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4-H 142 4-H Presentations for a Purpose

C. Dean Johnson

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4-H Presentations For A PURPOSE

Member Manual
Level III

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The Cooperative Extension Service provides information and educational programs to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.
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A special thanks to the 4-H Presentations curriculum committee members for their ideas and suggestions. They were:

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Kim Mehl, North Platte
Joan Meis, Sidney
Jere’ Sue Schroer, Kearney
Sandra Stockall, North Platte
Beverly Thurber, Roca
**4-H ALUMNI HAVE SAID...**

> "I have made over 30 TV commercials and they are very much like the 4-H club demonstrations I used to give. In my TV commercials, I must quickly attract attention — create a desire — and sell a product or a service. That's also what 4-H demonstrations are all about. Best wishes..."

> "In working with rural women's programs throughout the world, I constantly remember the valuable training which 10 years of 4-H club work gave me in Polk, NE. Each year my 4-H leaders expected me to give a demonstration. My white ribbons became purple. I am grateful for that experience—the confidence gained with demonstrations and the encouragement for each individual to 'make the best better'..."

> "During the past decade I have testified dozens of times at Congressional hearings and other similar situations where questioning can be harsh and intense. Rarely was I uptight on these occasions because I felt I had sufficient command of the subject matter and the ability to organize my thoughts and speak concisely to the issue. These traits are an invaluable part of the 4-H demonstration program."

> "The 4-H experience has many ramifications that relate to career life. The research and skill development plus the study and rehearsal required to give a 4-H presentation or demonstration have application to the world of work. From concept to implementation, 4-H demonstrations help to build individual confidence and the ability to tackle the larger problems of real life."
You have now reached the point in your 4-H Presentations career where there is a greater purpose in giving a presentation. You’ve learned the basics of selecting a topic, doing your research, organizing the material and practicing. You’ve learned to improve the effectiveness of your presentation by sharpening your skills, making visuals and adding variety through team demonstrations and illustrated presentations.

Now what? Now you’re ready for that greater purpose of lifelong leadership development which can be used in your home, community and career. When you give a 4-H Presentation, you are trying to get your point across to others. You want others to change their behavior, ranging from changed attitudes and understandings to changed buying patterns and voting preferences.

You are selling! Everyone has something to sell, from friendship to a product. Sell your class members on your idea for a float through an illustrated talk. Sell your friendship at a service station by demonstrating to a customer how to properly check the oil level in an automatic transmission.

When you’re in the business of selling (and you are), you need to think creatively for new and different ways to get your point across. However, don’t forget the basics which you have learned.

By giving 4-H Presentations, you will start to develop self confidence in effective communication skills. This publication is designed to give you greater purpose to 4-H Presentation as you:

- Learn the specific requirements for competition and contest presentations.
- Become aware of groups and organizations that might be interested in hearing your presentation, thus halting “dead end” 4-H presentations.
- Add variety to “get your point across” to increase self satisfaction, leadership development and effectiveness.
- Become aware of the career orientation value of giving 4-H Presentations.
- Help others after you have helped yourself to the benefits of giving 4-H Presentations.
Competition and Contests

One purpose for preparing and giving a 4-H Presentation is to be able to enter a contest. Contests occur at the county and state levels where you can compete against an established criteria or score card.

Entering a contest might not be for everyone, but you could find it rewarding and beneficial if you entered the contest with the proper attitude. As in most contests, you will be judged and awarded a ribbon. If the ribbon color you receive denotes success or failure, then you have gone into the contest with the wrong attitude.

ATTITUDE

“There are a lot of opportunities available in 4-H”, said Hall County 4-H’er Darrin Jones, “and I’ll keep taking advantage of as many as possible because I know that I will eventually be the winner in later life.” Now that’s the proper attitude to have toward contest work.

Just as a purple ribbon does not mean perfection, a white ribbon does not mean failure. There is always room for improvement and the most graceful and eloquent speakers and presenters can still improve.

You must believe in yourself and the 4-H motto, “To Make The Best Better.” And one big factor in contest work is practice, practice, practice.

