

***Foundations of Political Effectiveness  
in Cooperative Extension—2009***

**Political Effectiveness: Key Case Study Themes**

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These case studies are intended to be a tool for learning. The objectives are to: identify best practices and ineffective practices; emphasize that each case study is a real life example; understand that numerous strategies were used for each situation; and highlight key case study core themes. The themes are grouped using the four vital focus areas presented in *Principals for Political Effectiveness in Cooperative Extension*.

***Responsive Educational Programs***

- High quality programming provided by an engaged staff is essential to support political effectiveness.
- Educational programs must not be viewed as duplication.
- Solid educational programming in a community is not enough. The programs must be valued by financial partners including the county board and county administration.
- There must be a clear understanding of the particular county needs as well as ability to provide resources that are viewed as being valuable.

***Strong Relationships with Key Decision Makers***

- Our valued partners should never be perceived as adversaries or political effectiveness is lost.
- Effective relationships with the media are important in drawing attention to Cooperative Extension educational programs.

***Effective Communication***

- Constantly communicating the value of Extension programs to federal and state legislators, county board supervisors, the county executive/county administrator/county administrative coordinator, and community partners is essential.
- Establishing and maintaining open, honest and frequent communication, internally (within the office) and externally with stakeholders/decision-makers is critical for everyone in the office—not just department heads or center directors.
- It is important to communicate our successes and draw attention to the excellent educational programming that we provide in Cooperative Extension.

### ***Fiscal Awareness, Political Sensitivity***

- Remember decision-makers are often politicians and by their nature are political. It is important to be mindful of the very real budgetary and financial considerations that exist. Try to see it from the decision-maker's point of view.

