

Setting up your Office Sessions in Far North Queensland



During April, two Setting Up Your Office sessions were held in Far North Queensland, with one of the sessions being exclusively for Young Dairy Network (YDN) members. Jo Srhoj (Subtropical Dairy Regional Co-ordinator, Far North Qld) and Brie Bratfield (YDN Co-ordinator Far North Qld) facilitated the sessions with input from Howard Smith and Julie Goleby from Smart Biz HQ. The days were well attended with 26 farmers participating over the two days. While Jo and Brie developed a pre-workshop framework, a needs analysis was also undertaken to ensure participant's needs were met. Participants engaged in lengthy discussions and shared ideas across a range of topics from how to manage mail, to electronic and manual filing systems, and everything in between. The groups watched a couple of YouTube videos during the workshops containing key information and tips about office ergonomics and the importance of things such as the height of the office chair and the position of the computer screen.

Julie Goleby presented some of the key features of a range of accounting software programs, and their pros and cons. There was also discussion about the coming of Single touch payroll for businesses and the trend towards using wholly 'Cloud'-based accounting systems.

Some of the key outcomes/learnings from these sessions are listed below;

- The importance of having the right office equipment in the right place within the office space that you have. This enables the office worker to easily navigate the office and feel comfortable working in this space.
- Identifying the reasons behind why you procrastinate. The key to ending the procrastination cycle is to identify the reason(s) behind procrastination and address them.
- Written procedures are very important and help others to perform a task in your absence. Following a procedure also ensures certain tasks are performed in the same way every time. This is very useful for tasks that are not undertaken regularly.
- Managing regular mail and email by having a process in place to manage the information that enters your business. Use 'Rules' and 'Folders' to manage email in your inbox. This reduces the email chaos, which in turn allows you to think clearer and feel more in control.
- The importance of team meetings, whether it be a farm team of two, or a team of 10 or more. Team meetings open up the lines of communication and provide a platform for new ideas, problems and solutions.

Despite the fact that many people owning, and operating businesses do not particularly like doing paperwork, it's crucial to remember that paperwork comes with the territory. Those who are committed to efficiency in the office, know their financial position at any one time are therefore able to use this information to make key decisions. ■■

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