

Farm Business Culture: *Why It's Crucial*

Jon Wilcox/Vita Plus Corp
Mar 21, 2013



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Will we really have this in 5 months?



Hard to imagine on the 2nd day of Spring!?!

All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

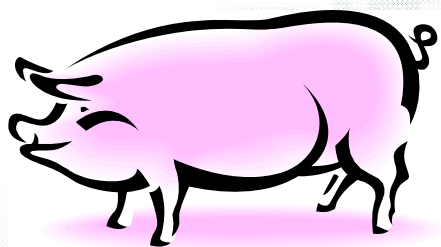
Who are we?

- Who came the farthest?
- Who's been to Swine Summit the most?
- Why did you come this year?
- Tell us a little about yourself and your farm?



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Think about the all changes in ag that have occurred in our life times.....



Genetics

Technology



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

The Size and Specialization.....



**Financial
Complexity**



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

**Compliance to
Gov't Bureaucracy**



**Despite all these changes families are still
at the heart of
most operations!**



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22





Attitude

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on my life. Attitude to me is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill.

It will make or break a company...a church, a home. The remarkable thing is we a have choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you ... we are in charge of our attitudes.

Charles Swindell



How do we react?



- To CHANGE
- To SEASONAL STRESS
- To EXPECTATIONS
- To AGING
- To FAMILY STRESS
- To TIME PRESSURES



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Our reactions result from our PERCEPTIONS

- Perceptions are not based on reality but on –
 - Our Attitude
 - Our Interpretations
 - Our Personality Type
 - Our Past Experiences
 - Our Beliefs and Values
 - Our present Circumstances
 - Our Expectations, Hopes, & Dreams for the future



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Let's explore the concept of
PERCEPTIONS and it's relationship
to **ATTITUDE** and how we "SEE"
the world and those around us.



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Perception – young or old?



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

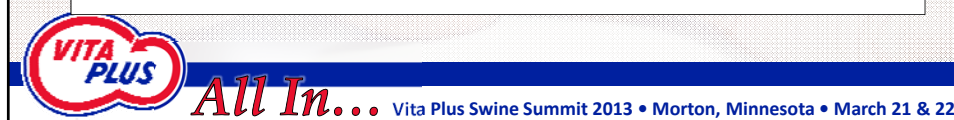


Perception — we interpret patterns based on past experience or patterns we already know!

News Flash:

Cmabrigde Uinervtisy Rscheearch

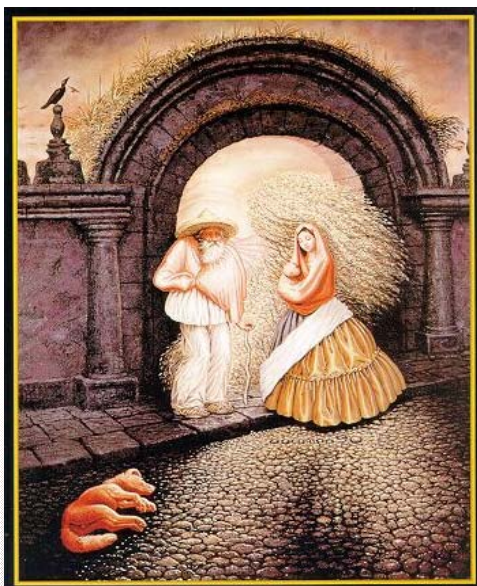
Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttar in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef but the wrod as a wlohe.



How many faces do you
see in the next slide?



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22



“We see the
world not as it
is, but as we
are”
– Stephen Covey



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22



**Who would like to
make an easy \$20?**



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Count the letter “F”

**FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS
OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH
THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.....**

How many did you get?



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

There are 6 in this!

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS
OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH
THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.....

Our brain struggles to process "OF".



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Perception

How we "see" ourselves
& the world matters.

"All our knowledge has its
origins in perceptions."

Leonardo da Vinci



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

The Ladder of Perception

My Reaction!

