

Designing the Information/ General Organizational Meeting



Those who should attend this meeting are:

- Families interested in being part of 4-H
- Potential volunteers or resource persons
- 4-H staff
- 4-H Awareness Team members

Consider the following things when you design an Information/General Organizational Meeting.

1. Allow time for formal introductions. Have everyone share their reasons for attending the meeting. 4-H staff members should go first to break the ice. Use an icebreaker activity. (See “Icebreakers” in Appendix A.)
2. Provide some background information about Michigan State University and Michigan State University Extension (MSUE), and explain how Michigan 4-H Youth Development is a part of the university.
3. Provide a good introduction to Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs, with an explanation of our mission, goals and guiding principles.
4. Provide a current overview of 4-H in the county. Give examples of current programs, and emphasize programming that is (or is not) going on in the citizens’ immediate area. Provide handouts which include a calendar of 4-H events (local, regional, state) and a list of 4-H workshops offered (local, regional, state). It may be beneficial to have current members and leaders help with this part.
5. Describe or highlight what the community can gain from starting a 4-H club. Identify the local needs of young people and illustrate the benefits of 4-H for youths and adults. You may want to design a brainstorming exercise around this. All meeting participants would have the chance to contribute their ideas and as a result, feel some sense of ownership for 4-H in their community. (This is a major goal.) Get a tentative commitment from adults to be involved in club leadership roles. Distribute MSUE Volunteer Selection Process forms for potential volunteers. (Visit web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/cwbvssp.html to download the forms.)
6. Provide time to explore the roles and responsibilities of the different people involved in 4-H: members, parents, leaders, the general community and 4-H staff.
7. Explain how a club functions and describe the chronological club events of a typical year.
8. Facilitate a group discussion that addresses the key question, “Do we, the people, want to start 4-H in this community?” Consider breaking into smaller groups of five or six to brainstorm about the following questions:
 - Who are potential leaders?
 - What are the best ways to publicize a 4-H club that is forming?
 - What local places could be used for club meetings?
 - How can and will the community support the club?
9. Allow time to explain the next steps in starting a 4-H club. In particular, talk about the Volunteer 4-H Club Leader Orientation and Planning Meeting. Ask the people in the group who are interested in possible leadership roles to attend this meeting.
10. Set a date for the next meeting (the Volunteer 4-H Club Leader Orientation and Planning Meeting):
 - Give everyone an opportunity to sign up to attend the next meeting. Get names, addresses, phone numbers and project interests. Members will join 4-H and sign up for projects at the Initial 4-H Club Meeting.
 - Arrange for public service announcements on the radio, school announcements and newspaper articles. Ask for a volunteer to help you publicize the Initial 4-H Club Meeting.
 - By the next meeting, a few project leaders and the club’s administrative leader should be identified. After the Initial 4-H Club Meeting, more project leaders will probably need to be identified.
11. Ask those present to bring a friend to the Initial Club Meeting (a potential member or volunteer).
12. Have time for refreshments and an activity so the members can socialize and get better acquainted. Display 4-H materials and sample projects.
13. Be sure to allow time for questions through out the meeting.

Note: Don’t leave this meeting without getting all interested young people and adults to fill out forms (that is, enrollment forms, leader forms, 4-H youth interest survey, parent interest finder and club activity checklist). You will find some of these forms following the sample agenda on the next page.

Information/General Organizational Meeting



Sample Agenda

7 - 7:10 p.m.	Introductions
7:10 - 7:35	Overview of Michigan 4-H Youth Development Programs
7:35 - 7:45	Current 4-H Youth Programming
7:45 - 8	Brainstorming – What Can the Community Gain From 4-H?
8 - 8:15	4-H Roles and Responsibilities
8:15 - 8:30	Group Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Starting 4-H in Our Community – Do We Want to Do This?
8:30 - 8:45	What's Next <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Volunteer Orientation and Planning Meeting• Club Organizational Meeting• Other Upcoming Meetings• How Do We Get There?
8:45 - 9	Wrap-Up and Refreshments

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4-H Youth Interest Survey

4-H is an organization that can help you learn about things that interest you in fun and exciting ways. It also gives you the opportunity to make friends and learn to work with others.

To help us plan for 4-H clubs in your neighborhood, we need your ideas. Please check the activities listed below that you would be interested in learning in a 4-H club. Select up to four areas.

Animals – list them:

Clowning

Collecting

Computers

Other (specify): _____

Conservation

Cooking and nutrition

Crafts

Drawing

Engine repair

Gardening

Household pets

Life in other countries

Photography

Rocket building



Would you like to become a 4-H member?

Yes

No

Could you suggest someone to help you learn one of the areas listed above?

Name of person _____

Area _____

List your hobbies _____

Name _____

Birth date _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email address: _____

School _____

Name of parent(s) _____

Parent Interest Finder

4-H is a family program and you play an important role in helping 4-H learning take place. You are encouraged to share your talents and interests so the best possible program can be developed for your child. Please check the things you are willing to do to provide learning opportunities for 4-H members.



At Home

- I will encourage my son or daughter to start and complete projects on time. I will take an active interest in him or her and encourage pride in his or her achievements.
- I will read the county 4-H newsletter and discuss opportunities with my child.
- I will keep a current calendar of 4-H meetings and events.
- I will urge my child to attend all meetings and to contribute to them.
- I will enable my child to meet financial responsibilities in monthly dues, project costs, etc.

