For the second time, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers has proposed allowing all properly trained Wisconsinites obtain a driver’s license regardless of their immigration status. He called for this change in law in his proposed 2022-23 budget.

DBA and our members have been advocating for something similar or more than a decade. We argue that it is a public safety and economic development issue. We need to ensure that everyone on the roads is properly trained and insured. Their immigration status does not have anything to do with whether than can be a safe driver. We also need to have a way for people to get to work, especially in rural parts of the state.

There are a couple of problems that stand in the way of the governor’s proposal. First, while the governor can propose anything he likes in his budget, the legislature does not have to accept any of his proposals. Also, Governor Evers is a Democrat and the legislature is controlled by Republicans. That makes it even less likely that they will accept his ideas, even those with which they agree.

DBA does not want politics to stand in the way of a good idea. For that reason, we are looking beyond the budget process to try to get bipartisan support for a bill that would allow noncitizens to obtain a driver’s license or a similar card for driving. Lawmakers have some concerns about this type of proposal, but we are working to overcome those and reach a compromise so this can become a reality. Sixteen other states have made the changes necessary to allow this. We want Wisconsin to be number 17.
Getting cows in and out of the parlor

By Elsie Gonzalez M.S.,
Motiva Consulting

We often get in the habit of touching cows, hitting objects, making noises and getting loud when cows ARE doing what we want them to do, such as cows are entering into the parlor; while also doing the exact SAME thing on cows that ARE NOT walking. By doing this, we are sending the wrong message to the cows, and often causing them to stop more often and slow down, rather than allowing them to continue entering calmly.

When a cow is not moving, the best practice is to approach and touch that one cow, rather than making noises, hitting objects or speaking loudly. Every time we make a noise or get loud to make that one cow move, this noise is not only heard by that one cow, but it’s also heard by the other cows that are doing what we want them to do. The noise or loud voice will be heard and send a wrong message to the cows that are already milking or standing in their milking stalls ready to be milked, cows exiting parlor and the ones ready to enter the parlor.

When cows are entering the parlor, let cows walk by themselves and avoiding situations that can stress the cows. We don’t want to send the wrong message to cows that are doing the right thing. Similarly, consider where you are standing is the best way to allow cows to move where we want them. Always ask yourself, am I helping cows move calmly and efficiently or am I making them stress and slow down?

The four Ws to effective training

By Jorge Delgado,
Alltech

Many dairy producers and industry representatives understand standard operating procedures and that it is important to share these guidelines with their workers, to achieve profitability through training and education. Unfortunately, some dairy operations may not get the message across to their audience due to the lack of accessibility, understanding and preparation for proper training.

Many facilities are built with the animals in mind but should also consider the people working with the animals. Do they have access to training or an area where they can focus on learning about strategies, and proper practices for the dairy? Creating an area or environment that can be utilized for training and learning could be beneficial, especially when external representatives visit the dairy for meetings, training sessions and presentations. Everyone should feel appreciated, comfortable, and motivated.

Once that area is established, you should consider how you will work with your team. You will want to think about how to deliver your message and instructions clearly, and how to use your body language and tone of voice, as well as visual tools to create an open conversation.

The four Ws — When: Communicate to your employees in advance of the date and time of the training. Use a formal and structured approach, that could include a face-to-face conversation. If you have many employees, share the information with your managers and have them relay the message.
this might also help to be more competitive when it comes to employee retention.

The four Ws — Where: The area or room where you are going to train your employees will have a significant impact, as it will be the foundation to support the learning objectives and the amount of participation. When choosing or establishing an area, think about the following:

**Size:** Can the area accommodate all employees with enough chairs and tables, and still provide room for interaction? Also consider health and safety protocols in accordance with local, state, or national advisories and or bylaws, such as physical distancing, using personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizers, etc.

**Distractions:** Select a room that is free of distractions and noise. If you cannot avoid this, try finding a quieter time when noises are not present or are minimal.

**Accessible:** If you are using a computer, a tv and/or a projector make sure the room has an electrical outlet, and access to internet if required.

**Obstructions:** When presenting, make sure you are not obstructing the participants’ view and make eye contact. Move around the room to engage and encourage participation without intimidation.

**Incentives:** Consider offering light snacks, and beverages, or bring in a meal. You could organize a contest or give door prizes to encourage participation.

