Keep it simple and optimize the human factor.

PIGXEL
REPRODUCTION - MANAGEMENT

In all my years as a pig advisor my slogan has always been: Keep it simple and decrease the human factor, but now I have decided to alter it to: Keep it simple and optimize the human factor.

One of the reasons, is that we see bigger and bigger herds, where the various departments are more and more specialized, but the communication is much too limited between the departments. This creates the challenge: that specialized people are working on the department's goals instead of the goals of the farm. This means, that everybody loses and will have more work than needed. A low mortality in the faring is, of course, very good, but if people "forget" the sow and don't prepare her good enough for the next litter, then it will affect the sow's productivity in her next litter.

However, it will also give the people in the service both more and difficult work.

People very often think that they should take care of the piglets but forget that they instead should take care of the sow so she can take care of the piglets, so always remember:

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"mother is the best in the world".

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In this article I will describe how we, with simple communication, can optimize without cost by simply changing our mindset.

These kinds of communication can also easily be used in other situations and places, than between faring and service departments.

What I would propose/suggest is that the staff from Faring will spend some time in the Service, 1 time per week with the staff in Service, should be enough. The staff in Service should prepare 'a reverse KPI' and show the sows that haven't been serviced or not pregnant. When people from the 2 departments walks around in Service they can discuss and see the sows that haven't done what were expected and planned. They can see the sows body condition/ backfat, maybe she couldn't start up the lactation, leg problems, low lactation days, haven't eaten normal in faring, MMA- problems, discharge and other issues that the staff would have noticed and/or observed. All these different factors could have a negative/positive influence on the next reproduction.

Reverse KPI can be:

- Not served before day 7. Why?
- Not pregnant after scanning. Why?
- Slaughter without a service. Why?

Why reverse KPI? Reason is that when we wean sows to service it is because we have decided that we want to see these sows again inside the faring because we believe that she can perform better than entering a new gilt. So instead of focus on the pregnant rate/ faring rate then instead focus on the sows that didn't succeed. By doing this we would have the possibility to increase faring rate and litter size in the next litter.

The big question is WHY the sow didn't perform as we expected?

To focus on these sows would make the staff from both departments think 'how can we do this better?!' And by doing that, the herds productivity would increase and make the skilled staff work better and easier. By understanding some of the challenges inside the Service, the staff from Faring could start to change some of their procedures inside their department, so they could optimize on the sows next litter. The staff would soon experience that the sow's productivity would increase.

It is always important to understand that the sows we wean to the Service area, is because we want to see them again inside the Faring. Otherwise these sows would need to be slaughtered. Therefore, it is important that we treat sows, which we want to wean, with careful and well-thought handling because they would have the highest possible potential to make a good litter next time.