

# DGA Master Roundtable Guide



**DAIRY**  **GRAZING**  
**APPRENTICESHIP**

# DGA Master Roundtable Guide

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## **Introduction: why Master Roundtables?**

Master roundtables are intended to be a means of building mentoring and teaching skills among our Masters in an informal setting where they can share successes and challenges and benefit from the support of their peers. DGA is, at its core, farmer-to-farmer training program and it has attracted many skilled dairy farmers interested in sharing their knowledge with the next generation. Having knowledge and being able to successfully teach it to another are very different types of skills. In many cases, the key to success for many Master-Apprentice pairs is the soft skills: communication, teaching and coaching strategies, interpersonal skills. These Master roundtables are a means for DGA to create learning opportunities that help Masters build these skills. This guidebook provides a framework and suggestions for planning and carrying out roundtables for your cohort of Masters.

Master roundtables are intended to be organized around local cohorts of DGA Masters who will meet periodically in a facilitated peer-to-peer format to discuss issues related to the training program. The underlying goal of the groups is to build a trust-based network of Masters in each region that can provide mutual support and learn from each other. In addition, these discussion sessions are a means for DGA to provide professional development training in an informal setting, share resources and information about the program, and to gather feedback from participants on their needs. Please plan to always take notes or capture the discussion on flipcharts to share back to DGA staff.

Master roundtables can involve both paired and unpaired Masters and even non-DGA participants. Especially in areas where Masters are not geographically close to one another, inviting area dairy farmers who are interested is a good approach. They can even be used as a recruitment tool to bring in new interested Masters. A good number to shoot for is between 3 and 10 participants.

There is no one specific way to carry out Master roundtables. The 'lesson plans' provided in this guide can be mixed and matched, modified, or adapted, based on our group's needs and interests. The primary goal is to create a space for Masters to come together without their Apprentices and discuss issues, challenges, goals, frustrations, and aspirations.

## **General guidelines for conducting a Master Roundtable**

The schedule for Master Roundtables is completely flexible. Each lesson plan is intended to be a 30 to 60-minute discussion and they can be mixed and matched to create a schedule as long or short as is needed. These topics can also be combined in a program with other more traditional dairy topics like pasture management or winter feeding. You can also consider building some of these mentoring/peer discussion topics into another event you are planning. Below are a few suggestions:

### **Possible timeframes or schedules:**

- A typical schedule is a mid-day meeting from 10 or 11 am to 2 pm. This would allow for 3 to 4 topics to be covered, plus time for lunch/dinner and informal discussion.
- A morning or afternoon meeting of two to three hours from 9 am to noon or maybe one to three pm would allow coverage of 2 or 3 topics.
- A one to two-hour Master roundtable can be held before or after a public pasture walk if there is a shed or at least some sort of seating available.
- A one to two-hour Master roundtable could be planned as a session at a conference or workshop (can be open to the public or not as you desire).
- A one to two-hour Master roundtable as a special private meeting associated with a conference where many of your Masters gather.

### **Locations:**

- A restaurant with a separate meeting room makes a great location for a Master roundtable.
- Hotel meeting rooms with meal or refreshments catered in or purchased and brought in.
- Extension offices or other public meeting rooms at libraries or courthouses.
- At one of your Master's farms. A shed with small square bales or folding chairs works great.

### **Suggested outline:**

- Always do an ice breaker of some kind to help people get comfortable talking.
- Always have some sort of refreshments. Food is a great icebreaker.
- Always include some time for participants to ask questions about DGA, and address any issues or challenges they're having with the program.
- Always include some time for open discussion and sharing on how their experience is going, allowing for feedback from peers.
- Select one or two topics from the list of lesson plans in this guidebook based on the needs and interests of your group.
- Consider setting aside time for a 'hard' dairy topic or an invited speaker. It doesn't have to be all about mentoring and soft skills and a 'safer' dairy topic may bring in some Masters who may be reluctant to participate.

**Materials:**

- Evaluation forms (feel free to use the 1/3 page one we developed for DGA events).
- Tip sheets appropriate to the topics you're covering.
- Some topics have worksheets or exercises that can be used (e.g. adult learning worksheets).
- DGA pens and/or any other DGA swag you have available!
- Flipcharts and markers (an underlying goal is to capture the insights and feedback we receive during these discussions and use it to improve the program—so please do write things down!).
- Paper or notecards for participants to write down their thoughts.
- Post-it notes may be useful for sharing ideas.
- DGA brochures if your group includes farmers who are not currently Masters.