For the Club

- I will lend my kitchen, backyard, living room, garage or basement for an occasional meeting.
- I will help provide light refreshments for a 4-H meeting.
- I will share a special interest or hobby with the group. My interest is _____

- I will help with transportation to 4-H meetings.
- I will help telephone parents for last-minute announcements.
- I will serve in the following leadership positions:
 - 4-H club leader
 - Assistant club leader for program coordination (e.g., program planning, working with officers, etc.)
 - Help with fund-raising
 - Help with record-keeping
- Arrange a special trip or activity
- Act as chaperone
- Help with music or skits
- Camping activity leader (i.e., coordinate camping and outdoor activities)

- I would like to share my skills in the following projects:

<input type="checkbox"/> Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> Clowning	<input type="checkbox"/> Collecting	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications
<input type="checkbox"/> Computers	<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooking, nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/> Crafts <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical	<input type="checkbox"/> Engine repair	<input type="checkbox"/> Games	<input type="checkbox"/> Gardening <input type="checkbox"/> Genealogy
<input type="checkbox"/> Health & Fitness	<input type="checkbox"/> History	<input type="checkbox"/> Household pets	<input type="checkbox"/> Language
<input type="checkbox"/> Life in other countries		<input type="checkbox"/> Model building	<input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Organization
<input type="checkbox"/> Performing arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Photography	<input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking	<input type="checkbox"/> Rocket building
<input type="checkbox"/> Science and nature		<input type="checkbox"/> Sewing	<input type="checkbox"/> Small engine repair
<input type="checkbox"/> Sports, martial arts		<input type="checkbox"/> Storytelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Time management
<input type="checkbox"/> Travel or international experience		<input type="checkbox"/> Visual arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____			

It is easiest for me to give my time (indicate time of day and day of week): _____

The best time to call me is: _____

Name _____ Address _____

Telephone _____ Email address _____

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Club Activity Checklist

Please select the five top club events or activities in which you would like our club to participate.

Educational Topics, Activities and Events

Check the 4-H educational topics, activities and events you're interested in:

- Attend or sponsor a natural resources and environmental education program.
- Watch or make films or videos.
- Attend or sponsor project-related workshops.
- Work to increase members' self-esteem.
- Work to prevent substance abuse.
- Learn or improve communication skills.
- Gather tips and ideas for public speaking and demonstrations.
- Make meetings fun and useful.
- Increase leadership skills.
- Set goals.
- Promote 4-H Exploration Days to our members.
- Learn more about time management.
- Learn more about coping with stress.
- Learn parliamentary procedure.
- Attend or sponsor a career night.
- Ask teen leaders to teach a project lesson.
- Learn more about coping with peer pressure.
- Explore, and possibly participate in, the county and state 4-H awards program.
- Learn about money management.
- Learn about dating, marriage and parenting.
- Invite a county commissioner or township official to visit our club.
- Attend or sponsor a babysitting workshop.
- Learn more about veterinary science.
- Learn more about plant science and horticulture.
- Organize a Challenge or wilderness survival outing.
- Other _____
- Other _____

Fun Activities or Events

Check the fun 4-H activities and events you're interested in:

- Bowling
- Building a club float for a parade
- Canoe trip
- Christmas party or caroling
- Club talent night
- Cookout
- Costume party
- Dance
- Family camping trip
- Family picnic or potluck
- Halloween party
- Hay ride
- Ice skating or roller skating
- Overnight swim or gym party
- "Parents are special" night
- Softball day
- Swim party
- T-Shirt night
- Winter party (including skating, sledding and more)

Community Service Projects

Check the 4-H community service projects you're interested in:

- Activity day with preschool group
- Help organize another 4-H club
- Make cookies or cupcakes for 4-H volunteers and supporters
- Park clean-up and beautification project
- Project with senior citizens
- Roadside clean-up
- Sponsor citizenship day



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Trips and Tours

Check the 4-H trip and tour opportunities you're interested in:

- Visit Cedar Point.
- Visit the Detroit Art Institute.
- Attend a Detroit Tigers or local minor league or college baseball game.
- Visit Frankenmuth.
- Attend a Detroit Lions or college football game.
- Visit Mackinac Island.
- Visit the Michigan State University Horticultural Gardens and Michigan 4-H Children's Garden.
- Take a mystery trip.
- Attend a Detroit Pistons, Detroit Shock or college basketball game.
- Visit a zoo.
- Other _____
- Other _____

Fund-Raising

Check the 4-H club or group fund-raising opportunities you're interested in:

- Bake sale
- Candy sale
- Car wash
- Club dues
- Dinners (such as pancake and spaghetti)
- Easter egg kits
- 4-H cookbook sale
- Garage or rummage sale

- Light bulb sale
- Paper drive
- Returnable bottle and can collection
- Seed or plant sale
- Submarine sandwich sale
- Thermometer sale
- Other _____
- Other _____

What Should We Do With the Money We Raise?

Check the options for using the money we raise in our 4-H club or group that you support:

- Pay for a club or group trip or outing.
- Make a donation to our county or state 4-H program.
- Provide sponsorships for club or group members to attend events and activities such as camps, workshops and 4-H Exploration Days.
- Provide club awards such as officer pins and member, leader or parent of the year.
- Sponsor a salute to club members who are high school seniors.
- Other _____



Designing the Volunteer 4-H Club Leader Orientation and Planning Meeting

Consider the following things when you design a Volunteer Orientation and Planning Meeting.

1. Give a presentation on the 4-H philosophy. Use a flip chart, slide show and graphics for an interesting presentation. Explain the relationship of the United States Department of Agriculture, Michigan State University and MSUE with a heavy emphasis on their educational function. Include information on the experiential learning process. (See “Appendix C: Working Effectively with Youth.”)
2. Design job descriptions for the various volunteer roles. Distribute these at the meeting. (See information about these roles “Section V: Roles People Play.”)
3. Review the Volunteer Selection Process and remind participants that the process needs to be completed before they start working with a 4-H club.
4. Prepare materials for leaders to use when they plan their first club meeting. (See “Designing the Initial 4-H Club Meeting,” beginning on page A-9.)
5. Provide information on parental involvement in 4-H. Discuss ways to involve parents. (See information on the role of parents in “Section V: Roles People Play.”)
6. Discuss any county 4-H guidelines and regulations with which leaders should be familiar. Handouts would be helpful.
7. In the “Working With Youth” session (see sample agenda on next page), do a brief activity on age-appropriate learning activities. (See “Designing Age-Appropriate Learning Experiences” in “Appendix C: Working Effectively with Youth.”)
8. Discuss state 4-H guidelines regarding the use of the 4-H name and emblem, emergency procedures, club insurance and financial responsibilities (including issues such as the Employee Identification Number [EIN]) and any other pertinent state-level information). Handouts would be helpful.
9. Provide a list of leader training opportunities such as the Kettunen Center booklet or a 4-H workshop calendar.

