

Kansas 

So you are

PRESIDENT

of your club . . .



Tips for Being a Good Leader

1. Be a team player
2. Be thoughtful of others
3. Be helpful
4. Be a good sport
5. Be reliable and responsible
6. Celebrate others' success
7. Be fair
8. Have fun with 4-H!!!

Congratulations! Now that your club has chosen you as the president, you, and all other officers of your 4-H club are representatives. As a 4-H officer, you represent not only your club, but also the 4-H program throughout the state. Your skills and abilities, standards and ideals, grooming, speech and even smiles represent Kansas 4-H members. Representing others is one of your most important responsibilities because it exists at all times — not just while you are at 4-H events.

President's Job Description

- Talk with the leaders and other officers to prepare for each meeting.
- Tell the leader and vice president well in advance if you are not going to be at a meeting.
- Conduct the business meeting according to parliamentary procedure and in a considerate and fair manner.
- Help other officers carry out their jobs and give them credit for the jobs they do.
- Encourage everyone to participate in the meeting.
- Make sure everyone gets the chance to serve on a committee at some point during the year.
- Delegate responsibilities rather than try to do it all yourself, so members feel more like an important part of the club.
- Represent your club at other meetings and events.
- Attend as many 4-H meetings and activities as possible and be prompt and enthusiastic.
- Set the rules of conduct (speaking, behavior, clapping, etc.) at the first meeting and stick with them for the rest of the year.

A Quick Look at Parliamentary Procedure

- Four basic principles:
 - Justice and courtesy for all
 - One thing at a time
 - Majority rules
 - Allow the minority to be heard
- Basic motion:
 - President: Is there a motion?
 - 1st member: I move that...
 - President: Is there a second?
 - 2nd member: I second the motion.
 - President: It has been moved and seconded that ... (restate the motion) ... Is there any discussion?
 - (Members discuss the motion when the president calls on them.) Be sure all members have the chance to discuss. The more members that participate the better.
 - President: We will now vote. All those in favor, say 'yes' or 'aye.'
 - President: All opposed, say 'no' or 'nay.'
 - President: The motion carried (or failed).
 - President taps gavel once.
- Use of the gavel:
 - One tap: indicates members need to find a seat to begin the meeting, signals the completion of a motion, announces adjournment
 - Two taps: calls the meeting to order
 - Three taps: all members rise
 - A series of sharp, loud taps is meant to restore order

What Makes a Meeting a Meeting?

Below are the general parts of a 4-H club meeting. Not every meeting has to include all five parts or follow this order. Do what is best for your club, and meetings will run smoothly. Plan the agenda ahead of time with your club leader. Know what business you need to discuss, etc. so you do not have to rely on the leader to make explanations during the meeting.

Opening (5-10 minutes)

This is a good time to learn about your fellow club members, and it will set the mood for the rest of the meeting. Depending on the amount of time you have, it could include a get-acquainted activity for a large club, or the traditional opening of the Pledge of Allegiance, the 4-H Pledge, a song and roll call. Roll call can be answered in many ways to better get to know the members, such as favorite color, birthday month, favorite teacher or subject, or middle name.

Business session (15-25 minutes)

Be sure to use proper parliamentary procedure during all business sessions. Business sessions should be held only when there is specific business to transact. This allows more time for the program part of the meeting. A good idea for a meeting where there isn't any specific business is to have the leaders and parents take the roles of the club officers to demonstrate parliamentary procedure in a fun manner.

When having a business session, it should include:

- Minutes of the last meeting
- Officer/Leader reports
- Committee reports
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Adjournment

Program (15-20 minutes)

This is the heart of most 4-H meetings and often includes project talks or demonstrations by club members. It is important that your program be educational because 4-H is all about learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. This is also a good time to have a goal setting session or team-building activity.

Other ideas include:

- Guest speaker
- Community service activities
- Project tour
- Supervised work on projects or record books

Recreation (10-15 minutes)

Through recreation at club meetings, members learn to create their own fun, cooperate, give as well as follow directions, and better understand themselves and others. Some clubs schedule recreational activities while waiting for all members to arrive; others prefer having this at the end of the meeting. Simple games/activities use up excess energy and can teach information or skills by using the experiential learning model to process the activity.

Refreshments

This is another area that is going to depend heavily on your club. If your club meets after school, it may be better to begin with a snack. If your club meets on Saturday afternoon, it may be best to end with a snack following recreation. Some meetings may include a potluck meal and others may not require any sort of refreshments. Be sure to assign refreshments evenly through the club and do not depend exclusively on your club leader to provide refreshments.



“Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.”
~Abraham Lincoln



The 4-H Pledge

*I Pledge my Head
to clearer thinking,*

*my Heart
to greater loyalty,*

*my Hands
to larger service,*

*and my Health
to better living,*

*For my club,
my community,
my country,
and my world.*

What Leadership Means to the President

To be a good leader in any group, especially one that is as diverse as a modern 4-H club, here are some more tips*:

1. Club members want:
 - To feel like they belong
 - To help with planning
 - To help make the rules
 - To know what is expected
 - To have responsibilities
 - To see goals being accomplished
 - To trust the leaders, officers and other members of the group
2. To gain your club's trust:
 - Accept others for who they are
 - Only speak for yourself
 - Avoid put-downs at all times
 - Be responsible with all your tasks
 - Expect unfinished business and deal with it without negativity
 - Don't judge anyone for what he or she may or may not do
3. Avoid these behaviors that block club development:
 - Not listening
 - Disorganization
 - No goals or objectives
 - Impatience
 - Using words that some group members may not understand
 - No agenda or meeting plan
 - Being pushy
 - Offensive humor

As a leader, involving each member of the club in decision-making and activities is very important. Each time your club meets, it is a different group due to absent or new members. Because of this, it is a good idea for some kind of group-building activity to occur at the beginning of each meeting to make members feel comfortable.

Here are some additional helpful tips:

- Note: Research has shown youth see meetings as successful or unsuccessful according to how often they speak during the meeting.
- Have members sit in a circle to encourage interaction.
- If your club is large, breaking into small groups of three to five at some time during the meeting to share ideas allows everyone a chance to talk.
- If your club has one person talking all the time, give the group a ball. Only the person with ball has permission to speak. Make sure the ball gets passed around to all members who want it.

As the president, you will be required to run meetings effectively, the younger members of your club will look up to you, and the leaders and parents will expect you to set a good example. Also, your extension agent will soon be seeking out volunteers for county/district committees and council officers. Take this responsibility seriously and use your head, heart, hands and health to lead this generation of 4-H'ers to make the best better.

To lead means a variety of things to different people. When you state the 4-H Pledge at the beginning of each meeting, you pledge to help your environment by doing your personal best. Your club chose you to be the president, and you accepted an important role in helping your fellow club members fulfill their pledge.

**Walker, K., Phillips, M., McAdoo, S., et al. (1999). LEADS Curriculum Notebook. Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service.*