

# **Volunteer Leader Training Guide**

## **Strategic Marketing**

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### **Introduction**

Marketing and effective communication about the Extension Homemakers Club are critical to the organization's sustainability. If members truly believe EHC is of value to themselves and the communities in which clubs exist, it is important for members to share this information with others to build awareness and support for the program.

### **Target Audience**

- EHC leaders and members

### **Objectives**

- Members will reflect on why they are involved with Extension Homemakers and how that knowledge can be used to market their club or council.
- Members will develop and practice an elevator speech to personally market Extension Homemakers.
- The club or council will identify marketing objectives and develop a plan for reaching those objectives.

### **Main Teaching Points**

- This lesson is divided into three sections. In the section (*Why Is Marketing and Effective Communication Important?*), members will reflect individually and as a group on what attracted them to EHC, why it is important and the need to market and effectively communicate about the program.
- In the second section (*The Elevator Test*), members will develop a personalized elevator speech to articulate what EHC is and why it is important.
- In the third section (*Marketing Strategy Basics*), the club or council will develop a basic marketing plan, including marketing objectives and strategies and actions for achieving their marketing objectives.

## Lesson Materials

- Elevator Test Worksheet
- Marketing Strategy Basics Worksheet
- Flipchart, white board or blank paper
- Markers
- Blank paper for participants
- PowerPoint (optional)
- Evaluation Worksheet

## Suggestions for Teaching

- This lesson is divided into three sections. Because of its length, you may want to divide it into lessons for two different meetings.
  1. Sections *Why Is Marketing and Effective Communication Important?* and *The Elevator Test*.
  2. Section *Marketing Strategy Basics*.
- Review lesson guide.
- Make copies of handouts.
- Conduct an evaluation six months after completing the lesson.

## References

Holland, T. “Successful Marketing Strategies for Nonprofit Organizations,” Powerpoint presentation. Institute for Nonprofit Organizations, University of Georgia.

Sieverdes, C. and E. Hardwick (2002). *Nonprofit Organization Board and Staff Training for Nonprofit and Faith-Based Organizations*. Southern Rural Development Center. Available online at <http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/educurricula/nonprofit/>.

Williamson, D. (2009). “Marketing and Communications in Nonprofit Organizations,” *Essays on Excellences: Lessons From the Georgetown Nonprofit Management Executive Certificate Program*. Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership, Georgetown University.

## Lesson Guide

### Why Is Marketing and Effective Communication Important? (Slides 1-5)

1. Marketing and effective communication about EHC are critical to the organization’s sustainability. If members truly believe EHC is of value to themselves and the communities in which clubs exist, it is worthwhile to invest some level of time and energy in building awareness about the program.

Begin by reviewing the state EHC mission: “The mission of this organization shall be to empower individuals and families to improve their quality of living through continuing education, leadership development, and community service.” Share any county EHC mission or stated purpose as well.

2. Ask members, “Why did you choose to become an Extension Homemaker?” and record responses on a flip chart, white board or sheet of paper. As a group, discuss commonalities and unique responses. Discuss whether these motivations would apply to other potential members in your community.
3. Have every member take a couple minutes to write down their individual responses to the question, “What have been the most important benefits you have gained through EHC?” There should be no talking during this period. Once everyone has finished, go around the room and have each member share one response and record on a flip chart, white board or sheet of paper. If a response is given more than once, record a check mark next to the original response. Continue circling the room in round-robin fashion until all responses have been recorded. As a group, discuss commonalities and unique responses.
4. Finish this section with a discussion of why marketing and effective communication about EHC are important.

### **The Elevator Test** (Slides 6-8)

1. Discuss with members why having an elevator speech is important. In an ideal world, you would have control over when and where you would “market” EHC. In reality, opportunities can arise at any time. Someone might see your picture in the paper at an EHC event, or you’re in the elevator with someone and mention you have to run to a meeting and that person asks, “What exactly is EHC?” Do you have an easy answer on hand? Can you communicate a response in an interesting and compelling way that motivates that individual to learn more? Giving some thought to your “elevator speech” can increase your chances of peaking someone’s interest.
2. Harry Beckwith, a marketing expert and author, suggests beginning this thought process with six basic questions.
  1. WHO – What’s your name?
  2. WHAT – What kind of organization are you?
  3. FOR WHOM – Whom do you serve?
  4. NEED – What pressing social problem do you address?
  5. WHAT’S DIFFERENT – What makes you unique?
  6. SO WHAT – Why should they care?

Hand out copies of the **Elevator Test Worksheet**. Have members complete them individually. Instruct members to reflect back about why they joined EHC and the benefits they have gained from it as they answer each question. Once the six questions have been answered, instruct members to combine their responses into a few straightforward, easy-to-remember sentences. This will become their personal elevator speech, a tool they can use to respond to anyone who asks about EHC – even when they’re not expecting it.

An added benefit of going through the process of developing an elevator speech is that it helps you remember what Extension Homemakers is really about and why you’re involved.

3. Once members have completed a first draft of their elevator speech, have each member exchange with another member for peer review. If time permits, allow members time to revise their work and read it aloud to the club for additional feedback. Feedback should

include discussion of strengths of the work as well as suggestions for improvement. Alternatively, revisions could be assigned as homework.

4. Encourage members to continue to revise, practice and give their elevator speech any time the opportunity presents itself.

### **Marketing Strategy Basics** (Slides 9-14)

1. Developing a comprehensive marketing plan can be an intimidating endeavor. If you're not quite ready to jump in and complete a comprehensive plan, consider the basics:
  - **GOALS** – What are your marketing goals? What do you want to achieve through your marketing effort?
  - **AUDIENCE** – Who do you want to reach? Be specific and prioritize.
  - **MESSAGE** – What message will motivate your target audience(s) to do what you want? Consider the needs and interests of your target audience in developing your message.
  - **VEHICLE** – What's the best way to deliver your message to its target audience? Who will be most effective at delivering that message?
2. The first step in developing a marketing plan is to establish goals. What are you hoping to achieve as a result of your marketing efforts? Do you want to recruit more members? Do you want to solicit financial support for your efforts? Do you want to promote an activity or event you are hosting? Do you want to build support for your county extension office?

Ask members what they think should be the marketing goals of your Extension Homemakers Club or Council and record them on a flip chart, white board or sheet of paper. Discuss the suggestions as a group and determine which goal(s) you should focus on first.

3. Once you have identified your marketing goals, think more specifically about the audience, message and vehicle. Break members into groups of three and assign each group a goal. If you have more groups than goals, assign the same goal to multiple groups. Have each group complete the first three columns (Audience, Message and Vehicle) of the **Marketing Strategy Basics Worksheet** for their goal. Provide each group 10 minutes to complete their worksheet.

If you have multiple groups working on the same goal, combine the groups and have each group share their work with the other groups. On a new worksheet, have the combined group integrate/combine their strategies into a single plan.

If you have groups working on different goals, have each group present their strategies to the other groups and ask for feedback. Revise the strategies on a new worksheet based on feedback provided.

4. Once you have addressed these basic elements, the rest of your plan is mostly logistical. Who's going to do what? When is it going to happen? How will you know if things are working? Using the final **Marketing Strategy Basics Worksheet**, complete the last two columns (Action Steps and Results) as a group.