PRACTICE

Practice sounds like work, and it is! Just as every athlete knows that muscles grow and develop only from hard work and exercise, a 4-H Presentation can only grow and improve by practice. A recent study of Nebraska State Fair presentations revealed there is a direct correlation between hours of preparation and practice and the ribbon placing. Assuming that hours of preparation is a meaningful factor in achievement, higher achievement (ribbons) was awarded to those 4-H’ers who spent more time in preparation.

AGE CATEGORIES

For contest presentations, the following age categories are followed:

- Junior division - 9 to 11 years of age
- Intermediate division - 12 and 13 years of age
- Senior division - 14 to 19 years of age

Some county contests may combine the intermediate and senior divisions. Only intermediate and senior division members selected from a county contest may participate in the state contest held at the Nebraska State Fair.

LENGTH

The presentation should be long enough to clearly and completely tell the story, yet avoid any unnecessary details. County and state level contest presentations should range from 10 to 20 minutes for an individual and 15 to 30 minutes for a team presentation in the intermediate and senior divisions. County level junior division 4-H Presentations could be shorter in length of time.

A judge may penalize a presentation that does not fall within the time constraints.
THE SCORE CARD

Contest presentations will be judged against the following criteria and point system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction - interesting, short, complete.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic - worthwhile and practical.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance - dress appropriate, well-groomed, good posture.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation - voice natural, words distinct, poised, friendly, confident, convincing, well-organized. Originality shown.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter - emphasize important points. Information accurate, complete, usable. Knows the subject.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workmanship - skillfull, good teamwork, if a team. Time, materials and equipment used well. Work and speech coordinated. Work area neat, orderly and well organized, easily viewed by audience.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment - suitable for the presentation. Good charts.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion - stress important points in summary. Shows finished product if appropriate. Definite closing. Questions answered satisfactorily.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is suggested that ribbons be awarded at the contest according to the following points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Ribbon</th>
<th>Denotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95 - 100</td>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 - 94</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 84</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 and less</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Needs Improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE JUDGE

The judge will evaluate your 4-H Presentation according to the score card. At the end of your presentation, the judge will ask you questions to either clarify a point or test your knowledge of the subject. If time permits, the judge might request a brief visit with you.

Next, the judge will award the points and place your 4-H Presentation in a ribbon category. Following the contest, the score card will be returned to you, with comments from the judge. If time is permitted for you to personally visit with the judge, then you would have received verbal comments of your strengths and weaknesses.
Halting "Dead End" Presentations

A recent study of Nebraska State Fair demonstrators revealed that the number of hours preparing 4-H presentations ranged from 10 to over 100 hours with an average of 36 hours. That represents a lot of hard work in preparation and practice and now is not the time to let the contest become the "dead end" for your efforts.

County contest presenters, as well as those of you who go on to participate in the state contest, should look for more opportunities to share your knowledge and skills. There are groups out there who are interested in what you have to show and you will be providing both them and yourself a service by participating.

Those groups will gain from your 4-H Presentation by learning new knowledge and skills and they will gain from seeing your confident leadership style.

You will gain the most. You will be sharing your hard work with others; you will be constantly improving your communication skills; and you will be gaining more confidence with each presentation you give. Since there will be no competitive pressure, your style will be more natural and friendly and you will be performing a community service.

WHO CAN GAIN

First, you have to look at your topic and match it up with potentially interested audiences and groups. The volunteer fire department would probably be interested in a fire prevention program and a homemakers' group would probably welcome a refinishing presentation.

Next, you have to sell your program. Just like you have been selling your ideas, information, knowledge and skills in your 4-H Presentation to others, you now have to sell another group or audience on the idea of watching and hearing your presentation. And, in most cases, this is easy. All you have to do is contact the group or organization and offer to give your presentation. And when they say "Yes", what a great opportunity to benefit yourself and others.