Beliefs I formed

Emotional and physical responses

Logical conclusions I drew & the stories I tell myself

Interpretations and meanings

Value judgements I made

My perception (selected data)

The event (as a camera would capture it)

All In...
Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

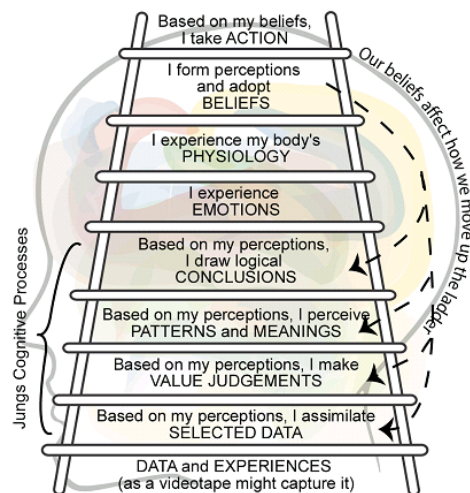
A dramatic example of someone having an experience and “going up their perception ladder”.

“....one Sunday morning”

Taken from “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” pg 30-31
By Stephen R. Covey

All In...
Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Ladder of Preference – going up your ladder



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

The Role of Perception?

We will each “see” the world differently from the way other people “see” it.....



.....and they're not wrong and we're not necessarily right!



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22



Let's take a break



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

2012 Survey about family operations



- Livestock operations
- Feed mills
- Ag suppliers
- Asked about –
 - Pros & Cons
 - Biggest Challenges
 - Keys to success
 - Employee issues



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Pros & Cons of Family Businesses?

Positives?

- Get to work together.
- Shared legacy & history.
- Know each other well.
- Common goals & vested interests in the business.
- Pride in the operation.
- More willing to forgive each other (not always).
- ???????

Negatives?

- Get to work together.
- Can't fire them.
- Familiarity sometimes breeds contempt.
- Non-family can have challenges.
- In-laws face challenges.
- Ownership & generational transitions can be difficult.
- ???????

DISCLAIMER – anything shared here is understood to be about our neighbors and other family operations – not ours!



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

How would you rank the following?

- Balance with work & personal life.
- Opportunities for advancement.
- Clear roles & job descriptions.
- Unique culture & values.
- Fairness in problem resolution.
- Communication.
- Attitude, commitment, and accountability.
- Performance reviews & evaluations.



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

1. Rank them yourself & then as a team of 5 people!
2. Discuss & agree on most important to least.
3. Which team will come up with the right answer?



There's a prize for the team that gets it correct!

All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

What should the order be?

- Balance with work & personal life.
- Opportunities for advancement.
- Clear roles & job descriptions.
- Unique culture & values.
- Fairness in problem resolution.
- Communication.
- Attitude, commitment, and accountability.
- Performance reviews & evaluations.



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

And the survey said.....

- Communication. (duh?)
- Attitude, commitment, & accountability.
- Fairness in problem resolution.
- Clear roles & job descriptions. ← These 2 were tied!
- Opportunities for advancement.
- Performance reviews & evaluations.
- Balance with work & personal life.
- Unique culture & values.



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Farm Business Culture – is it really crucial?

- What do Zappos, the US Marines, Apple, Southwest Airlines, and Vita Plus all have in common?
- What's the foundation to building a unique business culture?
- Ag is different – isn't it?
- What' my role?



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Culture?

- Lena decides that she and Ole need to get out and get some “culture” so she goes to great lengths to get some tickets to see the ballet in Minneapolis. During the intermission she asks Ole what he thinks of the performance?
“Ya, vell its arright..... but radder den have dem gurls up on der tip-toes all da time, why don’t dey yust get taller dancers?”