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Volunteer 4-H Club Leader Orientation and Planning Meeting

Sample Agenda



7 - 7:10 p.m.	Welcome and Introductions
7:10 - 7:20	4-H . . . What's It All About? Experiential Learning Process
7:20 - 7:30	Who Does What? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-H Creed for Leaders• Roles and responsibilities of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Administrative community club leader(s)▶ Project leaders▶ Parents▶ Teens and members▶ Extension staff
7:30 - 7:40	Review of Volunteer Selection Process
7:40 - 7:50	The County Program
7:50 - 8	Leader Training and Workshops
8 - 8:45	Working with Youth <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding Age-Appropriate Learning Activities• Designing the First Club Meeting• Other MSU Extension Resources to Help
8:45 - 9	Refreshments

Designing the Initial 4-H Club Meeting



Those who should attend this meeting are:

- Young people interested in joining the 4-H club
- Parents of interested youth
- Potential volunteer leaders
- Extension staff person and/or volunteer middle manager

Consider the following things when you design an initial 4-H club Meeting.

1. The format used at the first meeting should be an example for future meetings. (See “How a Typical 4-H Club Meeting is Split,” “Meeting Planning Tips,” “Points to Look for in a Good 4-H Meeting” and “Tips and Tools for Planning Your Club Year” on pages A-11 to A-19.)
2. Involve volunteers as much as possible in the design and implementation of this meeting.
3. As participants arrive, conduct an activity that everyone can enjoy. Ask a volunteer who knows many of the participants to be responsible for this activity. A welcoming, familiar face will help make everyone feel more at home when they arrive at the meeting. Building group unity and bonding are very important to the development of a 4-H club.
4. As the meeting begins, allow time for everyone to introduce themselves. State the purpose of the meeting and share what 4-H has to offer youths and adults in the community. It would be great if a seasoned volunteer from a nearby club could help with this part of the program.
5. Plan to talk about the 4-H pledge, what it stands for and why it is important. Each person should be given a copy of the pledge. Say the pledge at the beginning of the meeting and have it posted so everyone can read it.
6. Direct your remarks to the young people so they realize that this is their club. Explain the importance of volunteer leaders and the vital role that parents also play in a successful 4-H club. A handout would help the young people share this message with parents who couldn't attend the meeting.
7. Some clubs may choose to hold the election of officers at the second or third meeting. If that happens, the 4-H club leader conducts meetings until officers are elected. Club officers are usually elected each year near the beginning of the 4-H program year. However, officers may be placed in office through rotation, appointment, or any other similar means that has been approved by the club's county Michigan State University Extension 4-H staff.
8. If this is a community club, allow each of the leaders a few minutes to explain his or her project and the cost involved. If leaders are new, they may need help, guidance and reassurance in making this presentation. It may be necessary to spend time with each leader prior to the meeting.
9. Direct any club questions to the members so they begin to make decisions about the club name, frequency of meetings, election of officers and other club details. Be prepared to explain the various roles of officers and members, and their importance to the club.
10. Close the meeting only after decisions about the next meeting and some future plans have been made. Members should take leadership roles with the guidance of adult volunteers.
11. Ask a volunteer to be responsible for refreshments.

Initial 4-H Club Meeting



Sample Agenda

7 - 7:15 p.m.	Introductory Activity
7:15 - 7:20	Call to Order
7:20 - 7:25	Pledges <ul style="list-style-type: none">• American and 4-H
7:25 - 7:35	Welcome and Explanation of the Evening
7:35 - 7:45	Role of a 4-H Club
7:45 - 8:05	Determine Club Meeting Schedule
8:05 - 8:15	Discussion About Club Name
8:15 - 8:25	Project Overviews by Leaders
8:25 - 8:35	Determine the Selection Process for Officers (may want to delay until the second or third meeting, if youth are just getting acquainted)
8:35 - 8:45	Group Activity
8:45 - 9	Refreshments

How a Typical 4-H Club Meeting Is Split

The diagram below shows how a typical 4-H club meeting is divided between fun, business and learning. (Not every meeting needs to include all three parts or fit into the time frames. Strive to have all parts over the year.)



* We have tried and failed to find the copyright owner of this diagram. If you know who owns the copyright, please contact Michigan 4-H Youth Development at Michigan State University.

Meeting Planning Tips



The role of administrative or project leader of a 4-H group can be intimidating. Your roles as both the leader of the group and the facilitator of the meeting can be difficult to balance.

This section provides for planning successful meetings for your group. Keep in mind that 4-H is a youth development organization. Providing your members with opportunities to plan and conduct meetings, with support from caring adults, is your primary responsibility as a volunteer leader.

If you are an administrative leader, you can reinforce this idea with the project leaders who meet with members on a regular basis. If you're a project leader, think about how you can help your members build their leadership, communication, decision-making and team-building skills through planning and conducting group meetings during the coming year. Involving parents is also a good way to manage all of the activities of a 4-H group. Use the ideas in this section to help you be a better 4-H club leader.

Division of Responsibility and Expectations

Clear expectations of members, leaders, parents and officers can help your group function more effectively during the coming year. Consider having members, parents and officers complete the following checklist at the beginning of the year. The list suggests the kinds of measurable criteria that indicate a strong 4-H group. Writing these kinds of club goals lets you measure progress by counting what is occurring. Having written goals also makes it everyone's responsibility to work toward a better and stronger 4-H experience. Use this list to guide a discussion with your members about group expectations and to involve all your club members in decisions about how the club will operate.

Our 4-H Club Will Be Stronger If Each Member

- Attends and participates in more than half of our business meetings each year.
- Receives printed project materials for each project in which they are enrolled.
- Re-enrolls the following year.

- Completes at least two projects each year.
- Participates in at least one county or state event each year.
- Has a chance to participate in project group meetings for each project in which enrolled.
- Has input into the process of planning the annual club program.
- Can recognize life skills and choose experiences that foster development of life skills.
- Participates in at least six hours of planned learning activities each year.
- Participates in or leads planned recreation on two occasions each year.

