



# Interviewing, Onboarding and Retention

*Presented by:*

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Basin **trust**

**BASIN  
BUSINESS  
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# Agenda

- **Interviewing Candidates**
- **Onboarding Employees**
- **Training & Mentoring New Employees**
- **Onboarding & Retention Best Practices**
- **Next Steps**



# Interviewing Candidates: Preparing and Planning for an Interview



# Interview

- **Screen candidates**
  - Read all applications
  - Match candidates' skills to job description key words
  - Eliminate candidates who do not meet minimum skills or experience
  - Select an appropriate number of candidates to interview
- **Choose interview questions in advance**
- **Select an interview format and timetable**
- **Be prepared for common Q&As**
  - What a candidate will need to know about the farm and the job *before* accepting the position



# Screening candidates

## 1. Initial screening of Resumes

- Acknowledge receipt of resume and interest in position
- \* Be aware of 'phishing' that occurs on open job boards/social media
- Decline by email/online job board
- May have reporting requirements for Federal Work Programs

## Who does the interviewing?

- Depends on farm structure & nature of the position being hired
- Farm Owner/Operator
- Involve key personnel in two-part interviews



# Screening candidates

## 2. Phone Screening interview

- Select a team member to call potential candidates
- List of phone screening questions
- Think of your challenges and turn these into questions for the interview
- Note responses
- YES or Maybe



# Screening candidates

## 3. Second Round Interview

- Contact potential candidates to invite to an online or in-person interview
- Different person interviewing candidate
- Repeat of phone interview questions

# Screening candidates

## 4. Upon Completion of the Interview

- Check references
- Make your candidate selections
- Provide the candidate with the job offer
- Notify unsuccessful applicants

# Drafting Effective and Appropriate Interview Questions





# Types of Interview Questions

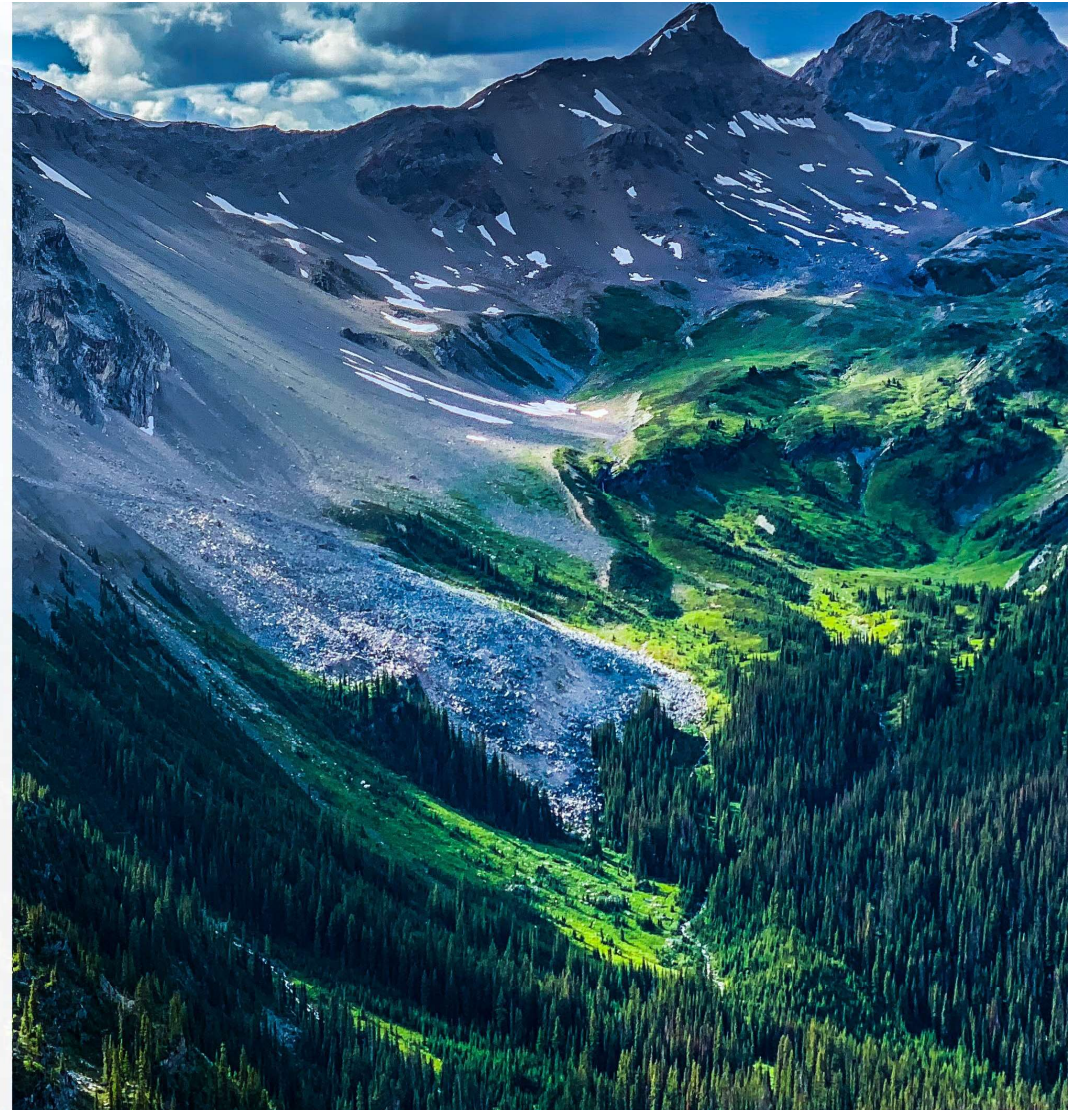
- **Situational questions** often start with “what would you do if...”
- **Knowledge questions** are direct requests for the information/skills
- **Worker requirement** questions explore a workers willingness to meet job demands





