
Both mistrust and confidence can be self-fulfilling.

Growers and ranchers with more tolerance for ambiguity and surprise are better off delegating than their risk-averse counterparts.

- **Leadership inclinations and habits.** Some supervisors seem to function more naturally as highly directive leaders. Resolving problems and issuing orders come easily to them. Others are more comfortable sharing their options with subordinates. Most managers tend to perpetuate aspects of the styles by which they were led earlier in their careers.
- **Confidence in workers.** Generally, managers who have more trust in other people and specifically in their hired staff are better able to solicit and effectively utilize employee participation in decision making.

Attributes of Employees

A grower's confidence in workers may depend partly on his or her general inclinations but certainly also ought to be based upon employees' actual abilities and interests. People respond differently to decision making opportunities, and personal attributes are not fixed. Most employees are capable of significantly expanding their skill repertoires, and they can exhibit various levels of competence in the abilities they possess. How they develop and perform is affected by the structure within which they work, including what is expected of them and how they are treated.

A manager's mistrust can be self-fulfilling, especially in the long run. By a similar dynamic, the foreman with enough confidence in a worker to delegate part of an important decision (or a responsible assignment) is likely to be rewarded with both an immediate contribution and a more experienced, confident employee to whom he can delegate even more tomorrow. Many a "troublemaker" or "goof-off" from one ranch moves on to become a highly valued performer at another. Though personal circumstances often play a role in such turnabouts, so do management differences. To assume that either employee abilities or the manager-worker relationship is static is to undersell the potential of employee involvement in the decision making process.

A manager who is inclined to bring employees into a decision making process will find that involving certain individuals is more productive when they possess the following attributes:

- Knowledge and experience relevant to the issue at hand
- Interest in the issue and appreciation of its importance
- Understanding of and agreement with the goals of the business
- Desire for autonomy, responsibility, and growth to help meet the so-called "higher order" human needs
- Tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, as opposed to a need for firm structure
- Previous participation in decision making processes