

COMMUNICATIONS

Working Exhibits! What are they?



A working exhibit is the sharing of a talent or showing off a skill!

If you have a talent, share it with others. If you know a subject well, tell others about it. If you have a skill, teach it to others. A 4-H working exhibit gives you the chance to present a topic informally. Your working exhibit should be a “teaching” or “showing” presentation. If it is limited to talking and does not involve the listener in any way, the talk would better fit the Educational Presentation section. Every project area could have a working exhibit! Working exhibits could include, but aren’t limited to: art, potato prints, mosaics, cake decorating, dog grooming, puppet making, small engine repair, or woodcarving.



Preparing

- Choose a topic that interests you, so you will enjoy sharing your knowledge about it, and be more able to answer questions.
- Choose a topic that has steps or procedures that can be easily shown and broken down.
- Make these steps and/or procedures include the audience. Visitors to your exhibit want to make something, learn a new skill, or practice a technique. Some working exhibit presenters might provide directions or information for visitors to take with them.
- Comparison shop for materials. Knowing the market enables you to answer questions about prices and availability. Keep the price of items in mind when picking a topic.
- Practice presenting your working exhibit. Present to your club, family, or school classmates. Let them proceed through the steps with you.

Setting Up

- Plan to set up your exhibit in a small area. Typical arrangements include a table in front and a divider/screen behind. Ask about arrangements in advance.
- Make the area attractive. Consider props, posters, and examples of your work. Use color—it not only attracts but provides order (e.g., first the red, next the blue, and then the green).
- Consider safety. Working exhibits often have visitors from pre-school through adults. If you have pre-schoolers in the audience, you will need to have tools they can handle and activities they can do.
- Arrange your materials to follow to the steps or stages of the activity. Set up the exhibit in stages. You might want to display a completed product, or several, so visitors get an overall picture of what your exhibit is all about.
- Make up samples to show. Samples can be useful if you are demonstrating an item that can be made a variety of ways. Foods, stationery, knot tying, and art activities are some examples.

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Presenting

- Be prepared to stop during your presentation. People may want you to repeat a step, ask questions, or ask for extra help.
- Be prepared to have people stay awhile, then walk away. Your visitors are not a captive audience. They may decide they don't want to learn about your topic, or they may have limited time. Don't feel hurt or become discouraged. Proceed with whomever is present at your exhibit.
- Draw people into a conversation so that they stop at your exhibit. You might say. "Would you like to try to ____?" "How about learning ____?" "Would you like to try a sample of ____?"
- Explain your topic, briefly, when visitors stop. Encourage questions to involve your audience. Using the senses of smell, taste, and touch is a good way to get people involved.
- Continue working on the exhibit activity, even when no one is at your table. Your enthusiasm and their curiosity will draw them in. Leaving your exhibit or stopping work are not ways to attract visitors.

Benefits for You

By teaching others, you also learn. You will discover what it takes to share knowledge. You also will learn how to get people involved, gain self-confidence, know the satisfaction that comes from doing your best, and having fun!

Evaluate Your Working Exhibit

Here are some questions to evaluate your working exhibit.

- 1 Was your exhibit attractive?
Yes No
- 2 Was your exhibit safe?
Yes No
- 3 Did many people stop at your exhibit?
Yes No
- 4 Were you enthusiastic about your topic?
Yes No
- 5 Did you involve the audience?
Yes No
- 6 Did you keep your visitors' attention?
Yes No
- 7 Did you speak loudly enough for everyone to hear?
Yes No
- 8 Did you present your topic logically?
Yes No
- 9 Did you have fun?
Yes No
- 10 Did you help your audience learn?
Yes No

For each no, ask yourself "why?" What could you do differently next time?

For each yes, explain how.

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