

LESSON 15

Characteristics of Recognition



- Recognition is a basic human need.
- Recognition must be designed to build self-esteem.
- A balance between intangible and tangible recognition is essential.
- Adult support is essential.
- All 4-H members need to experience recognition for their efforts.

Characteristics of Recognition



- Recognition is more meaningful when it occurs soon after it is earned.
- Appropriate recognition for individual 4-H members varies with stage of development, past experiences, family lifestyle, community and cultural heritage.
- Opportunities for self-assessment and reflection within the recognition process allow for youth to learn and grow.

Five Types of Recognition



1. Participating in educational experiences.
2. Progress toward self-set goals.
3. Achieving standards of excellence.
4. Peer competition.
5. Excellence in cooperation.

Participation Recognition



- Recognizes attending, participating and successfully completing an activity.

- Can take the form of a name in the paper, t-shirt, participation ribbon, etc.

Progress Toward Self-Set Goals Recognition



- Not limited to the outcome at the end of the project and is useful when several steps are involved in reaching a goal. This form of recognition:
 - Can be used with all ages
 - Requires goals to be realistic and reachable
 - Progress is evaluated by youth and adults
 - Progress is measured using young person's own goals and plans

Achievement of Standards Recognition



- Recognizing accomplishments as they compare to pre-determined standards. Key elements are:
 - Standard used to measure success is an outside source
 - Adults must assure standards are clearly defined and youth are well informed
 - Involves a judging system. 4-H uses a ribbon placement system
 - The standard measures quality of work and is not a comparison to others

Peer Competition Recognition

- Comparison to peers can negatively influence younger members' self-perception.
- Desire to win may overpower desire to learn. Help youth remain focused on the experience rather than the competition.
- Rules and procedures must be clear.

Peer Competition Recognition

- Negative stress, conflict, etc., can be reduced by assuring everyone understands expectations.
- Adults must remember that this form of recognition is designed to promote the development of youth rather than the success of their program.
- Competition should be optional. It does not motivate ALL youth.

Excellence in Cooperation Recognition

- Key components:
 - Involves all youth in the group
 - Is measured against mutually agreed upon goals and supports looking at a variety of ideas
 - Ultimate goal is not recognition
 - Everyone is recognized

LESSON 15

PREPARING JUDGES HANDOUT

It is important that volunteers who serve as judges are adequately prepared to provide effective evaluation and feedback to 4-H youth. Judges need to be informed about the judging experience and what is expected of them during judging. The following points should be covered with all volunteers before they engage in a judging experience with youth.

Getting Ready

Judges must know:

- The standards and requirements for the projects and exhibits to be judged.
- Any additional judging standards or adjustments to the standards in place for a particular contest.
- The capabilities and levels of understanding appropriate to the age of the youth being judged.
- The preferred procedures for getting answers from the superintendent regarding questions of clarification or problems that might arise. Remind them that it is best not to guess if not sure about a rule or requirement. No one is expected to have all of the answers.

Judging the Project or Exhibit

Judges must:

- Be prepared to give full concentration to the judging task.
- Be on time to check in with the appropriate person.
- Be willing to judge longer than they may have been asked. Unavoidable delays may occur.
- Keep a positive attitude, and avoid becoming upset over delays and schedule changes.
- Keep a sense of humor. This is a serious event for the exhibitor, but humor often helps relieve stress.
- Be tactful and concerned about the feelings of the exhibitors.
- Offer constructive criticism, keeping the educational value of the experience in mind.
- Keep personal likes and dislikes to themselves.
- Make decisions quickly and with confidence.
- Base decisions on clear, factual statements, not on opinions.
- Keep judging consistent among all youth exhibitors.
- Give the exhibitor the benefit of the doubt.
- Personalize remarks about the project or exhibit. Exhibitors compare remarks made by the judge.
- Be prepared to take criticisms. It is not unusual to have an exhibitor challenge the evaluation of the judge or be critical of a remark.
- Share suggestions with the superintendent regarding improvements in the judging process or repeated problem with exhibits.