Our 4-H Club Will Be Stronger If Each Parent or Parent Couple

- Is helped to understand the parent's role in supporting project work by members at home.
- Receives regular communications about the club program and activities.
- Is invited each year to accept a helper or leadership role in the club.

- Receives a personal invitation to attend and participates in at least one meeting each year.
- Is helped to understand the mission of 4-H and of Michigan State University Extension, and is familiar with the concepts of life skills and youth asset development.
- Has input into the process of planning the annual club program.

Our 4-H Club Will Be Stronger If Each Officer or Teen Leader

- Sets achievable goals for himself or herself each year.
- Receives guidance in planning for the project or role he or she has accepted.
- Has an experience in which he or she can grow in leadership at a county, state or national event.
- Gives leadership to one or more segments of a club program.
- Meets with a group of other youth leaders for learning and friendship.

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- Has a sense of belonging to the leadership team and is committed to the 4-H program.
- Understands the mission of 4-H and MSU Extension.
- Has received printed resources for the job he or she has accepted.
- Has another experienced leader to turn to for help if needed.
- Has clearly identified opportunities for personal growth as part of the commitment to club leadership.
- Can clearly articulate 4-H life skills and youth assets and helps members plan to achieve these.
- Has received training for the job he or she has accepted.
- Has opportunities to assume increasingly responsible positions with increasing leadership experience.
- Has a clearly identified role (job description) with a written agreement (including clearly defined goals) that is renegotiable each year.

Our 4-H Club Will Be Stronger If Our Club

- Holds at least six meetings of the full club each year.
- Conducts a program planning process in which all members and families are involved.
- Plans a community service activity or project each year.
- Has a program plan for the year with clearly stated, measurable goals for the year and for each meeting.
- Works with members to assure that 80 percent of the projects for which members enroll are completed each year.
- Encourages members to enroll in more advanced phases of projects they have already completed.
- Maintains enrollment next year at the same or higher level.
- Has at least 80 percent of all members attend one county, state or national event each year.

- Involves a range of resource persons from the community in presenting the club program.
- Cooperates with other youth groups as appropriate.
- Provides training for parents to enable them to support project work at home.
- Includes members who are from diverse ethnic, racial and economic backgrounds, and who have different disabilities and abilities.
- Invites all members and families to help evaluate meetings in which they participate and to decide the degree to which the club has met its goals for the year.
- Maintains a ratio of one identified and committed adult leader for each five members enrolled.
- Helps start a new 4-H club.



Tools for Building Strong Clubs

Activities and recreation are tools that can strengthen an already energetic program or revitalize one that is lagging. VanWinkle, Davis, Skubinna and Larwood (2002) define recreation as “games, skits, parties, songs, camping, hikes and refreshments.” They suggest that recreation – which can occur at any time – is important because it allows participants to (a) feel a sense of belonging, (b) become acquainted, (c) practice cooperation, (d) develop leadership skills and (e) release excess energy. In particular, they

suggest using the following ideas for helping to build a strong 4-H club:

- Educational kits
- Exchanges
- Games (educational games and icebreakers)
- Judging contests
- Outside speakers
- Presentations
- Record-keeping
- Role playing
- Skillathons
- Tours and field trips

The information that follows lists these activities, defines them,

provides their purpose, and offers examples and other pertinent material. It can help your group think about how to make the coming year the best one yet! A checklist of possible activities in which your group might wish to participate appears on

s A-5–A-6. Consider making copies of the checklist so all of your members can complete one.

Group-Building Ideas for 4-H Club and Group Meetings is an excellent resource for volunteers who

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are looking for specific ideas for club activities. It's available on the Michigan 4-H Web site at web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/. You can find out more about recreation, camping and games at your local library or bookstore and on the Internet.

Educational Games

- Educational games are fun activities that teach the participants a skill, concept or content.
- They are designed to help participants learn while having fun and to help participants develop trust and teamwork. Educational games provide healthy, monitored learning opportunities.

Examples:

Quiz bowls, television game shows (for example, Jeopardy, Password), drawing games, and sports such as baseball are educational. (Some sports may need to be adapted to include an educational component.)

Things to Consider:

Before starting the game:

- Make sure that the knowledge and experience level of the participants is equal to that of the game.
- Gather all of the materials necessary for the game.
- Give complete instructions and rules.
- Create an environment that is physically and emotionally safe.
- Remind the participants that education is the primary goal.
- Stage a "dry run" of the game so that the members can demonstrate their understanding of how to play.

During the game:

- Be enthusiastic about it.
- Allow other participants to help

a player who does not know the answer to a question.

- If possible, be part of the group.
- Quit playing while the participants are still having fun.

After the game:

- Encourage all of the players.
- Instead of keeping score and rewarding the winner, give prizes for all participants.
- Reinforce the participants' learning by using the information in the game throughout the meeting.

Educational Kits

- An educational kit is a group of items (such as laminated posters and supplies for running hands-on activities) collected in a container and used to teach a particular subject matter.
- They are designed to provide interactive, entertaining learning materials for specific project areas.

Examples:

Educational kits can be found in the following areas: animal science, horticulture, clothing and arts and crafts.

Things to Consider:

It may be possible to borrow, buy or build a kit related to project areas in which your 4-H'ers are interested. Many county MSU Extension offices have animal science education kits available on loan. You can also build a kit from materials you or your 4-H'ers already own. For example, homemade kits could contain magazine photos of animal breeds or plant species, posters of the parts of a particular animal species, photos or actual samples of tack, equipment and supplies related to the project area, and printed labels for everything.

After you or your 4-H'ers have put together a kit, have the group play games such as pulling the name cards out of a bag and placing them next to the appropriate picture, pulling a photo out of the bag and matching it with the appropriate label, racing to make correct identifications or – after studying a particular kind of decoration – making it.

Exchanges

- Exchanges involve individuals or groups in visiting or hosting a 4-H'er or group of 4-H'ers from a different club, county, state or country. Exchanges generally vary in length from a few days to a few weeks, with a few exchange programs lasting six months or a year.
- Exchanges are a fun way to learn about different ways of life, make new friends, learn and teach about one's own heritage, develop coping skills in unfamiliar situations, and develop leadership and communication skills.

