



Volunteers Recruiting Volunteers for 4-H



Volunteers are important leaders and members of the 4-H team. Without volunteers, 4-H would be unable to offer the 4-H programs, activities, clubs, and contests to so many young people.

What Do Volunteers Do?

Many opportunities exist for volunteers in 4-H. A few examples include the following:

- Serve as a resource person in a certain 4-H project for a club or county.
- Teach short-term programs.
- Help organize events.
- Judge 4-H contests.
- Serve as a leader for a 4-H club.
- Serve on advisory committees.
- Recruit other 4-H volunteers.
- Teach other 4-H volunteers.
- Serve as a resource volunteer.

You can see from this list the possibilities and need for volunteers in 4-H. You are a must!

How Do You Recruit Volunteers?

Before talking with a recruit, you, as a volunteer recruiter, will need to know:

- Why volunteers are needed.
- What skills the volunteer needs.
- What will be expected of the volunteer.
- What help is available to the volunteers.
- How long the volunteer needs to serve.

Ask your 4-H youth agent for a job description that contains this information.

Now that you know what is expected of this volunteer, you have an idea of the type of person needed to work with 4-H members. Start with a list of the people you think are right for this job. 4-H volunteers can be found

in every community. They come in all sizes, shapes, colors, and ages and have many different interests, skills, backgrounds, plans, and needs to serve.

As you make your list of prospects, think of the best person for this particular job at this time. Avoid thinking negatively that this prospect will not have the time. He or she may be waiting to be asked! Call that person and make an appointment for a specific time to talk.

How To Begin

You can use several methods to make it easier for a prospect to say "yes." Read on, then try them yourself.

Friendly and Sincere

The first rule for recruiting 4-H volunteers is to be friendly and sincere. Your own experiences tell you that you are more likely to do something for a person who is friendly.

Your first moments of talking with a prospect are important moments. Is it a convenient time? Is it best to call unannounced or make an appointment? Do you know enough about your prospect to start off a friendly conversation? Sincerity and friendliness are not limited to your introduction but must be a part of the recruitment visit.

Purpose

Quickly get to the purpose of the visit. Right from the beginning, the prospect wants to know why you are visiting; so, as soon as you have given some assurance of your friendliness and sincerity, say why you have come. Tell the prospect why you think he or she is right for the job. Reveal the purpose of the call early in the visit or interview.

Value

Show the value and scope of what you propose. After the prospective volunteer is assured of your friendliness, sincerity, and purpose, emphasize the importance of the

job to be done. The value of what you propose must be proven before a prospective 4-H volunteer gets interested enough to take action.

Challenge

Help your prospect see the personal challenge of being a 4-H volunteer. Worthwhile people do worthwhile things!

Why are people community-minded? It is because they are concerned about others and about some basic principles or ideas that need supporting. Somehow they have caught a vision or personal challenge.

You can be the person to present a personal, interesting challenge to the prospective volunteer.

Benefits

Even though you are friendly and sincere in explaining the purpose of your call and have done a good job pointing out the worthiness and challenge of the proposition, the prospective volunteer wants and needs to know the benefits.

Volunteers want to know how the proposition will help them, their families, and their communities. They will also be interested in knowing about recognition or awards that may be involved.

In recruiting 4-H volunteers, always remember to point out that their participation brings valuable benefits.

Task Possible

At this point, the prospective recruit needs to be assured the task is possible for him or her. To help the prospect feel this assurance:

- Name others who are doing the same job.
- Point out that the task is broken down into "bitesized," well-planned units of effort.
- Give examples of how others have accomplished the job.
- Most important of all, give assurance that training and counseling are provided if needed.

The main thing at this point is to emphasize that the job is possible for the prospective 4-H volunteer who is willing to give the sincere effort required.

What - When

Explain what is expected and when. By this time, the prospective recruit deserves to have the answers to two questions raised by almost every person undertaking an important task:

- What am I supposed to do?
- When am I supposed to do it?

Provide the prospective volunteer with a short description or written guide showing responsibilities. Before recruits are fully committed, they should know what is expected of them and when.

Training

Next, explain the training plan used for new 4-H volunteers. Almost everyone who assumes a new job or takes on an extra responsibility wants to be successful. Assure volunteers that a well-defined program has been designed to help them quickly learn the details of the job.

It is important a prospective volunteer knows a well-defined, new 4-H volunteer training program is available.

Get Commitment

Get a commitment! You have started out right by being friendly and sincere. You have explained the purpose of your call and the worthiness and scope of the proposition. You have revealed the personal challenge and benefits and shown that the job can be achieved by the prospective recruit.

You have also pointed out some experiences of others who are doing the same type of job. You have answered the questions about what is expected and when. The time has arrived to get a commitment from the prospective volunteer to undertake the job.

Responsibilities

If the prospective volunteer is not ready or able to make a final commitment at this point, set a date, preferably 2 to 4 days later, for a personal re-visit. Let the recruit understand that postponing a decision for a few days is to give time to consider the job seriously and not to just postpone saying no. Leave a copy of the job

description with the prospect. When you return, review the job and get the commitment.

Now that your recruit has agreed to undertake the job, review immediate responsibilities carefully.

Thank You

These are welcomed words! Don't fail to use them. A few sincere words of appreciation go a long way toward making volunteers feel glad they accepted the responsibility you asked them to take.

A sincere "thank you" expressed to the volunteer who has accepted the responsibility is reinforcing and encouraging.

Did You Get a No?

Just suppose you didn't get a commitment. Suppose your prospect really could not serve as a volunteer. That's okay, but before you leave this one, ask for recommendations—two or three people this prospect thinks would be right for the job. Compare these recommendations with other names on your list and decide whom to contact next.

Always use those welcomed words—"thank you"—for time, recommendations, and support of the 4-H program. The person who cannot accept this responsibility this time may be able to do something else later. Keep a record of your contacts and make notes about particular skills and interests you discovered during these conversations.

Tips for Recruiting 4-H Volunteers

1. Be friendly and sincere.
2. Explain the purpose of the call.
3. Show the value of the proposition.
4. Reveal the personal challenges.
5. Point out the benefits.
6. Make clear that it is possible.
7. Answer what to do and when to do it.
8. Review the training that is available.
9. Get the commitment.
10. Review immediate responsibilities.
11. Thank the new volunteer.



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