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

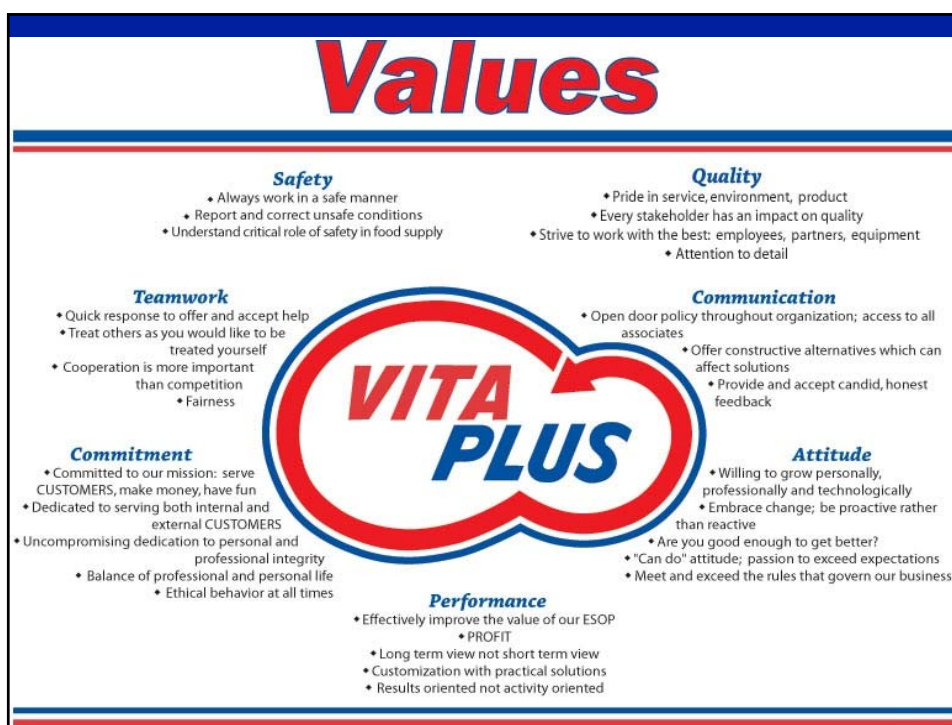
What do we mean by “culture”?

- When two, or more, people interact together a culture is created. Work groups, teams, families, churches, neighborhoods, ethnic groups, and nations all have unique cultures.
- The culture reflects the shared values, beliefs, attitudes, history, and goals.
- Decisions, performance, and patterns of communication flow out of the groups’ culture.



Does a strong culture always result in positive results?

All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22



We're an employee owned company!

- Our mission statement is to
 - Serve Customers
 - Make money
 - Have fun
- The business Strategy needs to match the Culture which is driven by the Values!
- Business guru Peter Drucker said –
 - “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”
- Mark Fields – Pres of Ford Motor Co. made it famous!



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Let's watch a video example of a business that's made a conscious decision to build, encourage, and **MANAGE a culture that's been established **ON PURPOSE**.**



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

I don't think we can "throw" Nursery Pigs, let alone Sows or Finishers. So how does it apply to what we do? Are there any take-home thoughts from this group of goof-balls in Seattle?

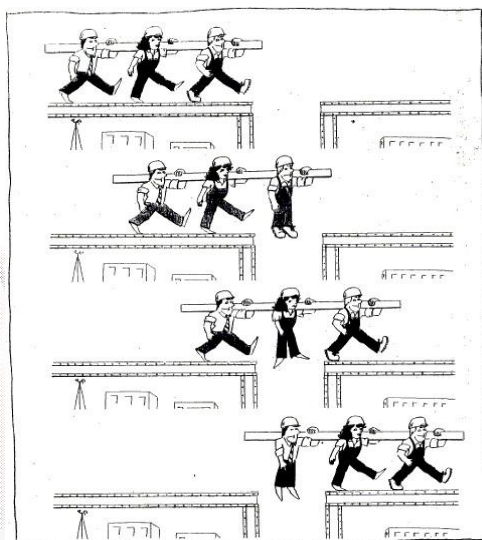


All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

Effective COMMUNICATION? **It's all about Connecting!**



Teamwork Explained?



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

**Some closing thoughts on the
role that women can play in
building a positive culture in a
business – particularly a family
operation.**



All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22

**Thank you for coming to the 2013
Swine Summit and participating in this
breakout on Farm Business Culture!**



And what was said in Morton doesn't have to stay in Morton!

All In... Vita Plus Swine Summit 2013 • Morton, Minnesota • March 21 & 22