THOSE "OTHERS"

In identifying those groups and organizations that might like to see and hear your 4-H Presentation, start close to home and gradually work your way to community organizations.
Close to home:
1. Family
2. Relatives
3. Neighbors
4. 4-H meeting

In the community:
1. Civic and service groups
   a. Lions Club
   b. Rotary Club
   c. Kiwanis Club
   d. League of Women Voters
   e. Junior Women
   f. Jaycees
   g. and Others
2. Educational and social groups
   a. Extension Clubs
   b. Other 4-H Clubs
   c. Scouts
   d. Toastmaster's
   e. and Others
3. Agricultural groups
   a. Farm Bureau
   b. National Farmers Organization
   c. Farmers Union
   d. and Others
4. Producer and commodity groups
   a. Beef Producers
   b. Pork Producers
   c. Sheep Producers
   d. Corn Growers
   e. Wheat Growers
   f. and Others
5. School groups
   a. Class at school
   b. School teachers
   c. Parent-Teacher Association
   d. Preschool
   e. and Others
6. Others
   a. Extension meetings and workshops
   b. Retirement Village
   c. Nursing Home
   d. City Council
   e. Board of Supervisors
   f. Volunteer Fire Department
   g. Hospital Auxiliary
   h. Hospital patients
   i. Local Law Enforcement Association
   j. Church groups
   k. County Bankers Association
   l. 4-H Leader Training meeting
   m. and Others

Halt that "dead end" contest 4-H Presentation. You've worked too hard to dismantle and forget it. Let others benefit from your hard work.
Adding Variety to “Get Your Point Across”

Creativity is similar to good health or intelligence. You can survive without it, but life is so much richer with it. Today, creativity is no longer a nicety, it’s a necessity. Our survival may very well depend upon our creative abilities to seek solutions to solve problems. And creativity makes our jobs and lives more challenging, fulfilling and rewarding.

Be creative in adding variety to your presentation. Your creative ability might make the difference in “selling” your idea. Following are a few ideas to consider for adding variety to your method of presentation, but feel free to add your own creativity:

SLIDE-TAPE PROGRAM
Either part or all of your presentation might be done by using slides or slides and cassette tape that you have produced.

FILM or VIDEO CASSETTE
Either part or all of your presentation might be done by using a movie camera or video cassette tape that you have produced.

PUPPETS AND MARIONETTES
Puppets might be useful in getting your point across. Hand puppets are easy to use and the doll puppet is an attention getter, especially if you are a ventriloquist. Marionettes might also be useful.

SKITS AND ROLE PLAYING
Skits and role playing are another way to add variety to your 4-H Presentation. Team presenters could give a skit on selecting a career or role play an interview between an employer and employee.

DEMONSTRATOR ASSISTANTS
It is all right to have a demonstrator assistant help you with your 4-H Presentation. For example, you could give an individual presentation on exercise routines and have a demonstrator assistant perform the routine while you narrate the movements.

AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT
Your 4-H Presentation could involve the audience in a bird calling presentation or it might require the help of a member from the audience. Remember, you’ll never buy a piano before first touching the keys and being told how easy it is to learn to play.

The goal of your 4-H Presentation could be to obtain immediate action on the part of the audience. You could consider:
Product Sales
You might create a product and actually offer it for sale to the people in the audience.
Issue and Idea Sales
You might try to convince the audience to take a stand on an issue and have them sign a petition or pledge cards.
Career Enhancement

"Little did I know that my 4-H presentation skills would be so valuable to me today." Many people make this statement as they find themselves in a career which requires skills in gathering facts, organizing information, making a presentation (formal or informal), and then expecting others to change their behavior.

We all have something to sell and we are all involved in selling. In some careers, the leadership skills gained from 4-H Presentations are more widely recognized and used than in other careers. But even a job interview involves skills you have learned in 4-H Presentations, because you will research the employer, organize your resume, personally interview with the employer and expect a change in behavior on the part of the employer by offering you the job. Wow! 4-H Presentation skills are valuable in getting a job!

TEACHING AND INSTRUCTION

Classroom teaching is probably one of the most obvious careers where 4-H Presentation skills are valuable. Whether it be a science teacher demonstrating osmosis or a third grade teacher demonstrating a computer, behavior change in increased understanding and skills is expected on the part of the students.

Teaching and instruction is also used by many volunteers. From a 4-H leader to a Sunday school teacher, all are using skills taught in 4-H Presentations. Volunteer groups in a community might band together to pass or defeat a bond referendum, with the outcome dependent upon the groups’ skill in research, organization and presentation of the data.

Four-H Presentation skills are even used in the home in the teaching and instruction of children and other family members.

