Santa Barbara County Fair: The Need for an Entries Office Manual

Introduction / Need for Innovation

Employee training is vital to any company and essential for an organization’s success (UMA S. N, 2013). Job training is defined as the process of enhancing the skills, capabilities and knowledge of employees doing a particular job (Schappel, 2016). Regarding job training, 76% of employees have reported this type of training is most important when obtaining a new job (Schappel, 2016). Not only is training desired amongst employees but it also improves morale of employees, decreases the need for employee supervision, increases chances of promotions, and increases employee productivity (UMA S. N, 2013). One training opportunity that companies utilize is training manuals, which are useful resources for new employees and an effective way to pass on skills and tasks to complete the job (UMA S. N, 2013).

The Santa Barbara County Fair (SBCF), held at the Santa Maria Fairpark, experiences high levels of office turnover with new interns every few years (Acquistapace, 2017). Consistent employee turnover, creates a difficult onboarding process needed to successfully run the entire entries office effectively. With the combination of the shifting employees and a lack of training, a manual including office duties, tasks and steps is crucial to maintain SBCF operations.

Background

At the Santa Barbara County Fair Entries Office, different types of software and vendors are utilized. The main computer programs used and to be included within the manual are Showorks, Excel and Word. Showorks is a vital piece to operating the entries office since it is where all entries from exhibitors are entered, auctions and livestock shows are created, auction buyer information is input, and where all invoices are processed (Showorks, 2018). Excel is used to keep record of ribbon inventory, quality insurance qualifications, ear tag number ranges, Adam’s camping locations, and much more. Word is where all announcements, entries forms, and business letters are created.

There are multiple vendors contacted throughout the year to prepare for the county fair. Local Copies is the business of choice for SBCF where all mass copies are printed. The local Farm Supply orders all ear tags for sheep, goats, swine, steers, and replacement heifers while Regalia provides all ribbon orders for the fair and annual strawberry festival. Jay Cee Trophy Co creates all the trophies and wine medal awards, and Gist Silversmiths is where all the belt buckles for grand, reserve champion animals, and showmanship winners are crafted (Manning, 2017).

Methodology

The first step in creating the Santa Barbara County Fair Entries Office Manual was to gather previous manuals created from 2003-2005. These were found at the Santa Maria Fairpark administration office. Then the author transferred all paper manuals into Microsoft
Word documents and joined the four different manuals, along with “during the fair” operation notes, into one document.

The third step was to gather different sources for each section of the manual. Most of the research came from previous documents used by the SBCF entries office through the 2016 and 2017 fair files, and how to operate Showorks from the Showorks fair management manual found on the Showorks website. The entries office supervisor, Brittany Acquistapace, past entries employee, Kayla Manning, and the Junior Livestock Association, all contributed and added essential entries office management operation tasks for before, during, and after the fair. All the research gathered added sections of the manual that consist of duties, tasks, and how-to’s for employees to run the Santa Barbara County Fair Entries Office. The manual was designed using Microsoft Word.

Results

The 30-page manual is divided into five sections: Fair Year Overview, Before the Fair, Week of the Fair, Week After the Fair, and ShoWorks Picture Guide. The Fair Year Overview contains a list of what needs to be completed within each month. The Before the Fair section provides instructions, how to’s, and lists for DNA kits, leader packets, Adam’s camping, awards, large livestock reports for superintendents, weight slips, judging sheets, showmanship classes, and other lists and task to be completed for the fair.

The Week of the Fair section is broken down into a detailed task and how to list for each day of the fair and includes instructions on breaking market classes, entering places in a timely manner, small stock auction, and large livestock auction. The Week after the Fair includes important tasks to be completed centered around DNA, ribbon inventory, buyer invoices, and premium and buyer auction checks. The Showorks picture guide provides images from the SBCF Showorks software and provides extra detail on how to enter weights, enter resale prices, printing a bill, and input resale and live pickup livestock destinations.

Upon completion, a finished paper copy will be put within a binder and kept in the entries office at the Santa Maria Fairpark for all entries office employees to access and use as a guide. An electronic entries manual word document named SBCF ENTRIES MANUAL can be found within the Showorks Local File in the 2018 Fair File on the Santa Maria Fairpark entries office computer.

Conclusion/Recommendations

As the Santa Barbara County Fair Entries Office evolves, this manual will need to be updated to reflect new methods of operation. The entries office supervisor should review it annually to make sure all procedures and content are relevant to the current practices of that fair year. The example reports and entries office form samples referenced within the manual should also be analyzed and altered to meet current needs of the entries office if found necessary.
References

B. Acquistapace, personal communication, October 26, 2017

K. Manning, Kayla, personal communication, August 4, 2017


