



X11 Forwarding in SSH: connection rejected because of wrong authentication

Question & Answer

Question

Why is the "connection rejected because of wrong authentication" in X11 Forwarding through SSH?

Cause

The issue occurs because they have changed the userid to root with "su -".

The root user does not have a DISPLAY set, nor will root have credentials for the original user DISPLAY.

Answer

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Users of SSH X11 Forwarding who su - to become root

OBJECTIVE:

Provide an explanation of errors and work around

PROCEDURES:

The following instructions explain typical scenarios and provide resolution steps.

PROBLEM RE-CREATION STEPS:

1) Enable X11 forwarding on AIX

```
% cp /etc/ssh/sshd_config /etc/ssh/sshd_config.save
% vi /etc/ssh/sshd_config
```



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2) Connect to the AIX Server from a remote PC, or other Linux/Unix system with an Xserver running. (This

can be through PUTTY, or various Xemuators which connect through ssh)

The basic underlying command is

```
% ssh -X NON_ROOT_USER@hostname
```

NOTE: NON_ROOT_USER is the non-root-userid

If the X11 forwarding is successful, the DISPLAY will be set

```
% echo $DISPLAY
localhost:10
```

NOTE: The default DISPLAY number is 10 (See/etc/ssh/sshd_config #X11DisplayOffset 10) but this number may be different if multiple connections are established.

3) Now become root

```
% sudo su -
```

4) Check root's DISPLAY

```
% echo $DISPLAY
(null)
```

NOTE: This is expected. This is not the same userid which connected to, and established credentials for localhost:10.

5) Now, export the DISPLAY to the previously established secure X11 forwarding session

```
% export DISPLAY=localhost:10
```

6) Check connection access

```
% xhost
```

Typical Error: "X11 connection rejected because of wrong authentication "

NOTE: This is expected. The xauth credentials for this DISPLAY were established for \$NON_ROOT_USER and must be shared with root.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION STEPS: ✕

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8) Check connection access .

```
% xhost
```

NOTE: This message will vary based on the Xserver access controls

```
% xauth remove localhost:10
```

Developer Works "Remote X11 Windows to AIX"

(<https://www.ibm.com/developerworks/community/blogs/paixperiences/entry/remotex11aix?lang=en>)

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Document Information

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