

4-H Volunteer Leaders' Series

Adding Variety to Club Meetings

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Try at least one of these ideas at your first club meeting in the fall or top these with ideas of your own.

- An opportunity for parents to say they can help –
 - with transportation
 - with checking books
 - with special refreshments
 - by teaching special classes as a project leader

Parent Information

Distribute parent information packets, if you haven't done it already.

- Enrollment cards
- Letter to parents
- Set of definitions –
 - 4-H
 - Extension agents (name them)
 - Volunteer leaders
 - Demonstration
 - Exhibit
 - Progress report
 - Poster
 - Demonstration
 - Illustrated talk
 - Officers (list them)
 - Club meetings
 - County 4-H activities
 - District 4-H activities
 - State 4-H activities
 - 4-H opportunities
 - (list some big ones)

Plan for Variety

Provide officers with guidance to vary the program each month. For instance, on a planning sheet, list learning activities like panels, speakers, contests, workshops, videos, skits, etc., on one side of the page. Let officers list important topics (with suggestions from you, of course) on the other side of the page. Referring to Extension's resources, school resources and personal contacts, help them match a topic to a learning activity.

Skit

Ask one or more teens to write a short skit, introducing new members to 4-H at the first meeting. The skit could be handed out a few days before the meeting; or if it's simple enough, it could just be handed out a few minutes before the meeting. (See the "Celebration" section for a fact sheet about a new member initiation ceremony.)



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Suggestion Box

Take a suggestion box. Say you'll bring it to every meeting for any suggestions anyone wants to make. Leave the suggestions with the vice presidents after each meeting so committees can work on plans for presentation at the next meeting.

Community Involvement

Involve your 4-H club with all the other clubs and organizations in your community by taking part in their activities, using individuals from the adult clubs as resource persons and getting 4-H members opportunities to speak or perform before these groups. When they see 4-H in action, they will become excited about 4-H. By involving the community in your plans and programs, you will gain support for the 4-H program.

Learn by Doing

Remember your purpose. We all learn more by doing than by listening. Take every chance to involve youngsters in active learning. The more interaction with the information, the more they learn. Branch out with volunteer help to actually have short workshops during the meeting where 4-H'ers can make or do something.

Committees

Have lots of busy club committees. Officers and members usually don't have as many between-club meeting responsibilities as they would like. Committees could help plan program segments, service projects or even club award ceremonies.

Slide Series

Let a senior in photography develop a slide series on 4-H activities. Camps, state O-Rama, fairs and individuals working in their 4-H project areas would

make good pictures for the series. Let a senior in public speaking record the narration for the slide series.

Videos

Order videos and/or slides from Extension Media Services through your County Extension Office. Check with your county agent for a listing.

Vary All Variables

There's no excuse for monotonous meetings. Divide programs or meetings into shorter, well-defined segments. Vary the group structure and teaching methods for each segment when possible.

Ways to Increase Interest

Some suggestions to increase interest of members and at the same time increase attendance are:

1. Provide a well-planned program.
2. Accomplish something.
3. Provide for group participation.
4. Allow several people to have a part on the program.
5. Socialize – Have fun and fellowship!
6. Run the meeting on a businesslike basis.
7. Eliminate wasted time of the whole group in (a) discussing minor points and (b) discussing items before adequate information is available. Assign lengthy subjects to committees for further detailed study and ask them to make recommendations.
8. Summarize accomplishments.

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