

Difficult Conversations Ahead for the Brown Family Farm

#1 Can't you Do Your Job? Or Kent isn't communicating his Expectations?

Kent: He has just about had it. He hired a farm manager about 3 months ago to help run the farm (John just can't do it all). And the new manager is not doing his job. He should know how to work and manage the workers but yet he just isn't getting it. He wishes Robert would come back to work on the farm and he wouldn't have this problem.

Employee: You don't know what the deal is. You are doing everything you can to make Kent happy. You are doing more and working longer hours than you ever did at your last farm, but it seems it isn't enough. You don't really know what his problem is. He hired you on Monday and you were out doing the job on Tuesday. He didn't have to tell you anything, you just went to work to make things happen.

#2 Too Many Tractors? Or Avoid Uncle Sam?

John: You've got too much equipment and debt tied up in that equipment. As you see it, this equipment isn't being used effectively. Cash flow is a concern and you've got to sit down with your dad to propose selling off some assets.

Kent: Those purchases 2 years ago were absolutely necessary. He wasn't about to pay taxes on his income to Uncle Sam. Still burns him up. The only way to avoid that tax payment of course is to buy more equipment. He can always sell it, but the farm needs it, especially with these new ideas John is dreaming about.

#3 Accept or Decline

Ann is planning to turn down a job offer that her dad helped to set up. While she understands the family desire to send her out to the workforce, she has been learning cutting edge approaches and methods at school and is anxious to begin to educate her family. She knows that she needs to talk to her dad this week because as soon as she declines the offer, her dad is going to get a call from his buddy at the company.

Kent is certain that his phone call a few months ago is going to lead to a job offer for Ann that has a good salary and benefits. This would be a huge load off his mind, plus it would give her a chance to experience life off the farm working for someone else. He is not sure the farm is yet ready to begin to support her full time. She's coming home this weekend so he hopes she has good news and is going to tell him about her new job!

#4 Trouble in the Office

Vicky is the office manager and has a lot on her plate. She is constantly trying to make sure everything is accurate and on time. This past week she should have found out that the part time assistant hadn't been recording transactions correctly. She found a whole stack of items that weren't recorded. This caused a backlog and now she is frustrated and trying to catch everything up. She has been noticing this is a trend and she doesn't know what she is going to do about it.

Assistant: You know you've been a little distracted lately, but there is a lot of drama happening at home. You hope Vicky doesn't find out that you are about a month behind on your work but you plan to get caught up this next week. You can't afford to lose this job.