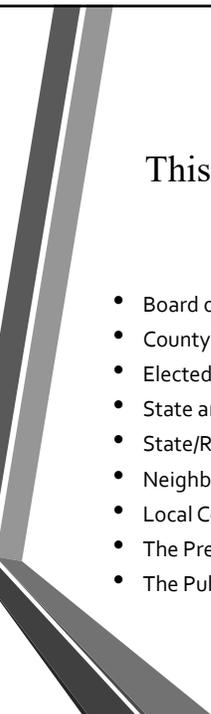


The Role of Managers and Directors in Developing Outside Relationships in Achieving Key Objectives

TRWA 2020 FALL MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Bruce A. Alexander, Superintendent
East Medina County Special Utility District

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This presentation will include a discussion on relationships with:

- Board of Directors/City Council Members
- County Judge, County Commissioners and County Officials
- Elected Officials in Neighboring Communities
- State and Federal Lawmakers
- State/Regulatory Agencies
- Neighboring Utilities
- Local Community Leaders
- The Press
- The Public

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Board of Directors / City Council Members

The relationship between the manager and the governing board of the organization is vital to the success of the organization.

This relationship is built on a clear understanding of the direction of the organization, trust and respect in the actions of the manager, and the authority for the manager to act in the best interest of the organization when it comes to building relationships with outside groups that are needed to help the organization succeed.

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County Judge

As the Chief Administrative Official of the County, the County Judge helps to guide the actions of Commissioner's Court on issues that often have a significant impact on the operations of a rural water system through the application, approval and enforcement of;

- County Subdivision Rules and Regulations
- The Use of County Road Right of Ways
- The Issuance of Community Block Grants
- Emergency Management

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County Commissioners

The relationship between you and your County Commissioners is key to the daily success of your water system.

Attend Commissioner's Court meetings and offer to speak on issues that may have an impact on your water system.

Know and understand the County Subdivision Rules and Regulations as well as you know and understand your own rules and regulations for service in a subdivision.

While the Water Code provides you the power to use a county road right of way for the placement of your waterlines, a strong positive working relationship with your County Commissioner is required to prevent and/or eliminate any potential conflicts that may arise from the use of the right of ways.

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County Officials

There are many officials, both elected and appointed, in the County that require good relationships to succeed. They include relationships with:

- The Sheriff's Department
- The County Health Department
- The County Emergency Management Department
- The Appraisal District
- The County Clerk

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Elected Officials in Neighboring Communities

- Get to know the Mayors, City Council Members and elected officials in your neighboring communities.
- Share the goals and objectives for the future of your water system as it relates to their future goals and objectives.
- Discuss development plans in and around their ETJ and how you can work together to provide service to high growth areas.
- Work towards solutions to issues of concern before they become a problem that requires outside forces to step in and resolve.

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State Lawmakers

Get to know your State Representative and State Senator
and their staff!

Attend an event to meet them whenever possible

Invite them to attend a system event and/or meeting

Inform them of who you are and who you represent

Discuss issues of concern and seek support when needed

Always be professional and respectful to the position they hold

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Federal Lawmakers

Get to know your US Representative and US Senators and their staff!

- Attend an event to meet them whenever possible
- Invite them to attend a system event and/or meeting
- Inform them of who you are and who you represent
- Discuss issues of concern and seek support when needed
- Always be professional and respectful to the position they hold

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State Agencies

Relationships with State agencies such as the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDot) and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) are crucial to the success of many rural water systems.

- Most systems use some portion of State Right of Ways for the installation of water lines parallel to or under the roadway. The use of the right of way requires a permit issued by TxDot. The relationship you have with the local and District offices of TxDot help to obtain timely approval of permits.
- TDEM is called on during disasters to provide assistance as needed. Continued good working relationships with TDEM will help to expedite relief when a disaster strikes that affects your system.

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Regulatory Agencies

Three of the most important regulatory agencies that have an impact on rural water systems are:

- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
- Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)

It is imperative that good working relationships be established with each of the local and/or regional offices of each of these agencies.

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Neighboring Utilities

Meet with managers and officials from neighboring utilities to share ideas and problems in building relationships that provide support and assistance as needed.

Be a good neighbor and agree to offer assistance when a neighbor calls for help with materials, manpower or guidance on how to address an issue of concern.

You never know when it may be you seeking assistance.

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Local Community Leaders

Relationships with local community leaders help you to get the word out and build support for your organization.

Local leaders are able to share with you some of the pulse of the community you serve to help improve customer service related issues and spread a positive message of your organization.

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The Press

Relationships with the press is often a concern that may or may not be justified based on what type of relationship you have.

The relationship with the press must be built on honest, truthful and factual communications. Take responsibility and corrective action when necessary based on the issue to be reported and be prepared to challenge a member of the press with accurate information when an error or omission is left out of a story.

Provide your local newspapers with positive impact public interest stories to support your system and rural water whenever possible.