## **Icebreakers**

*Ice breakers are an important first step in getting everyone comfortable with participating in a discussion. A lot of people (including facilitators) are uncomfortable with them, and part of the goal actually is to make people a little uncomfortable and get over that discomfort—the rest of the day will go much more smoothly as a result! Icebreakers help people who are more reserved to be able to contribute to the conversation and allow people to get to know each other. And even if they already know each other, they are a fun way to help set the stage for a productive meeting. Below are a few ideas I pulled off the internet. Feel free to use and adapt them to your needs. Also, feel free to find your own ice breakers—there is no shortage of ideas on the internet.*

### Find 10 Things in Common

This works well in a larger group that you can divide up into small groups of 2 or 3 people. In this icebreaker, each group find ten things that they have in common with the other participants in the group, without using really basic things like body parts, etc. Give them 5 or 10 minutes and then have each group report back to the larger group.

### Two Truths and a Lie

Instruct each player to think of three statements about themselves. Two must be true statements, and one must be false. For each person, he or she shares the three statements (in any order) to the group. The goal is for other participants to guess which statement is false. The group discusses which one they feel is a lie, and at the end of each round, the person reveals which one was the lie.

A variation to try

“Two Truths and a Dream Wish.” –Instead of telling a lie, a person says a wish. That is, something that is not true — yet something that the person wishes to be true. For example, someone that has never been to Europe might say: “I often travel to Europe for vacation.” This interesting alternative can tell you even more about a person than what they have done in their lives.

### Icebreaker questions

An Icebreaker can be as simple as a question that gets each person to talk about themselves in a non-threatening format. Here are some examples of questions you can ask:

- If you woke up tomorrow as an animal, what animal would you choose to be and why?
- If you could live anywhere on this planet and take everything that you love with you, where would you choose to live?
- Are you a sunrise, daylight, twilight, or night person? Share why you picked your time of day?
- If you could choose your age forever, what age would you choose and why?

- If you could be in the movie of your choice, what movie would you choose and what character would you play?
- If you could meet any historical figure, who would you choose and why?
- What are your five favorite foods?
- Are you a spring, summer, fall, or winter person? Please share why.
- If you were stranded on a desert island, what three items would you want to have with you?
- If you were to create a slogan for your life, what would it be? (Example: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow, we all die.)

### Three Shining Moments Ice Breaker

Tell the group that their assignment is to look back over their careers/lives and find three events, activities, accomplishments, collaborations, or moments of recognition by others that were shining or important to them. Provide five or ten minutes for the participants to think about and jot down ideas before you ask them to share their shining moments with the group.

### Some employment-focused ice breaker questions

- What do employees complain about in your organization?
- What characteristic do you value the most in people you work with?
- What is the most important personal attribute that you bring to your job?
- What's one work-related skill that you'd like to develop, especially if you could do it easily?
- What coworker characteristic do you find most irritating?
- What one factor or facet of work do you complain, moan, and groan about the most?
- What's the single most important factor that you would change about your work?
- If you were the king of your workplace, what are the three missing factors that you would add?
- When you have worked with a successful team, what factors were present in the working relationships?
- When you have worked with an unsuccessful team, what contributed to its failure?
- What are the three key characteristics of a boss for whom you would do your best work?

### Table Tent drawings

If you have a group that does not know each other, this exercise can help people learn each other's names and a little bit about the others. In addition, because it involves drawing, it engages the creative right side of the brain, which might make for a livelier discussion than you otherwise might have.

**Materials:** Markers and either commercially made table tents (Avery or other office supply

companies make them) or white cardstock folded in half, either lengthwise or widthwise so that it will stand up on the table.

Give each person a table tent or piece of cardstock and have them write their name and draw a picture or decorate the table tent with something that is important to them (doesn't need to involve farming). Then go around the room and have each person introduce themselves and tell the group what they've drawn and what it means to them. This gives people a chance to share something personal about themselves and gives everyone a good laugh, because the artwork can be pretty funny.

### Exquisite Corpse

Divide your group into small groups of three. For each group, provide letter sized piece of paper cut horizontally into three equal pieces. Each of the three people are given one section and asked to draw either the head, torso or legs of a person. When everyone is done, the pieces are put together. Who cares if they draw well or not? The worse they draw, the funnier the outcome. This one also helps engage the creative side of the brain, which many people don't use much in meetings.