# Examples of Interview Questions

- What abilities do you feel are most crucial for the success in this job?
- At this point in your life (career), what goals are you aiming for?
- What have you been particularly praised for or recognized for in other jobs?
- And in what areas do you need improvement?
- To sum up, why do you believe you should be hired for this job?



# Human Rights Code Protected Characteristics

- Indigenous Identity
- Race
- Colour
- Ancestry
- Place of Origin
- Sex
- Gender Identity or Expression
- Sexual Orientation
- Physical Disability \*
- Mental Disability
- Marital Status
- Family Status
- Age
- Political Beliefs
- Religion
- Summary or Criminal Conviction \*\*



# Interview Style Tips

- Review the candidate's information before the interview

***Establish rapport with the candidate!***

- Outline the objectives and structure of the interview
- Be professional
- Practice active listening



# Interview Structure Tips

- Preparation!**

- Consistency!**

Use consistent interview format and content for all applicants

- Transparency!**

Be transparent about the workplace and working conditions

Only make promises you can fulfill





## Location of the Interview

- Online
- Casual or Formal Structure
- Off-site interview
- On-site interview
  - Farm tour
  - Coffee on the Farm



# Interview Timetable

**Length of interview will depend on the position being hired**

- One hour is often enough time to schedule for the interview
- The goal is to gather some initial impressions of the candidate and to ask numerous questions
- Leave time to answer candidate's questions during or at the end of the interview



# Interview A

**Summer labourer, 35 hours/ week**

**May to September**

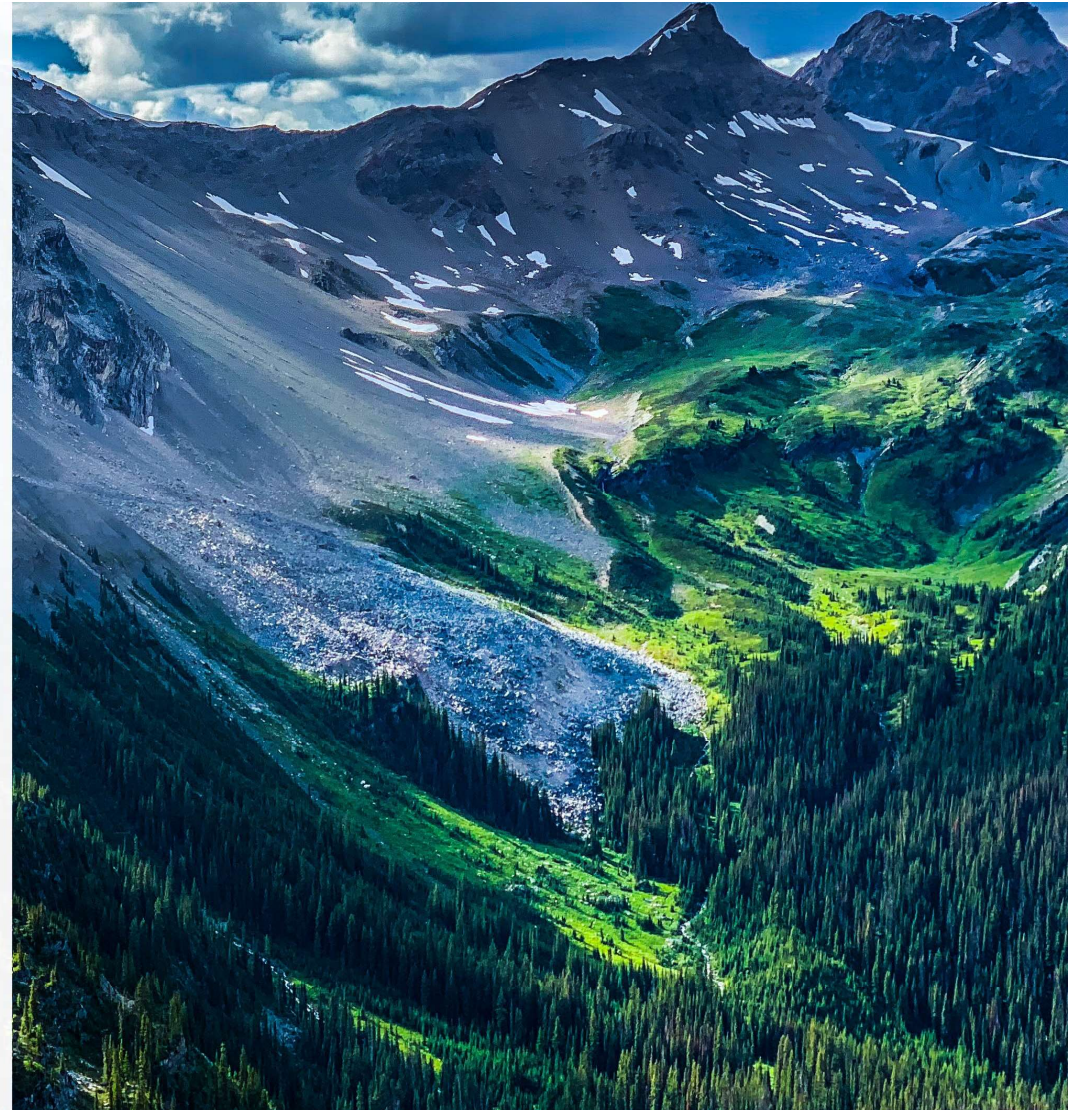
- Online call OR Casual coffee at the farm – farm tour to gauge interest in role and discuss job requirements.
- Introduction to other key FT staff on-farm
- 1-2 hours duration
- Follow up with written offer
- Request a reply within 1 week of offer