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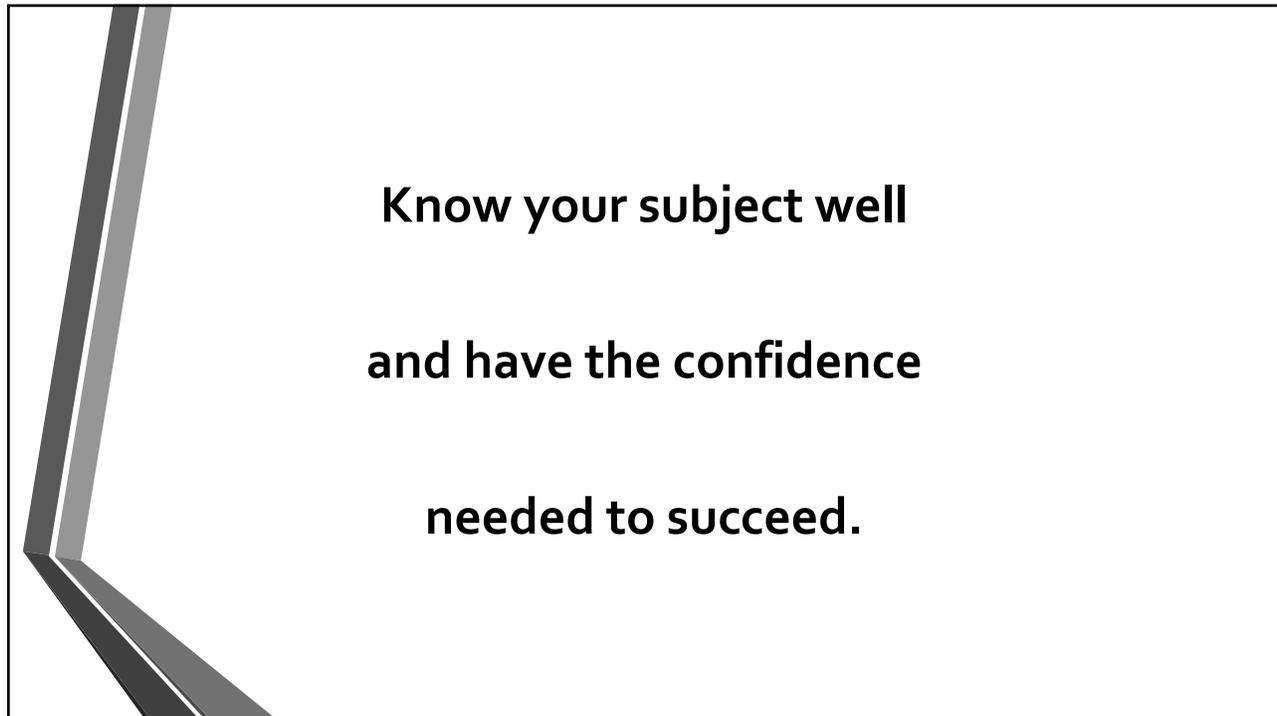
The Public

- Your relationship with your customers is one of the most important relationships you have.
- How your customers see you as the manager is a reflection of how they view the organization.
- Honest, fair and equitable application of all policies and procedures to everyone regardless of who they are and/or what they represent is required at all times.
- Build and maintain trust with the public.

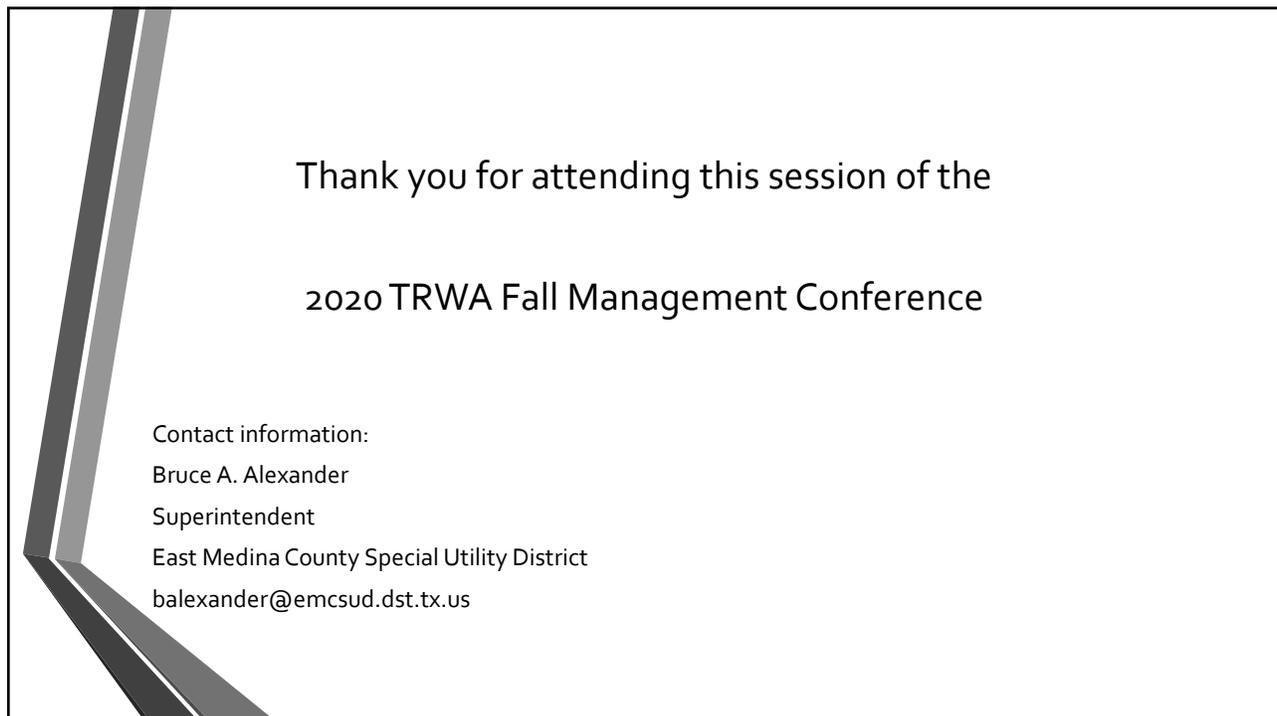
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So, what's the most important
thing you can do to develop
outside relationships to achieve
key objectives?

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