**Materials:** blank sheets of plain 8.5 x 11 paper, scissors, markers.

### Hot & Cold

Hide something in the room, maybe some money or the meeting agenda or something random, then have the team try and work together to discover it by asking you questions. You only can respond by saying they're hot or cold when they search. Depending on how big your meeting room is, this might be an absurd assignment, but that just makes it a better ice breaker.



## **Questions and Suggestions**

*For every Master roundtable, set aside 20 to 30 minutes for questions or comments about DGA. This is an opportunity to both provide support for Masters with questions and for DGA to solicit valuable feedback from our customers on how to improve the program. DGA was created by farmers for farmers. Our goal is to make the program work for them. Especially for groups with new Masters or farmers who are not DGA participants, it is valuable to share DGA's story and help people understand what we offer. Here are some suggestions:*

**Materials:** DGA general power point for new people, DGA brochures, Master handbooks, training guidelines (if needed).

### **Discussion questions/topics:**

- For groups with non-DGA participants, consider showing a brief DGA intro power point, as well as handing out brochures or Master handbooks.
- For groups including DGA Masters who do not have Apprentices, ask whether they are currently searching and whether they are finding candidates with the experience they're looking for.
- For Masters with or without Apprentices, consider doing a website demonstration showing how to enter work hours, how the messaging works, etc. See the following pages for details.
- Ask for any questions or problems they are having. Consider asking others in the group for ideas on addressing problems that are brought up, if appropriate.
- Ask for any suggestions they have for making the program work better for them.

## **Website Demonstration**

*The following pages provide outlines of website functions from each participant's perspective: Master and Apprentice. Feel free to use these outlines to prepare a website demonstration. You can use the following "dummy" accounts to access the website for views other than your own.*

Master account:

masterdairygrazier@gmail.com  
dgaMDG2016

Apprentice paired with above Master account:

apprenticecandidate@gmail.com  
dgaAC2016

Apprentice candidate account:

newcandidate2017@gmail.com  
candidateDGA2017

Ed Coordinator account:

edcoordinator@gmail.com  
dgaEC2016

# Master Website Functions

## 1. Dashboard

- a. Messages
  - i. Automated notices (EC assignment, new candidates, etc.)
  - ii. Directly from EC and Staff
  - iii. Directly from Candidates if Master has public profile
- b. Apprentices and Interns
- c. Upcoming Events – direct from EC

## 2. Sidebar Functions

- a. Master Searching for Apprentice
  - i. Can see map of current Apprentice Candidate locations
  - ii. Search by area or keyword
  - iii. Can see list alphabetical or chronological
  - iv. Click on Candidate to view profile with option to
    1. Option to star (add to favorite) or hide (don't show again)
    2. Create and download PDF of Candidate application
    3. Send message
    4. Send *Hire Offer* (links profiles, removes candidate from searches)
  - v. Edit profile settings at any time
- b. Forms (JDG Opportunity form, Related Instruction Info)
- c. Upcoming Events – general calendar
- d. Participant Resources
  - i. Tip Sheets
  - ii. JDG Opportunities Available

## 3. Paired Master

- a. Master can *view only* Apprentice Personal Program Record (PPR)
  - i. Master contribution – Master or EC/Staff responsible for entering Master contribution
  - ii. Related instruction – view only (PD and EC enter info)
    1. Formal coursework and RI table (PD only)
    2. Discussion groups
    3. Farm visits
- b. Recording Master Contribution
  - i. Go to Apprentice PPR (can be accessed through Master dashboard)
  - ii. Click on Work Hours to see records
  - iii. Click on Add Hours for new entry
    1. OJT (on-job-training) hours
    2. Teaching time (40 hours per month recommended)
    3. Wages
    4. In-kind amount and type (if any)
  - iv. Automated monthly reminder for OJT hours with link

# Apprentice Website Functions

## 1. Dashboard

- a. Messages
  - i. Automated notices
  - ii. Directly from Master
  - iii. Directly from Staff
- b. Favorite Masters

## 2. Sidebar Functions

- a. Candidate Searching for Master
  - i. Can see map of Masters with public profile
  - ii. Search keyword or distance from current location
  - iii. Click on Master to view profile with option to
    - 1. Star – add to favorite
    - 2. Hide – don't show again
    - 3. Send message – start conversation
  - iv. Edit application or select new areas at any time