**Lighting:** If the room has windows and you are planning to use a projector, make sure that you can control the light and draw the blinds or shades, or use black plastic garbage bags to cover the windows

**Cleanliness:** In most situations, trainings take place in the break rooms, so you need to ensure that the area is clean and setup for a productive training environment. It will show employees the seriousness of the meeting and/or training, and that you care about them.

The four Ws — What: I am bilingual in English and Spanish, so I will conduct trainings in Spanish, if that is the primary language of the dairy workers. I have a PowerPoint presentation designed for each one of my training modules, in English and/or Spanish. These presentations are built with dairy workers in mind, using lots of pictures and animations while trying to avoid complicated language or graphs that are hard to understand. It is important to stick to the basics and use visuals to explain the why and how of the topic being addressed. Incorporating videos in presentations are useful demonstration tools and tend attract the attention of the audience if they are short and concise.

Depending on what you are trying to explain, use educational toys, such as anatomical models, dairy tools, lab tools, science toys and customized tools to explain best practices during your training. For example, I use a bacteria and white blood cell toy to explain what a somatic cell is when discussing milk quality and udder health to milking technicians during my trainings.

The four Ws — Who: The person who is facilitating the training is key in developing an effective training environment. They need to know their audience, be relatable, have the knowledge to explain the topic and answer questions. Presenters should encourage discussion. Qualities of a good trainer include the capacity to listen, ask the right questions and engage the learner. Trainers should think about the following:

**Listen:** A good trainer can pause and listen closely and respectfully to what the workers are saying. This will help them to understand, create a relationship and open the lines of communication between the trainer and the employee.

**Ask the right questions:** The trainer needs to understand the objectives of the owner and/or manager to determine the training required for employees. The trainer needs to have the knowledge of these needs by asking the right questions before, during and after the training session. A good and effective trainer starts every session explaining the expectations of the training and inviting the audience to have open communication in a safe environment.

**Engage the learner:** The desired outcome of a training is that the employees will absorb and retain the information presented. A good trainer has the confidence to encourage participation as an active learning process. Remember to be organized, have a plan, and stay on topic to avoid distracting conversations. Well-organized lessons and materials help employees maintain focus, which prevents sessions from dragging on and losing the audience’s attention.

Finally, a good trainer is continually developing their skills and utilizing industry education resources and soliciting feedback as an opportunity to re-examine their training methods and materials. Remember that education is the best legacy you can give and leave to your dairy.
Throughout the past year, we have all been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of us have gotten sick, lost our job or hours at work, or have known someone severely affected by the pandemic. Since the pandemic started, scientists have been working hard to develop treatments and vaccines for this disease. We now finally have vaccines widely available for anyone who wishes to receive it. There are currently 3 vaccines available: Pfizer- BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson. Currently, the Johnson & Johnson vaccinations have been paused so the CDC can investigate potential side effects.

Anyone 16 years and older is eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is free — even if you don’t have health insurance. You are eligible to receive a vaccine regardless of your citizenship status, employment status, etc.

There are multiple ways to sign up for a COVID vaccine. You can go online to vaccinefinder.org or dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-map to find a location near you. Many county health departments are running local COVID-19 vaccine clinics as well as local pharmacies such as Walgreens, Walmart and others. Most vaccination providers are asking people to sign up for their vaccines online, though many also offer the option to schedule over the phone.

When you receive your first dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, you will automatically be scheduled for your second, follow-up dose. It is extremely important to also attend your second dose appointment to obtain full effectiveness of the vaccine. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine only requires 1 dose. It is believed that you will reach peak immunity 2-4 weeks after you receive your last dose. During this time, it is important to continue wearing a face mask, social distancing, and washing your hands frequently to avoid getting, or spreading an infection. Once you have reached peak immunity, it is recommended you still wear a mask and social distance in stores and other public settings.

The most common side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines are pain, redness, and swelling where you received the shot, as well as fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and nausea. These should go away within a few days. The vaccines have received emergency use authorization by the FDA and appear to be very safe and effective. If you would like more information on the COVID-19 vaccines, you can visit espanol.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.

“Always listen to employees, it shows respect. Let them talk, listen to their personal concerns, learn about them; however, when they bring negative comments, redirect the conversation into something positive. Never engage into negative conversations. Listen, give advice and tools they need to make themselves better, rather than solving all their problems and taking away the responsibility.”

The Dairy Business Association is Wisconsin’s leading dairy lobby group, championing smart and sensible regulations affecting the dairy community. The nonprofit organization of farmers, milk processors, vendors and other business partners work collaboratively to ensure that dairy farms of all sizes have the support they need to keep America’s Dairyland strong.