SALES AND SELLING

Another career area where 4-H Presentation skills are extremely valuable is in the area of sales and selling, especially product sales. A better mouse trap will never be sold until it is first demonstrated to a client. Computers will line the shelves until they are demonstrated to customers. Insurance will never be sold until the benefits are demonstrated to the buyer.

Issue sales is another career area that involves 4-H Presentation skills. Whether it be a politician selling a public issue or a defense attorney defending a client, both are using their research, organization and presentation abilities to cause a behavior change in others.

HOW ABOUT YOU

What career will you choose? Chances are that 4-H Presentation skills will be valuable. Now is the time to prepare for the future.

Helping Others

By now, you have helped yourself to the many personal benefits of giving 4-H Presentations. Many others have helped you along the way. Now you can help others and will enjoy the satisfying experience of seeing others grow through 4-H Presentations.

AS A 4-H JUNIOR LEADER

You probably have younger 4-H members in your club or county that could use help in getting started in 4-H Presentations. Enroll in the 4-H Junior Leader project and devote your efforts to helping others and developing your helping skills at the same time. This would be a great way to share your knowledge and experience with younger members.

Talk to your 4-H leader and volunteer your help. Obtain a copy of the "Nebraska 4-H Presentations Program — Leader Manual" from your 4-H leader or the Extension office.

With your helping skills from the 4-H Junior Leader project and your knowledge and experience from 4-H Presentations, you’re now ready to start. Best wishes.

One key factor to success that you need to remember in your new role as a teacher is that you are "helping younger members to grow." Do not do everything for them, but rather, help them grow. Help younger members make their posters, do not make them yourself. Help younger members develop an outline, do not make it for them. As a good teacher, you must allow your “students” to experience the steps in preparing a 4-H Presentation.

AS A JUDGE’S HELPER

Another way you can help others is by volunteering as a Judge’s Helper. This is a good way for you to gain experience in judging 4-H Presentations and helping others develop a positive feeling about 4-H Presentations.

Contact your Extension office to see if you can help as a Judge’s Helper. There will probably have a limited number of these positions available. Before the contest starts, you, the judge, and the person in charge of the contest need to discuss the following questions:

1. What will be your specific role?
2. Will you fill out a score sheet?
3. How will you help in determining the ribbon placing?
4. How can you share your comments with the contestant, both written and orally?

Each judge operates differently, so it will be very important for you to discuss these factors with the judge and person in charge of the contest ahead of time.

As a 4-H Junior Leader, you could expand your efforts to more 4-H’ers by volunteering to help your Extension staff members with a county 4-H Presentations workshop or clinic.
In my many years of 4-H work, demonstrating has helped me to become stronger in my ability to relate and express myself to others. I think my ideas out and then organize my thoughts in the most beneficial way to get my ideas across to people. Speaking in front of people has become very easy for me and I owe this success to the 4-H demonstration program.”

Mike Glaubius
Wisner, NE

“It’s just not true. Giving a demo-talk can improve one’s speech and help you organize your thoughts, actions, and equipment. Also, you learn a lot about the subject by researching the topic. Every aspect of the demo-talk from preparation to presentation is a valuable experience.”

Wendy Krause
Alliance, NE

“Giving 4-H demonstrations has developed my skills in communicating with others along with easing the fear of speaking in front of a crowd. Demonstrations have also taught me to organize my thoughts and actions so that my ideas can be easily understood by an audience. In my future career as a beautician I will need these skills to be successful.”

Kristie Ryland
Stapleton, NE

“The 4-H Demonstration Program afforded me an excellent opportunity to develop and practice skills which influenced my decision to pursue an education in Broadcast/Advertising. In college, I have learned that my 10 years of 4-H demonstrating has given me an advantage over students with less ‘hands-on’ experience in researching, writing, and presenting a concept to an audience. Four-H demonstrating unquestionably helped me start my college career on the right foot!”

Gail Steenson
Wolbach, NE

“I have shared my knowledge by giving 4-H demonstrations to both 4-H and non-4-H groups. The experience of organizing and presenting a topic has also helped me in school science fair research competition. I have had a lot of fun, learned a lot, and gained the confidence in myself that I will need as I plan a professional career in photography.”