## 3. Paired Apprentice – changes to view

- a. Progress graphic
- b. Notification (in message) to review Personal Program Record (PPR)
  - i. Master contribution
  - ii. Related instruction
    - 1. Formal coursework and RI table
    - 2. Discussion groups
    - 3. Farm visits
  - iii. Master Contribution
    - 1. OJT (on-job-training) hours
    - 2. Teaching time (40 hours per month recommended)
    - 3. Wages
    - 4. In-kind amount and type (if any)
  - iv. Option to download copy of PPR
- c. Upcoming Events – direct from EC
- d. Sidebar
  - i. Forms (Related Instruction Info)
  - ii. Upcoming Events – general calendar
  - iii. Participant Resources
  - iv. Master profile
  - v. Ed Coordinator profile

## **Peer discussion on managing your Apprentice**

*Masters may have issues specific to their personal situation with their Apprentice that the group could help with. Setting aside some time during the Master roundtable for some open discussion on these issues allows Masters to commiserate and support each other as they move forward with their Apprentices. A problem that one Master is currently having with an Apprentice (e.g. coming in late to work, or breaking equipment) may be something that others have dealt with in successful ways. This topic is intended to be an opportunity for Masters to share ideas with each other and brainstorm solutions to problems they are dealing with. Here are some questions to help get a discussion started:*

### **Discussion questions/topics:**

1. What are some successes you've had with your Apprentice? What is something that has worked really well in training your Apprentice?
2. What are some things that have not worked for you? What is something that you will do differently next time?
3. What are some questions you have that others in the group could help with?

Please do try to capture the suggestions that come out of this discussion, either on a flipchart, paper or on a computer. Some great ideas from Masters have come out of these discussions. Our goal is to compile these ideas in a Master 'best practices' tip sheet.

## Hiring topics: Finding the right Apprentice

*If your group is fairly new to DGA or if you have some participants who are currently seeking an Apprentice, or may be unsure of how to get started on their search, this is a good topic. This can be handled as a small part of a Master roundtable or could be the main topic of the day. Feel free to use this whole framework for an in-depth roundtable session or pull out individual questions, topics or tip sheets for a shorter session.*

**Materials:** DGA has a series of hiring tip sheets that you can share with participants. You could spend a few minutes going over each one and explaining what they are for and how to use them.

- **Finding the right Apprentice:** an overview of the hiring process to help the Master develop a plan for their search.
- **Sample dairy farmer job description:** a tip sheet to help Masters think about the skills they are looking for in an Apprentice based on what they do on the farm.
- **Apprentice candidate ranking scoresheet:** a worksheet to help Masters determine qualities they are looking for and rank potential candidates against each other.
- **Job Interview Tip Sheet:** creating a consistent process for interviewing and comparing candidates, what questions you can and can't ask from a legal perspective.
- **Interview Work Sheet:** a worksheet template for Masters to use when conducting interviews, so they can record candidate responses to questions and their impressions, also rank them in comparison to each other.

### Discussion questions/topics:

1. What makes a good Apprentice? Have the group brainstorm qualities they are looking for in an Apprentice or what qualities they like in their current Apprentice. This often brings up many interpersonal qualities and intangible things like being self-driven or passionate about dairy farming and fewer specific farming or dairy skills, which is an interesting outcome in itself. This leads to discussion of how an Apprentice differs from an employee and that the characteristics that make a good Apprentice may be different from what you are looking for in an employee.
  - a. Follow up questions:
    - i. Which qualities of a good Apprentice and a good employee overlap? Which are different?
    - ii. What are some red flags that you look for when considering an Apprentice candidate?
2. How will you know an Apprentice has the qualities you're looking for? What questions can you ask to evaluate based on your criteria? (refer to the interviewing tip sheet, interview worksheet, ranking tipsheet). Have the group brainstorm ways of learning whether a candidate has some of these somewhat intangible qualities.
3. What is your job description? What do you do and what do you want the Apprentice to do for you? Have the group brainstorm a dairy farmer job description (refer to the job description tip sheet).

4. Go through the steps for hiring from the *Finding the Right Apprentice* tip sheet (job analysis, job specifications, job description, pay range, evaluation of candidates, interviewing, decision-making). If your group is looking for more concrete information about how to go through a hiring process, the tip sheets could provide a template for teaching on this topic.

