



## **3 Reasons to Hire from the Farm**

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I grew up in Western Iowa, the son of a Father who grew up on a farm in a town of less than 1,000 people. I spent summers picking rocks, detassling corn, and walking beans. It was not uncommon to spend 5 hours in the fields throwing rocks into the bed of a tractor trailer and then make it to baseball practice for 90 minutes of throwing balls around the infield. One throw was work, the other throw was play. My arm didn't know the difference, but my brain sure did.

A few months ago, my team and I were in Sioux Falls, South Dakota speaking with a number of President and CEO-level executives about talent acquisition and development. At one point, one mentioned the growing need for “farm kids” in corporate America. “They know how to work,” one said. There’s no doubt that the national reputation of Midwesterners is one of hard work and a dedication to craft, but one thing about people from rural communities is they are often the most humble about their experience. I mentioned this to the group and even told them that I am constantly finding that college students from rural communities don’t put their experience on the family farm on their resume. They feel like it’s not applicable work experience. The whole room began buzzing with disbelief. In the eyes of many corporate professionals, it’s the only applicable work experience.

- **The job is done when the job is done**

When you’re on the farm you aren’t working on the clock. You work project to project and your timeline is strict. When you’re told to mow 15 acres, you mow 15 acres. That doesn’t mean you mow as much as you can until 5pm. That doesn’t mean you mow a few in the morning, take a long lunch and run errands, and then see how much you can get done before it gets dark. It means you mow 15 acres.

I am continually amazed by how many people leave the office the second the markets close, when they’ve hit their 40 hours, or when the clock strikes 5 p.m. I guess I was raised that you go home when the job is done. Not just done, but done correctly.

- **Reap what you sow**

In an age where results are expected immediately and a new generation that is considered entitled, workers from rural communities know that business is cyclical. Of course, there is work to do from dawn 'til dusk, but there is a time of the year to plant, a time of the year to grow and a time of the year to harvest. You don't take your crop out early because you're hoping to get down south before it gets too cold. You understand that things need time to grow: relationships, investments, academics and career success. There's a time for everything and patience is key.

- **The original problem solvers**

When you get a tractor stuck, you don't call AAA. When a pig escapes the pen, you don't text a friend to catch it. The ultimate problem solving comes when you've got a job to finish and the storm clouds are rolling in. The best problem solvers I've ever met have come from rural communities because when you're living off your own land, you don't sit around waiting for a bailout—you take action to get the job done by any means necessary. This means that you're going to need a lot of tools in the shed, but more importantly you need to know how to use them for their intended (and unintended) purposes. Crazy problems require creative solutions.

In corporate America critical thinking skills, problem solving and patience are all keys to doing a job right and advancing. But there is not one thing that can replicate hard work. Every leader needs a team that is willing to put in the work, offer creative solutions and stay until the job is done right.