Examples:

Exchanges can be cross-county or interstate. Michigan 4-H participates in international exchanges with countries such as Australia, Belize, Costa Rica, Germany, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Norway and Poland.

Things to Consider:

- For more information contact your county MSU Extension 4-H staff.
- For information on organizing local or interstate 4-H exchanges, see *A Guide to 4-H Youth County Exchange Programs*, which is available from your county MSU Extension office and on the Michigan 4-H Web site at web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/. For information on international

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4-H exchanges, visit web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/interex.html.

Icebreakers

- An icebreaker is a brief (5- to 15-minute), fun, energetic, interactive activity used at the beginning of a meeting or event.
- It is designed to help participants become acquainted, develop social skills and learn what they have in common. Icebreakers provide energetic fun that focuses the group on the present and on the subject or task at hand.

Examples:

Examples of icebreakers can be found in Appendix A and in *Group-Building Ideas for 4-H Club and Group Meetings* on the Michigan 4-H Web site at web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/

Things to Consider:

Before starting the icebreaker:

- Make sure that the developmental level of the participants is equal to the requirements of the icebreaker.
- Gather all of the materials necessary for the game.
- Give complete instructions and rules.
- Create an environment that is physically and emotionally safe.
- Stage a “dry run” of the icebreaker so that the members can demonstrate their understanding of how to play.

During the icebreaker:

- Be enthusiastic about it.
- If possible, be part of the group.
- Quit playing while the participants are still having fun.

Judging Contests

- Judging contests are competitions in which items or projects

are compared, evaluated and ranked in order of quality or merit, after which the judge’s decision is explained.

- They are designed to help members develop important decision-making skills (such as observing carefully, evaluating their own work, recognizing quality) and communication skills (such as expressing themselves clearly and demonstrating recognition to others). Leaders can use judging contests as a means of determining their members’ current knowledge and skill levels.

Examples:

Common examples of judging contests include livestock, horse, crops, dairy and foods judging.

Things to Consider:

When planning a judging contest for 4-H’ers who have never participated in such an event, consider the following suggestions to help develop an informal approach. Have your members:

- Examine one item and then discuss its strengths and desired improvements.
- Visualize an ideal item and discuss its strengths and compare it to the example.
- Compare and rank two or more items, then explain the decision.

Before holding a judging contest, be sure to clearly explain:

- Judging criteria.
- Important judging steps (such as observation, comparison, decision and explanation).

Outside Speakers

- An outside expert can be invited to make a presentation to your group.
- This is a great way to increase

the participants’ subject area knowledge.

Examples:

Local business people, artists and craftspeople, individuals with unique skills, or those who have traveled to other countries or unusual places are good examples of outside speakers.

Things to Consider:

When bringing in an outside speaker, it is important to prepare the speaker and the audience. Make sure your speaker knows the age of the audience, where the program will be held and how much time has been planned for his/her presentation. Find out if they need any special equipment or room arrangements for their program. Before your speaker comes to your meeting, spend time with your members preparing questions they might ask. This will keep the youth more involved in the conversation and make the program more enjoyable for the presenter and participants.

Presentations

- Presentations commonly involve a member doing a demonstration (showing how to do or make something), giving an illustrated talk (using audiovisual aids) or giving a speech (using no aids or equipment).
- They are a great way to help members to practice and develop public-speaking, research and organizational skills. Clubs can use presentations to teach subject matter or share personal information, talents and interests.

Examples:

Presentations can be done using interviews, team presentations, introductions, grab-bag games (in which the presenter pulls an item

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out of the bag and describes it), and demonstration kits (a bag containing items related to a specific topic to be described).

Things to Consider:

The Communications Toolkit: Fun Skill-Building Activities to Do With Kids (4H1560) by Michigan 4-H Youth Development is an excellent resource to support this activity. For more information on this publication, visit web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/toolkit.html.

Record-Keeping

- Record-keeping is an important activity for any 4-H club. It involves members keeping records about their projects or records about the group's activities.
- Members learn neatness, how to follow directions, and organizational skills (especially sorting out important from unimportant information). Keeping records in 4-H gives members practice for record-keeping later in life. Records can show profit or loss in projects in which financial information is important. Carefully kept written records are more reliable than human memories.

Examples:

Examples of records include live-stock record books, journals, secretary's minutes and treasurer's records.

Things to Consider:

The Member's Personal 4-H Record Book (4H1192) is available through your county MSU Extension office and on the Michigan 4-H Web site at web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/. Encourage your members to use this publication regularly.

Before introducing record-keeping:

- Be positive and enthusiastic and

- help your members see the importance of keeping records.
- Let parents know the importance of their children's 4-H project records and what they, as parents, can do to encourage their children's record-keeping efforts.
- Thoroughly explain how to keep records and use good examples to illustrate this.

As the record keeping is underway:

- Consistently devote time during your meetings for record-keeping or have special record-keeping meetings.
- Remember that each member's records are going to be different, just as their interests, personalities and learning speeds vary. If you have a member or members who have a disability that makes one type of record-keeping difficult, explore other record-keeping alternatives.
- Keep record-keeping as simple and easy as possible.
- Show interest in each member's records.
- Give members help if needed and consider inviting older 4-H'ers – who take pride in their record-keeping – to work with younger members.

Role Playing

- Role playing involves setting up a realistic scenario and having participants play the roles of characters in the scenario.
- This helps young people develop a feel for real situations they may face and learn how to plan for emergencies. It can also help volunteer leaders learn about their members' decision-making skills.

Examples:

Some possible role-playing scenarios could be:

1) A teen leader is asked to step in for a project leader who is ill and who was going to demonstrate a complex project of which the teen leader has some knowledge. 2) The process a first-time exhibitor goes through to prepare for the county fair. 3) What a member should do if he or she comes home to an empty house and finds an animal showing unfamiliar symptoms.

Things to Consider:

There are two ways to set up a scenario.

1. Write the scenarios ahead of time. Gather the necessary supplies. Give the players time to read the scenario, look at the supplies and decide how to deal with the scenario. Then give them 10 minutes to play out the scenario in their character.
2. At the meeting before the role playing is to take place, tell the members to bring scenarios for role playing and the supplies needed for the scenarios to the next meeting. At the role playing meeting, have the members exchange scenarios so that no one is role playing a scenario he or she wrote.

