



DESIGNING 4-H PROJECT EXPERIENCES: SETTING PROJECT GOALS

Intended Audience:

- 4-H youth and adult project leaders

Learning Objectives:

Project leaders will:

- Understand the importance of providing members with opportunities to design their own project experience
- Learn the importance of goal setting as a first step in project work
- Learn the parts of a good project goal and ways to help members set goals.

Target Essential Elements:

Participating in designing their own project experience increases members' sense of *independence* as they set their own goals and make decisions about their project work.

VRKC Taxonomy:

Volunteers will increase their expertise in *educational design and delivery* as they develop skills in *implementing* learning opportunities that effectively promote positive personal development.

Time: 30-40 minutes

Supplies Needed:

Get Acquainted Activity

- Tape
- Slips of paper with project terms

Goal Setting Activity

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Fair premium book

BACKGROUND

To get the most from their project experience, members need to be actively involved in choosing their projects, setting their project goals, and making decisions about when and what they will do to accomplish those goals. Project leaders serve as guides for members as they set off on their project adventure. Today we will learn about goal setting as an important first step on the road to a successful project experience.

WHAT TO DO

Introduction

One of the many roles of the 4-H project leader is that of “guide.” But, it’s difficult to guide members along their project adventure unless we know where they want to go. It’s like trying to access driving directions from the Internet without knowing our destination!

Goals represent the members’ destinations. Well-written goals will help you, the members, and their parents or other project helpers know exactly where they want their project adventures to take them, and more importantly, shed some light on how and when they want to arrive.

Use your first project meeting as a time for getting acquainted, goal setting, and planning for the new project year.

Activity: Get Acquainted

Helping members get acquainted and feel welcome at project meetings is an important role of the project leader.

As youth and adult leaders arrive, tape a project term on each of their backs. For example, if the sample project is woodworking, use terms such as nail, stain, oak, hammer, saw, etc. When everyone has arrived, ask them to move about the room, asking others “yes” or “no” questions to help them guess the term taped on their backs. Hint: To split the group into pairs, tape the same term on the backs of two different people; ask the two with the same term to pair up for the goal setting activity. When matching pairs, consider pairing up a new participant with a more experienced participant. The more experienced member will then be in a position to work with the newer participant on the next activity.

Activity: Goal Setting

Ask leaders to think about some typical project goals that members have mentioned through the years. Record their ideas, which may include such goals as:

- Win grand champion at the fair
- Learn something new
- Have fun
- Make a bookcase.

Are these good goals? Let’s apply some “goal setting” criteria to them, to see how they stand up. Good goals are measurable and have three parts:

1. Action – how you will do something
2. Results – what you are going to do
3. Timetable – when you are going to do it



- Project guides
- Handouts

Handouts

- 4-H Goal Setting Worksheet
- Evaluation

Do Ahead:

- Have supplies and handouts ready.
- Prepare slips of paper with project terms.

Sources:

- Developed by Carolyn L. Belczyk, 4-H Youth Development Educator, UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development Program.
- “4-H Goal Writing Worksheet,” Iowa State University Extension.
- “Goal Setting Leader’s Guide to Helping Youth,” University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.
- “Goal Setting Youth Guide,” University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension.
- “Strengthening 4-H Project Leader Support” UW-Extension work team, January 2001, whose work provides a foundation for this project leader training series.

Good goals also pass the “control test.” Does the member have control over the outcome of the goal, or does someone else have that control? For example, a member controls the outcome of this goal, “I want to collect, identify, and display six new species of butterflies for this year’s fair,” but does not control the outcome of this goal, “I want to win grand champion for my butterfly display at this year’s fair.” In the second goal, the judge controls the outcome, not the member.

Looking back at the examples, let’s determine if each meets the “good goal” criteria.

- Win grand champion at the fair – includes a result and timetable, but does not pass the “control test.”
- Learn something new – includes action, but does not include a specific result or timetable; is not measurable.
- Have fun – includes action, but does not include a specific result or timetable; is not measurable.
- Make a bookcase – includes action and result, but does not include a timetable.

Using the handout, “4-H Goal Setting Worksheet,” write two good goals that a member might have for the project(s) you lead. Discuss your goals with others at the table. Do they meet the criteria?

Note: When working with members to set their project goals, it’s helpful to have copies of the fair premium book and the project activity guides (project literature) on hand for their reference. And, remember, younger or first year members need more help with setting appropriate goals than older or more experienced members. You may want to pair newer members with more experienced members for the goal setting activity.