# Interview B

## Farm Manager Position - Permanent FT, Live-in position

- Initial online interview to further gauge interest in the role and to discuss job requirements
- Follow up communications about impressions of job
- Invitation to visit the farm for one or more days
- Detailed tour of farm, meetings with all key personnel – individual time with other staff, tour of area/region
- Contract negotiations





# Reminders

1. Involve the right people in the interviews
2. Invest time in to preparing for the interview
3. Stay consistent, transparent and professional throughout the process



# Onboarding New Employees







## Making a Job Offer





# Job Offer

- Make a verbal offer by phone or in person to allow the person to ask any questions. Keep the communication positive and let the candidate know that you expect they will do a good job and enjoy working for you.
- Follow up with a written offer

## What should a written job offer contain?

- Quality and quantity of the work expected
- Work schedule and term
- Evaluation requirements
- Clearly stated wages and benefits





# Creating Clear Job Expectations







# Employee Handbook

- **Why do you need an employee handbook?**
- **What should you include in your handbook?**

# Understanding a Policy vs. Procedure

- **Policy** – informs your employees on what is expected, may include guidelines, rules and regulations
- **Procedure** – informs the process of how things are done, and the actions taken to implement policy





# Job Expectations

- Create clear job descriptions!
- Level of experience and skill required for the position.
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Clear description of duties to be performed.
- Calendar/Gantt chart
- Clearly explain your expectations as the employers during onboarding process
- Model the behaviour!



# Reminders

1. Begin work on Employee Handbook
2. Create key on-farm policies and procedures, post relevant information in highly visible areas