Before the start of the role playing:

- Make sure that the participants have the level of knowledge they will need to act out their roles.
- Gather all of the materials the members will need for their roles.
- Create an environment that is physically and emotionally safe.

After the participants have acted out the scenario:

- Encourage and thank the players.
- Ask the audience for their feedback (both the positives of the

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solution as well as anything that would strengthen it).

Skillathons

- Skillathons are a series of stations designed to help participants (either individuals or teams who rotate through the stations) understand how to do a skill.
- The purpose of a skillathon is to provide a fun, hands-on learning and teaching experience that increases knowledge and gives members the opportunity to practice a skill.

Examples:

Examples of skillathon stations include how to mount an insect or butterfly for an entomology exhibit, making pinch pots from quick-drying clay, how to feed a premature kitten, tying a quick-release knot for livestock handling, and evaluating a feed sample.

Things to Consider:

Planning and organizing skillathons takes time. Each station should take 3 to 5 minutes to complete, so don't plan too many stations for the time available.

Recruit experienced older youth and parents to help plan and conduct a skillathon. Having helpers at each station is important, especially if you have young members. After the event, recognize and praise the participants and helpers.

Tours and Field Trips

- Tours and field trips are typically a group outing that may last for a day or longer.
- They can be a fun, interactive, educational experience; a reward; a change of surroundings; just for fun; or used to develop members' leadership, research, planning and evaluation skills.

Examples:

A museum, a veterinary clinic, an artist's studio, an historic place, and a wooded area are all good places to take field trips.

Things to Consider:

As you plan the trip:

- Think about whether the trip is just for fun or is an educational experience, too. If it's educational, consider what you would like the group to learn and who the teachers will be.
- Include your members in the planning as is appropriate for their age. If you have many young members (11 and under), you may have to do most of the planning. If most of your members are aged 12 to 19, however, they can take care of such details as researching and planning transportation, food and lodging.

Reference for Meeting Planning Tips

VanWinkle, R., Davis, W., Skubinna, T., & Larwood, L. (2002). *Active teaching — active learning: Teaching techniques and tools*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Extension Service. Available at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/4h/4-h02591.pdf>

Points to Look for in a Good 4-H Meeting



Effective 4-H club meetings are one of the ways you can have a significant impact on the members of your club. A successful 4-H club is one that meets regularly and has meetings that are both educational and fun. The most effective 4-H meetings are those that have a balance between educational programs such as presentations and special activities (40 to 60 minutes), business meetings (15 to 20 minutes) and recreation or social time (15 to 20

minutes). Not every meeting needs to contain all three parts or fit within the suggested time frame. Involving young people in planning and conducting meetings is an important part of both successful 4-H clubs and positive youth development.

Use the following checklist to evaluate your 4-H club meetings. Work toward being able to answer “yes” to all of the questions. The ones you answer with a “no” are the areas you will want to work on improving.

Answer yes or no to these questions to help evaluate the effectiveness of your 4-H club meetings.

	YES	NO
Do all of the officers and leaders check meeting plans with one another beforehand?		
Does the president call the meeting to order on time, keep moving down the agenda and close the meeting on time?		
Do all officers use correct parliamentary procedure, when appropriate?		
Is the business part of the meeting short and concise?		
Are guests introduced and made to feel at home?		
Is there an educational program in addition to the business meeting and recreation time?		
Does the meeting have variety?		
Is the educational program of interest to everyone?		
Is there an opportunity for members to get to know each other?		
Are all announcements short and to the point?		
Do officers avoid doing all the talking?		
Do volunteer leaders avoid doing all the talking?		
Do all or most of the members have an opportunity to talk at least four times during the meeting?		
Is the recreation suitable to the meeting place and the group?		
Do members, officers and leaders treat each other in a courteous and respectful manner?		
Are volunteer leaders given a chance to voice their opinion?		
Are all members given a chance to voice their opinions without feeling judged or ridiculed?		
Is there fun, learning and fellowship at the meeting?		

Tips and Tools for Planning Your Club Year



Planning is one of those things that many of us just never seem to get around to. The new 4-H year is always a busy time: reenrollment information is due in your county MSU Extension office, county recognition events are coming up and new members are joining your group.

In the midst of all this, taking time to plan the activities for the entire year may seem silly, but it can pay big dividends in the long run. Involving members in planning and designing club activities and events helps to build young people's leadership skills and increases their commitment to carrying out the plans. 4-H clubs and

groups are excellent places for young people to build leadership skills. Planning, implementing and evaluating group activities throughout the year are great ways for youth to practice their leadership skills.

Annual Club Calendar

Creating an annual calendar is a good communication tool for 4-H clubs and groups. It can help everyone keep on track and involved in the group's activities. For each month of the year, identify the educational, recreational and community service activities your group will be involved in. The list that follows is just an example!

September

- New member recruitment and club reenrollment. Begin to select projects for the year.
- Start to think about which Kettunen Center workshops our club will participate in.
- Hold roadside clean-up day.
- Sponsor 4-H get-acquainted night.

October

- Do a window display in a downtown store for National 4-H Week.
- Organize a senior citizen Halloween party.
- Hold a club officer training event.

November

- Everyone attends CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training.
- Write cards and letters for holiday pen pals project.
- Attend food safety workshop.

December

- Hold club holiday party.
- Go caroling at community hospital.
- Work on holiday crafts.

January

- Attend stress management workshop.
- Collect pop cans and bottles for Habitat for Humanity.
- Large animal project identification information due.

February

- Organize "Be My Valentine" senior citizen dance.
- Begin exercise and fitness program.
- Attend countywide lock-in.
- Begin planning for countywide dog walk as a fund-raiser for local humane society.

March

- Attend kite-making workshop.
- Celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday by volunteering to help with the "Read Across America" program at local bookstore.
- Send in club members' 4-H Exploration Days registration forms.

April

- Attend Ukrainian egg decorating workshop.
- Work at park clean-up day.
- Hold chocolate bunny sale as a club fund-raiser.

