

MAGRSc Innovation Support Programme 2015-2017

Study Title: An Approach to Building Effective Agricultural Advisor – Client Relationships

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Research Objectives

1. Explore how the relationship between individual clients and their advisor evolved and investigate the reasons why these relationships were successful or not
2. Identify and understand the critical factors that positively and negatively impact advisor - client relationships
3. Identify the key processes involved in establishing an effective advisor - client relationship
4. Gain an understanding of the importance and necessity for trust in advisor - client relationships

Methodology

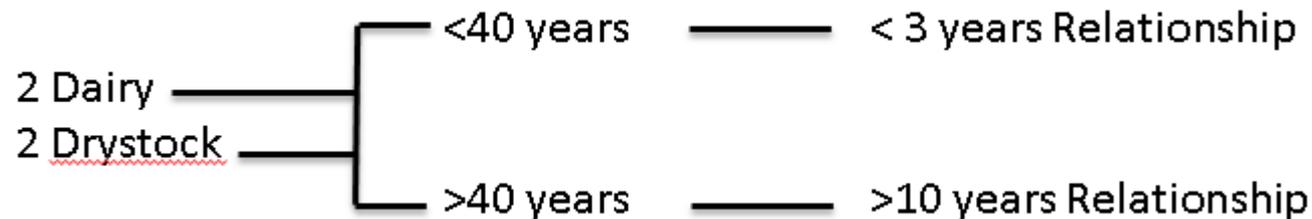
1. Key Informant Interviews (6)

- Regional Managers (2)
- Teagasc Advisors (4)

2. In Depth Interviews with Teagasc Clients (30)

- Dairy (13) Drystock (17)
- >40 years (19) <40 years (11)
- Core A (8) Core B (11) Discussion Group (11)

3. In Depth Interviews with Teagasc Advisors (4)



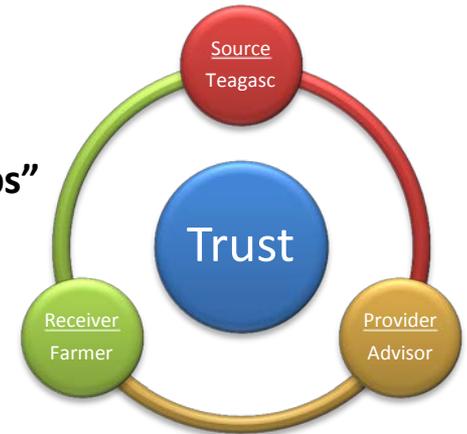
Thesis Structure / Chapters

- Chapter 1 - Introduction
 - Background to Trust in Advisor – Client Relationships
 - Research Questions
 - Research Objectives
 - Research Design
 - Methodology
 - Utility of Study
- Chapter 2 - Literature Review
 - Farmer Decision Making and the Role of AKIS
 - Farm Advisory Relationships
 - Development Stages of Advisory Relationships
 - Factors Influencing Advisory Relationships
 - The Importance of Trust in Business Advisory Relationships
- Chapter 3 - Research Findings & Analysis
 - Importance of Trust
 - Trust in Advisory Organisation
 - Factors Impacting Advisor - Client Relationships
 - Establishing Effective Advisor - Client Relationships
- Chapter 4 - Conclusions & Recommendations
 - Conclusions from Farmer and Advisors interviews
 - Recommendations and Future Research

Study Findings

Key Components of “Effective Agricultural Advisor – Client Relationships”

1. Trust in the Farm Advisory Service (Teagasc)
2. Trust in the Individual Farm Advisor



Trust in Advisor – Client Relationships

- 100% of farmers trust the information and services provided to them by Teagasc
- 57% of farmers shared that the success of their advisor – client relationship was based on trust in the advisory service
- 43% of farmers shared that the success of their advisor – client relationship was based on trust in the individual advisor

Why Farmers Trust Teagasc

- Reliable source of information which is backed up by research
- Provide up to date information across all farming sectors
- Good reputation and well recognised within the agriculture sector
- Provide independent advice
- Employ qualified and highly trained staff

The Advisor

Good Advisor

- Personal Qualities
 - Good Personality
 - Good Communication Skills
 - Young
 - Committed to their role
 - Respect the farmer
 - Honest
 - Interested in their role and want to help the farmer
- Expertise
 - Good Technical Knowledge
 - Good Experience
 - Farming Background
 - Up to date with information
- Professionalism
 - Easy to Contact
 - Return Calls
 - Provide adequate one to one contact
 - Good Reputation
 - Ensure Confidentiality

Poor Advisor

- Personal Qualities
 - Poor Personality
 - Poor Communication Skills
 - Doesn't listen to the farmer
 - Disrespectful
 - Not Interested in their role or in helping the farmer
 - Difficult to approach
 - Dishonest and untrustworthy
- Expertise
 - Poor Technical Knowledge
 - No Experience
 - Unable to make decisions
 - Not from a farming background
- Professionalism
 - Doesn't Return Calls
 - Poor Time Keeper
 - Difficult to Contact
 - Poor Reputation
 - Poor Facilitator

Conclusions

- “Effective Agricultural – Advisor Client Relationships” play a key role in improving knowledge transfer among farmers
- Farmer’s must trust both the source of information and the individual advisor delivering the information
- Teagasc must maintain its reputation of sourcing reliable information
- Advisors must develop and maintain personal, expertise and professional attributes associated with their role (CECRA Training)
- Trust can be gained quickly, however will become deeper overtime so long as the experiences of the relationship remain good

Thank You

Questions?

