\_\_\_\_ More than 60 days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31 to 60 Days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25 to 30 Days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24 to 15 Days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14 Days or less

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Inventory turnover-Ratio of sales to inventory-(Use month-end balances to give average for the year. Because of different closing dates and seasonal inventory fluctuations, the year-end inventory should not be used as standard.)

(Select only one)

Over 50% less than standards.  
 Up to 50% less turnover than standards.  
 Turnover of main lines about equal to standards.  
 Turnover up to 50% greater than standards.  
 Over 50 % greater than standards.

Standards of turnover per year are:

Clothing	_____	Feed	_____	Groceries	_____
Hardware	_____	T.B.A.	_____	Produce	_____
Fertilizer	_____	Bulk Fuels	_____	Grain	_____

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

## C. BOARD RELATIONS

1. Recommendations and presentation to board

(Select only one)

Sometimes disorganized-some data either unreliable or hard to follow.  
 Planning and presentations ability, but some recommendations seem rushed without full consideration.  
 Satisfactory.  
 Good-generally timed and planned well, understandable and quite complete.  
 Excellent planning and presentations, timely, well supported by facts and logic.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

2. General teamwork and leadership with board

(Select only one)

Friction and strained relations-quite unsatisfactory.  
 Need more organized communication and teamwork with board.  
 Average.  
- - Quite good in keeping board informed. Sound balance between board areas and manager areas.  
 Outstanding in leadership. Keeps board manager teamwork on high level.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

## D. MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### 1. Membership education and communications

(Select only one)

- Must be improved-membership slipping, complaints, lack of member interest.
- Programming meetings and mailings need more attention. Sometimes misses opportunities.
- Membership growth and meetings OK-mailings to member list and sometimes more.
- Some long-range programs, good meetings, mailings consistently go beyond membership list.
- Outstanding program of tours, mailings, meetings covering present and potential members. Growing and enthusiastic membership.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

---

### 2. Community relations-With schools, businesses, key leaders, government agencies, young adults

(Select only one)

- Must be improved-too much community misunderstanding and lack of interest. or far too much time spent away from work for results achieved.
- Some contacts and participation, but doesn't seem organized. Too little or too much time spent.
- Relations OK-some activities and publicity, no criticism of program.
- Good program of contacts, publicity and participation. Time in activities seem about right.
- Outstanding programs, use of publicity, community leadership, excellent time balance between work and activities.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## E. SUPERVISION AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### 1. Personnel policies and planning

(Select only one)

- Hardly any policies or plans evident. Day-to-day handling varies.
- Need for more systematic policies and planning.
- Some planning and adequate policy handling.
- Above average attention to policies and planning.
- Excellent personnel policies recommendations and long-range planning.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## 2. Hiring and personnel development

(Select only one)

- Need to hire and develop better employees. Employees not up to necessary standards.
- Some hires seem mediocre. Selection and training need some work.
- OK-some good, some so-so. Adequate training.
- Selection and training is generally good to very good.
- Picks able people and trains them to outstanding level.

## 3. Employee Attitudes

(Select only one)

- Major problem-serious employee dissatisfaction is obvious
- Some lack of discipline and team spirit. Too many members complain on service.
- Average.
- Good leadership-employee attitudes seem sound-some compliments.
- Outstanding leadership-many compliments on employee attitudes-really on the ball.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Appearance of employees

(Select only one)

- Giving poor impressions.
- Some "slips" in appearance.
- OK.
- Usually makes a good impression.
- Always in clean uniform, looks really sharp.

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Delegation

(Select only one)

- Delegation seems vague, lacks controls and organization.
- Some delegation but tends to do too much personally.
- OK.
- Gets things done-delegates work load and authority quite well.
- Superior in organizing and delegation work with good controls.

## F. USE OF MANAGEMENT TOOLS

(Respond to each item)

yes **n o**

- Monthly financial statements
- Departmentalized
- Budgets
- Regular employee meetings
- Job descriptions
- Employee appraisal program
- Employee salary program
- Management and product meetings

(Select only one)

- Uses almost none
- Below average
- Average
- Above average
- Uses all or most tools

REMARKS: \_\_\_\_\_

## G. SUMMARY

1. Best areas are: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Since last rating session, progress has been shown in (see last year's rating for possible items)
3. The main areas that need further development are (refer to checklist items above and give specific examples where possible).
4. Suggestions and planned action to develop in these areas (show follow-up dates to give definite "targets").

I have had a opportunity to discuss and ask questions about my progress and performance.

---

General Manager

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Date - - / - / \_\_\_\_\_

---

## Form IO-SALARY REVIEW

(Cooperative Name) Date \_\_\_\_//\_\_

Department head or supervisor whose signature appears below submits this recommendation for approval of the general manager

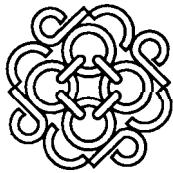
Name of employee	Department	Date employed	
Present position	Present salary	Last raise	Proposed salary
	\$/ / 19	\$	
Raise recommended by	Effective date	Signature/department head	

Reasons for recommending increase in salary (Explain in detail)

The above request for salary adjustment is (approved / rejected)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
General Manager

Recorded _____ Comptroller	Pension plan	Group insurance	Payroll records
-------------------------------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------



## **U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Cooperative Service**

**P.O. Box 96576**

**Washington, D.C. 20090-6576**

Agricultural Cooperative Service (ACS) provides research, management, and educational assistance to cooperatives to strengthen the economic position of farmers and other rural residents. It works directly with cooperative leaders and Federal and State agencies to improve organization, leadership, and operation of cooperatives and to give guidance to further development.

The agency (1) helps farmers and other rural residents develop cooperatives to obtain supplies and services at lower cost and to get better prices for products they sell; (2) advises rural residents on developing existing resources through cooperative action to enhance rural living; (3) helps cooperatives improve services and operating efficiency; (4) informs members, directors, employees, and the public on how cooperatives work and benefit their members and their communities; and (5) encourages international cooperative programs.

ACS publishes research and educational materials and issues *Farmer Cooperatives* magazine. All programs and activities are conducted on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, marital status, handicap, or national origin.