May

- Small animal project identification due to county MSU Extension office.
- Work at downtown flower box planting day.
- Send in club members' summer 4-H camp registration.

June

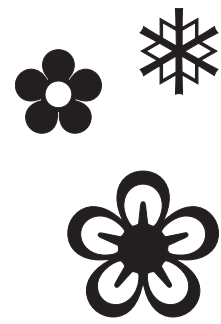
- Finish up fair projects and get ready for summer camp.
- Attend 4-H Exploration Days!
- Complete and turn in fair entries.
- Participate in countywide dog walk fund-raiser for local humane society.

July

- Attend summer 4-H camp!
- Hold club Fourth of July celebration; participate in community parade.

August

- Fair time!



Icebreakers



Icebreakers are activities designed to make learning easier. The beginning of a new club year can be an exciting and stressful time. Returning members are celebrating the successes of summer and new members are joining your group for the first time.

Try some of these activities to help everyone get acquainted, or reacquainted, at the beginning of the year. They will help get the new project off to a great start and help everyone get to know each other better! The following ideas were taken from the Peer-Plus II Notebook (4-H 1009) and the Group Dynamite Notebook (4-H 1068).

Rolling Right Along

<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Several rolls of toilet paper with perforated sheets <p>Time:</p> <p>20–30 minutes</p>	<p>Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pass around a roll or two of toilet paper and have each participant tear off a length that is as tall as they are. 2. Have them sit in a circle and explain that they'll take turns telling one thing about themselves for each square of toilet paper they have. Ask for volunteers to go first, or begin yourself.
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Positive Impressions

<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pencils (one per person) <input type="checkbox"/> "Initial Positive Impressions Sheet" (one per person) <p>Time:</p> <p>30 minutes</p>	<p>Procedure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have the group sit in a circle on the floor. Explain that each person will receive positive feedback on how he or she is initially perceived by others. Each person will have about a minute to introduce and tell about themselves. Tell them that as each person speaks, the other group members are to listen quietly. After each person speaks, the group may ask questions to help clarify what the speaker said. 2. Ask for volunteers to begin the introductions (you may need to begin the process yourself), and continue until everyone has had a chance to speak. 3. When all participants have introduced themselves, pass out the "Initial Positive Impressions Sheet" and a pencil to each person. Tell them to fill in the names of each person in the group and their positive impressions of each person. Let them know that they'll be reading the positive impressions to the group. 4. When the group is finished filling out the "Initial Positive Impressions Sheet," ask for a volunteer to begin receiving feedback. Have all the participants share their impressions with the volunteer. Have the participants take turns being the "receiver."
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**POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS HANDOUT:
Initial Positive Impressions Sheet**

Name	Impression
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	

4-H Trivia

<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ 4-H trivia questions (from the sample questions provided or from a list brainstormed by the group) printed on 3-inch by 5-inch cards <p>Time:</p> <p>15 minutes</p>	<p>Procedure:</p> <p>Before the meeting:</p> <p>Write trivia questions related to 4-H on 3-inch by 5-inch cards. You can use the sample questions provided or questions developed by your club.</p> <p>Sample 4-H Trivia Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do the four “H”s stand for in 4-H?2. Where and when is 4-H Exploration Days held?3. What is the name of this 4-H club?4. Who is the state leader for Michigan 4-H Youth Development?5. What is/are the name/names of our county 4-H agent/staff?6. Where is the State 4-H Office located?7. What is Kettunen Center?8. Where is Kettunen Center located?9. What is the date of our county fair?10. How many meetings should a 4-H club in this county have in a year?11. What are the duties of the president of a 4-H club?12. What are the duties of the vice president of a 4-H club?13. What are the duties of the secretary of a 4-H club?14. What are the duties of the treasurer of a 4-H club?15. What is the 4-H motto?16. Who is the president of our county 4-H Advisory Council?17. Name three workshops offered for 4-H members or volunteer leaders during the coming year. <p>At the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tell the group they’re going to play one or more rounds of “4-H Trivia,” a game that can help new members learn about 4-H and your club and help returning and new members learn about important 4-H dates and events. (This game is also a good way to encourage group members to work together!)2. Decide whether to have the group divide into teams or play individually.3. Divide the questions into equal groupings (enough for each team, or each person).4. Teams (individuals) will take turns asking one question to the rest of the group. The person who knows the correct answer should raise their hand, ring a bell, stand up or somehow identify him/herself.5. If the correct answer is given, the next team (individual) will ask a question. If an incorrect answer is given, the team (individual) asking the question should give the correct answer before moving to the next question.6. It is not necessary to keep score in this game, but you can if you wish.7. The game is over when all questions have been asked and answered.
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Designing the 4-H Club Officer Training Meeting



Those who should attend this meeting are:

- All young people who will be serving in officer roles in a club
- At least one adult volunteer from each club who will be supporting the club officers

Many counties offer this on countywide basis as opposed to individual clubs.

In new clubs, members don't know each other, so the selection of officers should be put off for two or three more meetings. Plan this meeting so that the majority of your clubs have appointed officers for the year.

Consider the following things when you design a 4-H Club Officer Training Meeting.

1. Plan an activity to build group unity.
2. Make sure that each officer (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter and community service officer) and the club leaders understand their roles. In order for the group to work effectively, everyone should also understand the others' roles. Use the publication *Helping You Help Officers and Committees (4-H1467)* which includes separate bulletins for each officer.
3. The officers should conduct a couple of practice meetings to build their confidence. Parents and leaders can help by role playing with the group.
4. It is helpful for officers to hold a goal-setting mini-session to develop their goals as an officer team. Stress the importance of involving all club members in committees, discussions, decisions and making motions.
5. The officers should develop an agenda for the next 4-H club meeting with three components:
 - A business meeting
 - An educational program
 - Group-building activities
6. The officers should create some suggestions for future club activities or programs. They can then present their ideas at the club meeting. **If the next club meeting is not planned at this officer's meeting, a separate planning meeting will be necessary.**
7. Emphasize how vital it is that the volunteer 4-H club leader and at least one other adult work with the officers. Once the 4-H staff person no longer attends monthly meetings, it is imperative that the officers seek their guidance from the adult leaders of the club.

