

Good relationships don't just happen.



Shauna Hermel, editor
shermel@angus.org

One could argue you don't have to build relationships. Relationships develop all on their own, and often without much effort from you.

Consider your neighbor. You have a spacial relationship because of your proximity. You have a size relationship based on the scope of your business, as one operation is likely larger. You may have a relationship based on your vocation if you are both

cattlemen or both fishermen. Or maybe one is employer and one employee and you share that relationship.

It's neither good, nor bad. It's just a relationship of one to another.

Personal relationships can just happen, as well. Maybe you sit beside the same person or family at the high school football game every Friday night or in the pew at church on Sunday. Your relationship may be as shallow as shaking hands or nodding each time you see Ol' What's His Name, to as deep as knowing about his grandpa's favorite mule.

Your relationship may grow from one end of the spectrum to the other as weeks stack up over time. Relationships tend to grow — or sour — with each interaction. What does it take to develop a relationship that would allow you to trust that person to babysit your 2-year-old for a weekend? Or vice versa.

Customer relationships

You don't need a deep and meaningful relationship to load up your calves and drop them off at the local auction market

to sell. You can drop them off with just a nod or a handshake. But, if you want those calves to bring a price that will cover their costs and maybe send your daughter or grandson to college, you might want to start building the relationships that will keep you in business.

Like gaining someone's confidence to allow you to babysit their child, gaining someone's confidence to promote your calves or to pay you a premium depends on trust.

Over time, that trust can be built through experience — good experiences — with one another. But if you want more than one person bidding on a set of cattle, it might require some documentation — a résumé, if you will.

Since the important thing to your potential bidders is how the cattle perform once they leave your ranch, building that résumé will be dependent on the relationships you've built with others in the supply chain who have fed and harvested your cattle and objective metrics to describe the cattle.

You can do much to enhance how those cattle perform and the experiences those buyers have by building those relationships and finding the right partners to make sure your cattle have what they need to optimize their value to each buyer in the supply chain — from the backgrounder to the consumer.

As with most good long-lasting relationships, all those involved see to it others in the relationship benefit from it. There might be times of covering for each other,

taking a back seat; but, in the end, sustaining relationships are generally symbiotic.

After all, the fox and the hen have a relationship. One might call it a good relationship; the other, probably not. One thing is sure, it won't be a long one.

We hope you enjoy and benefit from this issue devoted to helping you build successful relationships in the quality-beef supply chain. **ABB**

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Digital EXTRAs

Our third annual "Feeder-Calf Marketing Guide" forms a trilogy to help you improve your marketing plan by understanding the basics, understanding what determines price and how to build the necessary relationships. Find the first two issues online.



2021 The Basics



2022 The Price Primer