Tip: Leaders should keep copies of the members’ goals. These will come in handy when planning future meetings and can be used later to measure members’ accomplishments.

Closing

As previously noted, well-written goals will help the leaders, the members, and their parents or other project helpers know exactly where they want their project adventures to take them. More importantly, they shed light on how and when they want to arrive. The next step is using the members’ goals to develop a project plan.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- How do well-written goals help members focus their project experience?
- Why might it be useful to have the fair premium book and project activity guides on hand when helping members develop their project goals?

Apply:

- Try writing your own goal or goals for this year’s project experience. What do you want to learn or do? What are your goals for the group? Compare your goals with those of other members of the project leadership team, and incorporate them into the project meeting plan, as well.

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY

Enhance:

- Think about how project goals might be different for youth with more or less project experience or youth of different ages. Refer to the “Goal Setting Leader’s Guide to Helping Youth,” University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, at <http://extension.unh.edu/4H/4HPubs/ldrsggs.pdf> for more information. Look again at the sample project goals you wrote. For what age group or experience level are they most appropriate? Try writing sample goals for youth with more experience. Think of one or more sample goals for youth project leaders.

Simplify:

- Rather than challenging participants to write and discuss sample goals appropriate for the projects they lead, brainstorm and write several good sample goals as a total group that meet the goal setting criteria and stand up to the “control test.”

EVALUATION

It is important to use an evaluation that is consistent with your teaching objectives. The short evaluation provided at the end of this lesson plan can be modified to meet your needs. An option to a written evaluation is to record the Reflection question discussion. Recruit someone ahead of time to take notes while you are leading the discussion.

ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

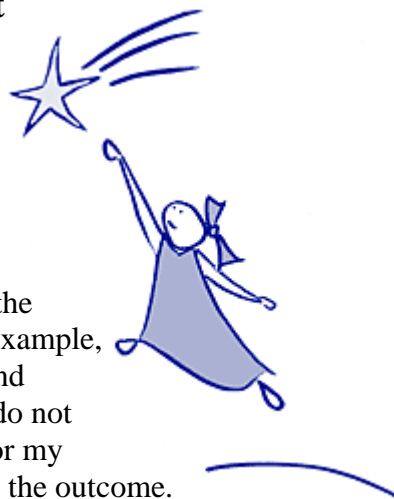
- “4-H Goal Writing Worksheet,” Iowa State University Extension, <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/NR/rdonlyres/5C47273A-F2B6-443B-9DE1-76CC1EB16C84/5699/4HGoalWritingWorksheet1.pdf>.
- “Goal Setting Leader’s Guide to Helping Youth,” University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, <http://extension.unh.edu/4H/4HPubs/ldrsggs.pdf>.
- “Goal Setting Youth Guide,” University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, <http://extension.unh.edu/4H/4HPubs/youthgs.pdf>.
- “Helping Youth Set Goals,” *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series*, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, <http://www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/pubs/pdfs/4h/e148/415-416.pdf>.
- “Making the Most of Your Projects,” ACTcc061, Wis. 4-H Community Club Central, <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=4089>.
- “Section 5: What is a 4-H Project,” *NYS 4-H Club Leader Handbook*, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, <http://nys4h-staff.cce.cornell.edu/documents/1-Section5.doc>.

Finalized by the Strengthening the Vitality of 4-H Community Clubs Work Team, March 2007.

4-H Goal Setting Worksheet

Good goals are measurable and have three parts:

1. Action – how you will do something
2. Results – what you are going to do
3. Timetable – when you are going to do it.



Good goals also pass the “control test.” Do you have control over the *outcome* of the goal, or does someone else have that control? For example, you control the outcome of this goal, “I want to collect, identify, and display six new species of butterflies for this year’s fair,” but you do not control the outcome of this goal, “I want to win grand champion for my butterfly display at this year’s fair.” In this goal, the judge controls the outcome.

	ACTION	RESULT	TIMETABLE
I want	to learn	to bake two new kinds of cookies	by Christmas
I want	to train	my dog to sit and lie down on my command	by June 1
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Handout

Designing 4-H Project Experiences: Setting Project Goals Evaluation

1. Please rate the following: How useful will this information be in helping members set achievable goals for their project experience? Circle one response.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not Sure Not Useful

2. Please answer the following: Do you feel better prepared to help members set project goals?

Yes No

3. What will you do as a result of this program?