

Building Trust (for Successful Extension)

What is trust?

Trust can be defined as a *firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or dependability of someone or something.*

Why is trust so important in Extension?

Trust in both the message and messenger is repeatedly identified as a key factor in successful extension.

Not surprisingly, trust is also considered crucial in the business and marketing world in gaining and maintaining business and sales.



Building trust is critical in successful extension (Photo H Carrubba)

How do you build trust?

Realize that building trust depends on you and takes time.

- **Be Open and Sincere.** Show genuine interest in and be respectful of other people's points of view, even if you disagree with their perspective. Listen, understand and respond to their interests and points of view. A good way to begin a question to help show genuine interest in a person's concern is, "Help me understand.....?"
- **Show Respect.** Treat others as equals i.e., don't criticize, don't lay blame.
- **Build Rapport.** Find things you have in common, even mirroring body language can help build trust (but do it with the sincerity of building a relationship – not to manipulate)
- **Be Honest.** Always tell the truth. Offer your honest perspective on matters (making sure the other person is ready and open to your thinking). If you don't know something, say so, find out and then get back to the person. Accept if you make a mistake. There is nothing wrong with admitting that you have made a mistake. Apologize and take actions to fix it.
- **Establish Credibility and Competency.** Develop and show competence in matters important to the other person. If you don't have the competence, find someone who does.
- **Be reliable, dependable, and show Integrity** – Make your actions match your words; take your promises seriously. If you can't meet a commitment, quickly let people know, apologize, and then see how the situation can be resolved.
- **Work for win-win** – Work to meet the needs and interests of all those involved and help their efforts to become sustainable.
- **Build on established trusted networks.** Work with trusted local partners.

Reference: <http://www.business-wisdom.com/articles/ArtclElevenWays.html>