# Onboarding Candidates



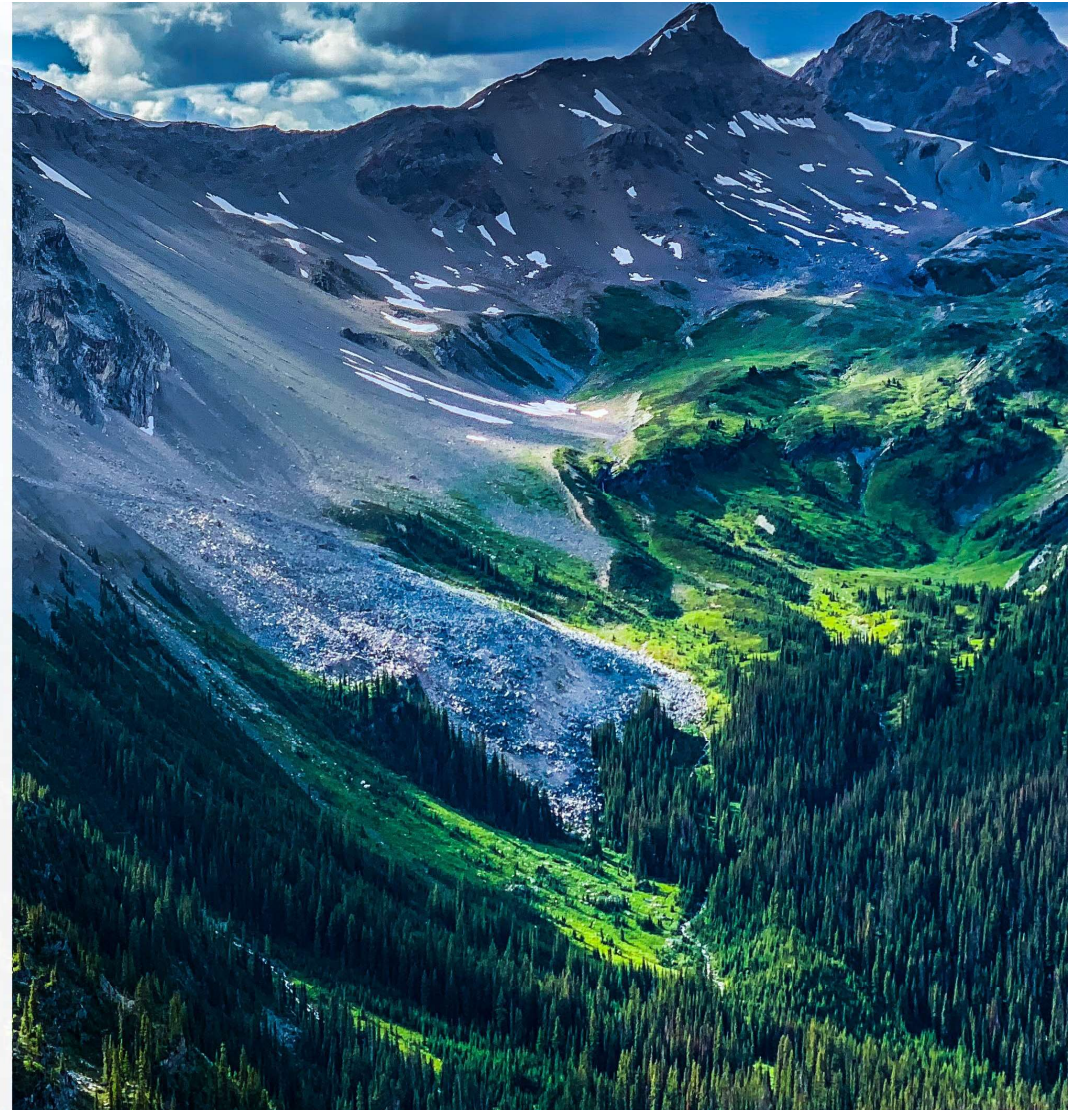
# Onboarding New Employees

- **Orientation**
- **Policies and Procedures**
  - Allow time for questions and discussion
  - Use the employee handbook
- **Training**
  - Safety training
  - Customer service training



# Create a good "First Day"

- **Time** spent with candidate on first day
- Tour of workplace
- Meet key team members Paperwork – fill out employment package
- Schedule for upcoming shifts
- Social time – get to know each other (Lunch?)
- Calendar/Schedule follow up check in with new employee





# First Weeks...

- Demonstrate workplace culture
- Supervised Job orientation – understanding how to perform duties
- Watch me, Tell me, Show me
- Safety Training
- Check-ins
- The 5c's of onboarding stand for compliance, clarification, culture, connections, and check back





# Training and Mentoring New Employees







## Training and Mentoring New Employees

- Be intentional with the training schedule, building on skill sets.
- Use structured check-ins with formal questions to gauge progress, learning and understand employee needs



# Employee Retention







# Retention Best Practices

Transparency

Communication

Collaboration

Personal Growth

# Non-Wage Benefits

- Free or reduced price for farm products
- Flexible hours and vacation time
- Full-time employment opportunity for management or supervisor positions
- Free or discounted lodging
- Group health benefits or health spending allowance
- Professional Development Opportunities



# Wrapping up Seasonal Employment



# Wrapping up the season

- Workplace wrap up – tools, equipment, notes
- Final payroll
- Record of Employment
- Collect current contact information
- Exit interviews – collect feedback
- Find out who is interested in returning







# Personal Touches

- Celebrations
- Growth Opportunities
- Gratitude & Recognition

# Stay in Touch with Seasonal Employees

- **State your intentions to continue employment the following season**
  - Employ key staff year round
- **Reach out during winter holidays**
- **Check returning interest when you send T4's**
- **Invite returning workers to offer suggested candidates and to share your job posts**



# Recap



1. Create clear job expectations and job descriptions
2. Start with employee handbook essentials  
– hours of work, pay schedule, time off
3. Plan your employee orientation and onboarding activities
4. Adopt best practices for worker retention
5. Plan for end of seasonal employment





# Thank you!