



5 COACH'S CORNER

The Value and Importance of Coaching

Every good team in sports, politics, school and yes in 4-H, has a good coach. They have a leader who knows that performance and commitment go hand in hand.

To build a 4-H team requires a 4-H leader who is willing to bring out the best in performance and commitment with each member.

What does this require of the leader? Knowledge of 4-H? Experience in leading 4-H clubs? A ton of ideas to keep clubs active?

All of these factors are important and will go a long way in building a successful 4-H club. But the key ingredient, is not any one of these or a combination of these factors. Rather, it is your ability to relate to your members in a supportive and a meaningful manner. Another word for these abilities is coaching.

What makes a good coach? Someone who:

- walks her talk
- leads by example
- supports and encourages
- provides alternatives
- is flexible
- gives timely and practical advice
- listens, listens, listens
- models what he wants
- strives for excellence

As a 4-H leader, think of yourself as being the coach of a TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More. You are working together on a wide variety of activities and projects. Everyone is important in the club - we all have roles and responsibilities. You can and do achieve when you receive the commitment of each member. You do more when everyone feels a part of the team.

Let's take a look at each of the nine coaching stems provided above as it relates to effective communication.



COACHING TIPS FOR 4-H LEADERS

Walk Your Talk

Learning is self-discovery, teaching is mutual discovery. Discover together what it takes to be an effective communicator.

Lead by Example

Modelling is an important part of learning. Do you want a club that is on time? Then be on time yourself. Do you want a club that strives to be better communicators? Then work at communicating better. Do you want members giving constructive feedback? Then work on giving concise, thoughtful, insightful feedback.

Support & Encourage

Be proactive. Take the statement "I'll believe it when I see it (reactive) and change it to, "I'll see it when I believe it" (proactive). Put the responsibility on yourself to support members where ever you can. Your belief in them inspires and encourages.

Provide Alternatives

We all learn and change in different ways. There is no one method or way to teach or lead. If we are flexible enough to think and provide alternatives, we provide the opportunity for that same creativity and spontaneity in our members.

Giving Timely Advice

When it's time to open your mouth, make it timely and relevant. Fit in with the moment and build on making it better. Be concise and be thoughtful.

Listen, Listen, Listen

You must actively listen to members. Respond both to their messages and the context of feelings in which the message was given. Once their ideas and feelings have been responded to, then they are ready to listen to you.

Strive for Excellence

You have a standard for your club. Expect it - don't demand it; anticipate it - don't beg for it; get it - don't quite until you do!



How To Give Feedback Part One: Some Scenarios

Scene #1: You've just listened to a speech from a club member. In your opinion, it had a lot of room for improvement. You're concerned about how you are going to encourage this member.

Scene #2: You've just seen a great speaker - she was excellent! Will this frighten the younger members into thinking "I can never be this good".

Scene #3: The speech you just heard was all fluff - not much substance. It was full of opinions with little content. You're concerned because you don't want this approach to spread to other members.

Scene #4: Someone is giving a speech and freezes. They can't remember what they want to say - it has all gone blank for them. You have to coach right now - what do you say to the speaker and to the club?

Scene #5: You're coaching one on one. But you sense a wall - some reluctance and/or passivity. How can you connect?

All of these scenarios require a response. There is no leader who can tell you what to do in every circumstance. Your experiences are contextual - they are unique and tempered with your own set of special and timely circumstances.

But there are some guiding principles to giving effective and useful feedback. Let's examine these feedback principles on the next page.

Part Two: Feedback Principles

Be descriptive

Avoid evaluative comments. Rather describe what you saw and leave the member free to use it or not. Evaluative language can make a member defensive.

Be specific

Get to the point. Avoid general comments. For example, if someone talks too long, you might say; "When you were given the responsibility of preparing this talk, you were advised to keep it to one minute. You spoke for four minutes. It's easier to talk much longer than required. Audiences like brevity. Work on this for next time!"

Two -way Needs

Take into account the needs of the coach and the member. If comments only serve the coach, feedback can become self-serving and destructive. Make it constructive. Work together.



Can Use

Can the member change their behavior? Frustration is only increased when the member is reminded of something over which they have no control. Ensure they can use your advice.

Is Solicited

Feedback is most useful when the member asks a question which those observing can answer. When solicited, feedback can better meet the needs of the learner.

Timely

Feedback is most useful when given as soon after the observed behavior. This depends of course on member's readiness to receive it.

Checked with the Member

One way to check is to ask the member to rephrase the feedback he has received. This helps all to ensure clear communication has taken place.

Checked with Others

Do others share your impressions? Check to see what others think. This is particularly appropriate when a group evaluation is being given.

Coaching Techniques

There are three easy to use coaching techniques to help your members communicate more effectively. Each technique will have its advantages and limitations. When and where you use them will depend on your judgement. This section will outline each technique and how the technique can be implemented.

Technique #1: The Hamburger

A hamburger, to state the obvious, has three parts - the bun, the meat and the extras. The hamburger technique has three parts:

The Bun: Identify one or two things you liked in the member's speech - things the member did well or was willing to take the risk and learn from. This can include comments from all aspects of speaking - the visual, the vocal and the verbal. For example you may comment on his varied pitch, his well-organized thoughts and his good use of gestures to emphasize points made in the speech.