Suggested Interview Procedure:

Ask Questions of the Exhibitor

The questions asked should test the understanding of the why's and how's of the exhibited work. Asking about strengths and weaknesses gives the exhibitor an opportunity for self-evaluation.

Be Positive

Talk about something that stands out favorably on the exhibit. It is easier to hear suggestions for improvement in the context of what has been done well. Praise should be sincere and in line with the achievement.

Help the Exhibitor Feel At Ease

Choose a pleasant site for the interview with little noise or potential interruption. Help the exhibitor feel at ease by extending a warm greeting and talking in a friendly manner. Talk with and not at the exhibitor. A two-way conversation will add to the exhibitor's learning experiences. Lead the exhibitor in discovering the positive aspects of the learning experience as well as recognizing the problems. Ask about things the exhibitor likes to do. Ask what new things they learned. Find out how the exhibitor feels about the project. Ask what they liked best and least about the project. Did they get help with their project and if so, how? Remember to be a good listener and to be genuinely interested in what the exhibitor did and why. Often something unexpected was learned. Allow time for the exhibitor to ask questions too.

Focus on the Individual

Evaluate each item and exhibitor as an individual. The exhibitor's efforts are not to be judged against other exhibitors. Use the growth of the individual and the set standards for the project to evaluate the skills and abilities of the exhibitor. Judges' personal preferences or tastes should not influence the evaluation.

Be Consistent

Evaluation of techniques or methods must be consistent. Explain why certain techniques are or are not appropriate for the item. If non-standard approaches have been taken, explore the reason for taking a different approach and consider the effectiveness of that decision. It is important to keep an open mind and encourage creativity.

Facilitate Analysis

Help exhibitors analyze their work, so that each successive venture will be a more successful one. Focus on the complete project and avoid becoming overly concerned with small details of the project. Learning occurs when an exhibitor knows, understands and recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of the work. If an exhibit has not met standards, it is important to help the exhibitor learn what could be done in the future to assure success.

End on a Positive Note

Begin and end each evaluation on a positive note. Find something about the exhibit that is successful and compliment the exhibitor. Try to inspire future work. If interview judging is done well, exhibitors will leave with a sense of accomplishment, even when the project has not met their own or the judges' expectations. It is important to remember that the goal of project work is the development and growth of the youth.

Sample Questions for Interviews

Introduction

1. What did you enjoy about working with this project?
2. Have you taken this project before? What did you learn during those years?
3. What were your goals for this project?

Detailed Learning

4. What did you learn as you worked with this project?
5. How did you go about making or assembling this exhibit?
6. Did someone help you with your project? Who? How?
7. What were some of the difficulties or problems you had?
8. What would you do differently if you did it again?
9. Approximately how much did this project cost?
10. What are some characteristics of a good exhibit?
11. What do you believe contributed to the success of this project?

Continued Learning

12. What other things would you like to do with this project?
13. What are some new things you could learn?
14. Have you helped someone else learn these skills?
15. How will what you learned be helpful in the future?

Final Note:

There are variations in counties and states in judging procedures. Always check rules and regulations with the person handling the judging.

Adapted from:

Parsons, Jerry. 1996. Helping Volunteers Recognize 4-Hers and Introduction to Model for Recognizing 4-Hers, USDA, National 4-H Council.

Payne, Claudia. 1996. Judging of 4-H Exhibits, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, College Park.

LESSON 15

JUDGING RIBBON HANDOUT

Danish Ribbon System

There is no special formula about the number of blue, red or white ribbons to be given with the Danish ribbon system. Quality, measured against product standards and fulfillment of exhibit requirements, determines the ranking. A typical standard for awarding ribbons is as follows: blue means the exhibit meets or exceeds product standards and exhibit requirements; overall, the work is of high quality and is considered "excellent." Red means the exhibit meets minimum product standards and exhibit requirements; overall the work is of average quality and is considered "very good." White indicates serious or considerable deficiencies in meeting product standards and/or exhibit requirements and is considered "good."