## **Hiring topics: The Apprentice’s first week on the farm (“Onboarding”)**

*“Onboarding” is the term employers use for bringing on a new employee. This is a very important first step in getting the Apprenticeship off to a good start. Orienting the new Apprentice, who may or may not have worked on a farm before, is a major undertaking and cannot be done in a few hours on the first day. Helping Masters think through how they will accomplish this task is the goal of this topic.*

**Materials:** DGA has a several tip sheets that can help Masters get their Apprentice off to a good start. Consider spending a few minutes going over each one.

- **Onboarding:** This tip sheet suggests a process for bringing on a new Apprentice, including giving an overview of the farm, introducing them to other family members and employees and giving them a tour of the community if they are new to the area.
- **Safety on the farm:** As trainers for a registered Apprenticeship, all DGA Masters are required to provide safety training to their Apprentices. This tip sheet provides an overview of general safety issues and should be given out to each Apprentice as they start. Masters should also share safety protocols for their own farm with the Apprentice during the onboarding process.
- **Safe Livestock Handling:** a second tip sheet that should be given to each Apprentice is this one on safe livestock handling. Whether or not an Apprentice has worked with livestock before, this tip sheet provides an overview of best practices for working with livestock.
- **Employee Handbook template:** If they don’t already have an employee handbook, Masters may wish to develop one as they begin working with Apprentices on their farm. This tip sheet provides an outline of what usually is included in an employee handbook and some suggested wording that can be used.
- **Sample employee agreement or contract:** DGA Apprentices and Masters are bound by the DOL form they sign, but some Masters may also want to have a separate employee agreement that details such things as work hours, days off, in-kind compensation (housing, heifer calves, etc.). This sample agreement contains items that are usually included in an employee agreement and is available for Masters to modify as they desire.

### **Discussion questions/topics:**

1. What is the first day on a new job like? For those who have worked off the farm: think back to your first day on a new job. What was the job? How did you feel during your first week? What did you need to know first to get off to a good start? What were some things that allowed you to hit the ground running? What were some things that caused confusion for you?
2. What does an Apprentice need to know about your farm? Put yourself in the new Apprentice’s position. Looking at your farm on your first day, what would you want to know first? What would your questions be?



3. List some items you might want to give your new Apprentice (from Onboarding tip sheet):
  - a. Map of farm
  - b. Notebook and pen
  - c. Employee handbook, employment agreement
  - d. Written standard operating procedures
  
4. Teaching a new skill. How do you teach someone a new skill, what steps do you take? Have participants share how they do it. (Onboarding tipsheet has guidelines)
  
5. Review Training Guidelines. If it seems appropriate, you can have copies of the Job Book available, review what is in it, and ask for questions.
  - a. A discussion question could be “How would you teach ‘XX’ in the training guidelines?” Pick a topic from the training guidelines book and ask the group how they would go about teaching it.
  
6. Correcting mistakes. Your Apprentice will make mistakes. How will you give “constructive criticism”? (review *Communicating with your Apprentice* tipsheet). Have the group discuss how they do this.
  - a. Discuss the “feedback sandwich” technique: Start with praise, share areas where improvement is needed, end on a positive note.
  - b. Have participants practice the feedback sandwich: have someone volunteer a mistake that has been made by an Apprentice or someone else on the farm. Have people come up with different ways of shaping a feedback sandwich.
  
7. First meeting with the Ed Coordinator. Go over with the group the steps we take as Ed Coordinators to help them get off to a good start. What happens on the first visit?
  - a. You can review the paperwork if it seems appropriate (DOL form, Master agreement, etc)
  - b. Master and Apprentice goals (worksheet in EC handbook): talk about the process of having Master and Apprentice both articulate their goals for working together for the next two years. Let them know that you will refer back to these goals as the Apprenticeship progresses.
  - c. Apprentice Individual Education Plan (worksheet in EC handbook): helping them plan out the two-year training, when they will teach which parts of the job book, when RI classes will be scheduled and when they will be able to attend pasture walks, conferences and other group discussion. Let them know that this is a tentative plan and will be reviewed and updated periodically as they move forward.