4-H Club Officer Training Meeting



Sample Agenda

7 - 7:15 p.m.	Group-Building Activity
7:15 - 7:20	Pledges <ul style="list-style-type: none">• American and 4-H
7:20 - 8	Officer Roles
8 - 8:15	Role-Play Practice Meetings
8:15 - 8:30	Goal-Setting Mini-Session
8:30 - 8:45	Designing Future Meetings
8:45 - 9	Wrap-up and Refreshments

4-H Club Officers



Club officers are an important part of the leadership team in the local 4-H club. Being an officer helps the member develop leadership skills as he or she performs the duties required.

Allowing 4-H club members to elect their own officers serves the following purposes:

- All members learn about, and participate in, elections.
- Those elected learn to be responsible to their group, learn leadership skills and parliamentary procedure.
- Members feel ownership in their club meetings.

Club officers are usually elected each year near the beginning of the 4-H program year. However, officers may be placed in office through rotation, appointment, or any other similar means that has been approved by the club's county Michigan State University Extension 4-H staff. One of the organizational leaders of the club should be named to help the officers carry out their responsibilities. This leader should explain the duties of each officer and guide the election so the officers are chosen for their ability to do the assigned task rather than for their popularity.

The 4-H officers usually elected in each club are the:

- **President** who presides at all meetings. The president manages the club's business meeting, appoints committees and helps keep order during the meeting.
- **Vice President** who takes charge of the meeting in the president's absence. The vice president serves as chairperson of the program committee and is responsible for the program portion of the club meeting.

- **Secretary** who keeps written minutes of all meetings in the *Michigan 4-H Secretary's Record Book*. The secretary also keeps a record of each member's attendance.
- **Treasurer** who takes care of all club funds. The treasurer keeps an accurate record of the club's funds in the *Michigan 4-H Treasurer's Record Book*.
- **Reporter** who writes interesting and accurate reports about club meetings and special club activities, and sends them to the local newspaper. The reporter helps keep local people informed about 4-H activities.
- **Service officer** who boosts member commitment and involvement in service activities. The officer helps the members fulfill the "hands to larger service" part of the 4-H pledge.

A club may elect additional officers. For example, some clubs elect a song leader, an historian or a recreation chairperson. In other clubs, the offices of secretary and treasurer may be combined into one office. The club's size and its members' age will probably help determine the number and kinds of officers to elect. It's useful for each of the members to have responsibilities in the club. However, serving on a committee may be the best learning experience for many beginning members.

One of the goals of 4-H is to develop leadership skills. Therefore, it's a good idea to pass jobs around so members gain different experiences. This will usually mean that the same member doesn't hold the same office in successive years. A variety of experiences will help the member grow in leadership and develop new skills.

For more information about this topic, please see *Helping You Help Officers & Committees: Leader Packet (4HI467)* from which this summary was derived.

Designing the 4-H Club Leaders Meeting



This type of meeting is usually held once or twice yearly. It could include club officers' and teen leaders' training as well.

The purposes of this meeting are to:

- Provide updates to 4-H club leaders.
- Conduct training in some aspect of youth development or club management.
- Provide the opportunity for leaders to get together to share successes and concerns with the staff.

Typically, leader meetings are held in several locations around the county to help accommodate volunteer schedules and travel. Consider holding both daytime and evening meetings.

Consider the following things when you design a Leaders Meeting.

1. Allow plenty of time for leaders to report what's happening in their clubs and to share their concerns.
2. Allow time for project leaders to give input to the administrative leader for future club meetings. Leaders should meet once a month when the community club first starts and when new volunteers are involved. After two or three leaders meetings, they may only need to meet a couple of times a year.
3. Have selected materials (bulletins or news articles) available for each leader. These should relate to each leader's function in the club.
4. Be sure leaders respond to, and work directly with, the community club leader.

4-H Club Leaders Meeting



Sample Agenda

7 - 7:05 p.m.	Call to Order
7:05 - 7:10	Pledges <ul style="list-style-type: none">• American and 4-H
7:10 - 7:55	Sharing Time
7:55 - 8:05	Update on County Activities
8:05 - 8:25	Educational Component <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Example: “Recognition of 4-H Members Within the 4-H Club”
8:25 - 8:45	Plans for the Club’s Future
8:45 - 9	Refreshments

Designing 4-H Club Meetings



Consider the following things when you help the club officers and leader(s) plan a 4-H club meeting.

1. Ask the officers to arrive 15 to 30 minutes early so they can organize everything for the meeting.
2. Check with the officers to see that each of them are following up on the commitments they made at the officer training meeting. Ask them what they have planned and how they will carry out their responsibilities. In the future, the club leader will meet with officers to plan meetings and handle follow-up contacts. Work with the leader so he or she understands this role
3. Review the previous meeting, if any. Give pertinent suggestions to the club leader(s) and officers to use as they design the meeting.
4. Make sure the room is set up so that it is conducive to a business meeting. A semicircle with all chairs facing the officers' table is one example of a good seating plan.
5. Review the agenda so everyone knows his or her responsibilities.
6. Prepare for the installation of officers. See "4-H Club Member and 4-H Club Officer Ceremonies" in "Appendix B: 4-H Club Ceremonies."

This meeting is developed by the community club leader and officers, with 4-H staff support.

4-H Club Meeting



Sample Agenda

7 - 7:05 p.m.	Call to Order
7:05 - 7:10	Pledges <ul style="list-style-type: none">• American and 4-H
7:10 - 7:15	Roll Call
7:15 - 7:30	Installation of Officers
7:30 - 7:35	Minutes and Correspondence
7:35 - 7:40	Treasurer's Report
7:40 - 7:45	Committee Reports
7:45 - 7:55	Unfinished Business
7:55 - 8:10	New Business
8:10 - 8:20	Announcements of Club or County Events
8:20 - 8:25	Adjournment of Business Meeting
8:25 - 8:45	Educational Component <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guest Speaker or Demonstrations
8:45 - 9	Group-Building <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recreation and/or Refreshments