American Ribbon System

This is a rank-order system in which exhibits are placed from first to infinity. There also may be special categories such as top of class, best of show, grand champion, etc. While the American system uses product standards and fulfillment of exhibit requirements, it also uses the idea of competition among exhibitors to establish the ranking. Check with the county prior to judging to clarify their interpretation of this system.

Participation System

This system recognizes the exhibitor's participation in a category, usually without regard to the quality of the exhibit or competition among the exhibitors. This is often used with youth who are 5-7 years old. Combinations and modifications of these systems are used often. If there are questions or something is not clear, always check with the department superintendent.

Adapted from:

Payne, Claudia. 1996. Maryland Judging of 4-H Exhibits, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, College Park.

LESSON 15

OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND THE CLUB HANDOUT

In addition to the actual club experience, members and leaders are encouraged to participate in local, state and national events. As a youth development professional, it is your job to maintain contact with state and national programs that are providing developmental experiences for youth and to connect the youth in your program to these opportunities. Listed here are some of the national 4-H opportunities available annually.

National 4-H Week is celebrated the first full week in October. Over 6 million 4-H'ers nationwide celebrate with special activities including window displays, community projects, attending a church service as a group, field trips, outings and more. National 4-H Council provides a packet of ideas for celebrating National 4-H Week that includes sample news releases, radio spots, clip art and more. Contact your 4-H Extension professional or visit <http://4-H.org> for more information.

National 4-H Conference is held at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland near Washington, D.C. every spring and is planned and conducted by teens. At the National 4-H Conference, teen delegates take the lead by making recommendations for future directions for 4-H and by accepting responsibility to be on one of the committees that helps conduct the events and functions of the Conference. Activities include a visit to Capitol Hill and meetings with senators and/or representatives. This event is sponsored and conducted by National 4-H Council and CSREES. Contact your county 4-H Extension professional for more information.

National 4-H Congress is built upon the Cooperative Extension System's belief that young people can be significant partners in addressing the issues that face our nation, especially those affecting youth. Each year a National Design Team of Extension professionals, 4-H youth, and 4-H adult volunteers analyze current youth issues and determine the most effective ways to address them. The program combines plenary sessions, seminars, discussion groups, and a service learning experience. The nation's most outstanding community leaders, speakers, and educators present the most current and timely information available. More information can be found at www.national4-hcongress.com.

Citizenship Washington Focus is a six-day civic education and leadership program organized by National 4-H Council and held at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, MD every summer for high school youth. Those attending CWF will broaden their appreciation and respect for themselves and others in the world through workshops, committee work, field trips and social events. Participants learn and practice skills intended to make them better citizens and successful individuals. To learn more call 800-368-7432 and/or visit <http://www.citizenshipwashingtonfocus.org>

State-to-State Exchange Programs are available between individual counties in different states. Local 4-H Extension professionals make the connections and arrangements for these exchange opportunities for the youth in their communities.

Wonders of Washington (WOW). WOW is a civic education program for youth organized by National 4-H Council that includes field trips and workshops that highlight the historical, political and cultural attractions of Washington, DC. WOW is a flexible option for youth to learn about the nation's capitol and is designed specifically for each group's age and length of stay. Visit <http://www.wow.washington.org> for more information.

4-H members can also participate in a variety of national 4-H contests in various project areas. These are for individuals and teams that have won at the county and state levels. Your Local 4-H Extension professionals can explain more about these opportunities.

Opportunities for professional development are available regionally and nationally for both adult and youth leaders and/or youth development professionals.

Regional 4-H Volunteer Leader Forums are where adult and teen leaders from multi-state regions attend annual meetings to learn new information, gain new skills, and share ideas with other 4-H leaders. Contact your local 4-H Extension professional to find out when the next Regional Leader Forum is scheduled in your area.

4-H professional development opportunities for youth development professionals include NAE4-HA affiliate membership (National Association of Extension 4-H Agents). Affiliate membership in the professional association of 4-H agents is open to the staff of partnering organizations. This inclusive network of youth development professionals sponsors a national conference for youth development professionals each year. See <http://www.nae4ha.com> for more information.