## **Mentoring**

*The core of the Master's work is mentoring their Apprentice. This exercise is a good initial discussion to have with a new group. It centers around what we mean by mentoring and why it's important for us all to be a mentor to someone. This is a good time to share some background on DGA and the importance of peer-to-peer learning in farming in general, in the grazing community especially, and the role it plays in DGA's training program. DGA was structured as a formal Apprenticeship because work-based learning beside an experienced mentor is the best way to learn a skilled trade, which is what farming is.*

### **Discussion questions:**

1. Who was your mentor? Have the group spend 3 to 5 minutes individually thinking about who they considered a mentor in their lives (doesn't need to be related to farming). You can give them note cards to write their thoughts down. Then have them describe that mentor. What impact did they have on their life? What qualities did they have? What made them memorable?
2. Influencers in your life. Have the group share who was a major influence in their life and when was it in your lifetime? What were the results? How did it change the course of your life?
3. Mentor characteristics. Have the group brainstorm characteristics of a good mentor, write their suggestions down on a flip chart.
4. Apprentice versus employee. Review background on DGA and importance of mentoring: an Apprentice is not just an employee, but a learner. You are not just their boss but their trainer and coach. Have the group discuss ways that hiring an Apprentice is different from hiring an employee.

## **Leadership styles**

*Many of DGA's participating farmers do not view themselves as "Masters" let alone leaders, but that is exactly what they are! It's in everyone's best interest for DGA Masters to consider themselves leaders in this movement to train the next generation of dairy farmers. This discussion helps them think about the example of leadership that they demonstrate to their Apprentice as well as leadership roles they can and do play in their communities. The example they set for their Apprentice can help guide them toward developing the Apprentice's own good leadership and management skills, which are as important as the skills and knowledge of physically operating the farm.*

**Materials:** Leadership styles tip sheet

### **Discussion topics and questions**

1. Discussion question to introduce the topic: who have you interacted with in your life that you consider to be a leader (in agriculture or in general)? What characteristics did they have that made them leaders in your mind?
2. Share background on why DGA wants to cultivate leaders: what leaders in the broad sense can do for DGA, why it's important to your Apprentice for you to model leadership qualities.
3. Leadership tip sheet
  - a. Describe leadership styles: note that four of them are resonant/soft styles and that good leaders have at least one dissonant style.
  - b. Have participants rank the leader they mentioned in the discussion above on these styles from 1 to 6. What were their most prominent leadership styles? What were their less important ones? How did they use them to influence you?
  - c. Have participants rank themselves on these styles and have a discussion on how they use their leadership styles in their mentoring relationships.
4. Discussion on how leadership styles affect the experience of the Apprentice
5. Discussion question: What is the relationship between leadership and management skills.
6. Discussion on when you should use each of the leadership styles.
7. What leadership styles did your mentor have? How were they effective in influencing you?

## **Teaching Management Skills**

*Part of learning to farm is learning how to physically do the work (milking, building fence, etc.). Just as important is learning how to balance multiple, competing responsibilities, make sound decisions, and manage. This discussion focuses on how we teach management skills. This is an area where DGA doesn't really have answers. We have a set of training guidelines that focuses on building skills in managing a dairy farm, but how does someone learn management skills? This topic is a good way for DGA to gather practices and insights from our Masters on how they transition their Apprentices from doing physical labor to actually helping manage the farm.*

*Note: Some Masters feel uncomfortable with the thought of turning over management responsibilities to their Apprentices and may react defensively to this topic. The goal here is to build awareness that their Apprentice will need management skills to run their own successful farm business some day and part of what should come out of the training is management skills.*

The author Peter Drucker wrote many books about management. Here are some of his primary principles from his book, *The Practice of Management*, written in 1954:

### **A good manager:**

- Manages by objectives
- Takes risks and allows risk-taking decisions to take place at lower levels in the organization
- Is able to make strategic decisions
- Is able to build an integrated team with team members capable of managing and measuring their own performance and results in relation to overall objectives
- Is able to communicate information quickly and clearly, and motivate employees to gain commitment and participation
- Is able to see the business as a whole and to integrate their function within it
- Is able to relate the product and industry to the total environment, to find out what is important and what needs to be taken into account. This perspective must embrace developments outside the company's particular market or country and the manager must begin to see economic, political and social developments on a world-wide scale.

### **Discussion questions:**

1. How do we define a manager? How does that role differ from that of an employee?
2. How can we teach management skills or give Apprentices the experience of making management decisions without turning over management of the farm?
3. What are some ways that we can build those kinds of experiences into the program?
4. What are some benefits and pitfalls of doing so?
5. What are some tools DGA can develop to make it easier for you to teach management skills?