The Meat: Identify one or two things the member can work on for the next speech. Notice the use of the words work on rather than wrong. (We're being descriptive here, not evaluative.) You can phrase this by saying, "If you were to give this speech again, you may wish to consider using some more vocal variety and organizing your speech into three parts."



The Extras: For many hamburger lovers, the best things about the hamburger are the extras you put on it. With the speech, what was the best thing you noticed? Save this for the last. It leaves a very good taste in the member's mouth - a taste that will last and encourage their best for the next time they speak.

Once you've used this technique a few times, you'll find it easy to use. It is particularly helpful at getting your ideas across in an organized and concise manner. It can be very effective with members because it always ends with on a positive and encouraging note.

Technique #2: The Pump

Essentially the process of this technique is very similar to the hamburger, except that you use the member's data, not your own.

Like the hamburger technique, the pump consists of three parts.

The handle: Get a handle on things by asking the member to identify two things they enjoyed about their talk. Don't proceed to the next step until you've two items to discuss. If they give more, focus on the best two.

Pumping: Ask the member for two things they would change in the next speech. Keep the conversation focused on change not excessive negativity. Remember negativity drains energy. It's easy to feel that one does not have the power to change.

The Water: The best thing about pumping is what you get - the water. So ask the member to identify the best thing he/she did today in their speech. They may go back to your initial discussion (the handle) and repeat something from this segment. That's okay, as long as they can view this as the best thing about their speech.

When using the pump, members can often be their own worst critics. They can easily focus on the negative. They may assume that because they feel this way, that all members in the audience must feel this way too. In other words, they can be very evaluative rather than descriptive.

By drawing out the best thing at the end of your discussion you are reaffirming the member's worth and efforts. And you're giving what she needs to work on another speech - the water to grow.

Technique #3: The Target

Your senior members may be at the stage where they want to develop more advanced speaking skills. Their target is to work on one thing at a time to make sure they get better at it before moving on to another speaking skill.

When coaching with this technique, you look at one or two specific items. It may be their organizational skills in speech making. It may be that they want to develop their hand and facial gestures. Whatever it is, focus on that skill and avoid getting distracted with other skills. The major task here is for the coach to keep the member on target.



Your coaching is more proactive here. For example, you may find yourself coaching both during the speech and after it.

Session One: Setting the Goal

After hearing the first speech, review what you and the member observed and felt. Identify one skill the member can work on for the next speech. If there are several skills the member wants to work on, then prioritize all skills. Determine the most important skill to work on now. You can cover the other skills in future coaching sessions.

Spend the remainder of time in session one with how you and the member will work on this most important skill. Perhaps the member wants to work on eye contact. Agree how you will do this for the next speech, such as using a paper audience (activity 1 in section 4), some coaching signals, etc.

Session Two: Achieving the Goal

After hearing the next speech, meet with the member to discuss how well they did in achieving the one skill they identified in the first coaching session. For example, did they develop better eye contact?

You can take one of two paths here: continue on with the same skill for more work or advance to the next speaking skill the member wants to develop. In either case, conclude the session with a target and how to achieve it.

Future sessions depend upon the goals you and the speaker set.



SUMMARY TABLE OF THREE COACHING TECHNIQUES

Technique	Orientation	Advantages and Disadvantages
Hamburger	Leader	<p>ADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good method to use with novice speakers. Can be highly supportive. • You model good coaching - you are providing valued information to the member. • You restrict negative comments because you are the one giving most of the feedback. • Efficient use of time. <p>DISADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback is limited to your data and impressions. • Members can get too passive with this technique.
The Pump	Member	<p>ADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good method to use with more experienced members because they have more speaking experience to draw upon. • You're always dealing with the members' data and impressions - they will value what they say. • You're teaching self-coaching skills by drawing out member ideas and expanding upon them. <p>DISADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member doesn't benefit from your insight. • This method takes time to draw the member out.
The Target	Growth	<p>ADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very useful for senior members who are looking for more challenge. • Especially appropriate for preparation with speech competitions. • Easily monitored with the setting of specific goals. <p>DISADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a committed member to stay with the targets. • Can be time consuming.



CONCLUDING COMMENTS ON COACHING

Coaching Coaches

You may be asking where do I find all the time to do this kind of coaching? As a 4-H leader my hands are full at the meetings and I don't have a lot of extra time available between meetings. So when do I do it?

There is no assumption that you will do all the coaching. In fact you may coach the coaches. The senior members of your club can learn a great deal about speaking just from the responsibility of coaching younger members. The Hamburger and The Pump techniques are easily grasped and implemented by senior members. The Target technique is the only one where you may find yourself involved. Some clubs have members in the Senior Opportunities Project work with younger members all through the year.

Believing is Seeing

We've talked about the four A's as the strategic design in this manual. The fourth A is 'action'. Action occurs when you see changes in the behavior of the members. With regard to this program, action occurs when you see members communicating more effectively.

One of the most powerful ways to get action is coaching. Why? Because coaching combines a number of motivational techniques, including: accountability, modelling, mentoring, and personal care.

As you coach, you make the member accountable to you for ongoing improvement. You provide a model of what they can aspire to. You give advice and suggestions that can make you a great mentor. Your personal care can make a world of difference to each member.

Show them how to hit home runs as effective communicators. Start with the ball nearby and work until they're delivering home runs in speaking.

Believing is seeing! Your coaching will make all the difference.



6 APPENDICES

Appendix one: Bibliography

Resources listed are for the use and benefit of 4-H leaders. They will help you develop your speaking skills.

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