## **Adult Learning Styles**

*Many DGA Masters may not have had full-time employees on their farm before and most have not had employees whose primary motivation is learning how to run a dairy farm. Adult learners come into the learning situation with their own needs and goals. Providing a learning experience that is effective for them involves understanding how adults learn and that different individuals learn differently. This discussion topic helps Masters understand these concepts.*

### **Materials:**

- Adult learning tip sheet
- Adult learning styles worksheet

### **Adult learning styles worksheet**

1. Have the group fill out the adult learning worksheets, add up their scores and mark them onto the learning styles graph.
2. Discuss the four different learning styles (Doer, Thinker, Feeler, and Observer), making the following points:
  - a. The fact that none is superior to any other and that we all have some of each in us.
  - b. Knowing what your style is versus what your Apprentice's is can help you be a more effective teacher.
  - c. All work-based training is going to be heavy on the "Doer" kind of learning, but we can incorporate the other types of learning as well.
  - d. Have each participant show how the four learning styles balance out for them on their graph.

### **Discussion questions:**

1. What learning experiences that you've had that are examples of these learning styles?
2. Have each participant share a setting in which they learned most effectively.
3. What are some negative learning experiences you've had and why were they bad?
4. Discussion of how we learn, including how to do things (physical skills) as well as why we do things (management skills).
5. What are some ways to incorporate different learning styles into our teaching on the farm? Use the last page of the learning styles worksheet for some ideas and examples.

## **Communicating with Your Apprentice**

*The quality and strength of the relationship between Master and Apprentice hangs on good communication. How they communicate will influence how well they will work together, how much the Apprentice will learn, and how they will get through the inevitable rough spots. All Masters will find themselves in the position of correcting errors and giving “constructive criticism”. This discussion will give them some tools for developing good communication skills.*

**Materials:** *Communicating with your Apprentice* tip sheet

### **Discussion Questions/Topics**

1. Discuss tip sheet concepts:
  - a. Importance of non-verbal communication (tone of voice, body language)
  - b. Communication cascade (what you wanted to say, what you actually said, what the listener heard, what the listener understood, what the listener listened to, what the listener accepted, what the listener remembers)
  - c. Importance of listening and what good listening practices are.
  - d. Have the group share examples that illustrate these concepts (either when they did or didn't work well).
  
2. Have the group do a role play.
  - a. Have two people volunteer to take part in a conflict.
  - b. Have one be the Master and the other be the Apprentice.
  - c. ID a topic to have a conflict about (anything will do).
  - d. Have them role-play a discussion.
  - e. Have the audience discuss what non-verbal communication told them.
  - f. Have the Master and Apprentice actors discuss what they meant to say and the group discuss what they heard and understood).
  
3. Teaching communication tips (page 2 of tip sheet)
  - a. Go over effective communication tips
  - b. Have the group share examples of how they teach, communicate instructions to their Apprentice
  - c. Have the group share examples of how they provide feedback/constructive criticism when something is done wrong.
  - d. Ask if anyone has had problems with this and if the group can help them brainstorm solutions.

## **Bridging the Generations**

*Each generation has different goals, interests, motivations, and work habits. Many Masters comment on how different the Apprentice candidates are from what they expect. Part of this is the result of generational differences. This discussion explores the differences among generations and is intended to help Masters understand where Apprentices 'are coming from' and explore how to address the differences. The descriptions in the tip sheet are generalizations and don't represent everyone. They're also not intended to be positive or negative. They just are what they are.*

### **Materials:**

- Generations power point (in dropbox)
- Bridging the Generations tip sheet
- Goal setting worksheet for first visit from Ed Coordinator handbook

### **Discussion questions/topics**

1. Ask the group for examples of how their parents' generation differed from their own. How do they do things differently from that generation?
2. How do they see their own kids differing from themselves?
3. Discuss importance of nurturing this new generation of farmers, understanding where they are coming from, and figuring out how they can fit their values and goals to the farm system (and how we can adapt our farm system to their needs)
4. How do Millennial characteristics play out on the farm? (e.g. interest/need to have a life outside work; interest/need to have work be meaningful, understand why we do things the way we do; reliance on social media and internet for information and validation of what is true, etc.)
5. Discuss the goal setting exercise done during the first visit at the beginning of the Apprenticeship and the importance of understanding the Apprentice's motivation for working with you. Use goal setting worksheet from EC handbook.