



4-H Youth Development

Strengthening Goal-centered Learning in the Exhibit Experience (for 4-H'ers)

Goals...Exhibits...Evaluation...How do the pieces fit together? How can you set goals? How do goals relate to exhibits? How will your exhibits be evaluated?

Goals

Set Project Goals

Having goals is like having a road map. It is a tool that helps you decide how to get where you want to go. Your project goal has three parts. The three parts can be measured or checked. Now, think about the three parts of a measurable project goal:

- (1) the action,
- (2) the result, and
- (3) the timetable.

How you plan to do something is the action portion of the goal. For example, for the goal "I want to train my 4-H beef heifer to lead before county fair time,"

I want to train is the *action* portion of the goal. What you intend to do is the *result*—I want to train **my 4-H beef heifer to lead**. *When* is the amount of time it will take to complete the goal—I want to train my 4-H beef heifer to lead **before county fair time**.

If you are not certain that you can carry out a goal easily, you can give it a "control test." Do you have control over what you want to do? Does the action part of your goal tell what you will do? You have control over a goal such as "I will learn to put in a hand-sewn hem." However, if

the action mentioned in the goal is what someone else will do, it does not pass the control test. The goal statement, "I will have the champion steer at the Cedar County Fair," does not pass the control test because the beef judge provides the action that decides whose steer will be the champion.

As you practice setting goals, refer to the resource, *Achieving Goals through Record Keeping*, 4H 91.

Exhibits

Exhibit Goals—One More Piece to the Puzzle

As you think about exhibiting at the county fair, remember to start with your project goal(s). Brainstorm a list of exhibit possibilities and choose the best ideas that will help you achieve the project goal(s).

Following are examples of project goals a 4-H'er might set. Under each of the project goals, list possible exhibit goals that might come from the project goals. As you work through that process, you can quickly see that many different exhibit goals may come from one project goal. You also can meet your project goals in ways other than exhibits.

Project Goal

I want to learn more about how to recycle aluminum cans and plastic jugs in my community by the end of the school year. I'm enrolled in citizenship.

Possible Exhibit Goal(s)

Project Goal

Our club will clean up the local church cemetery as a citizenship project by June 1. We are all enrolled in citizenship.

Possible Exhibit Goal(s)

Project Goal

I want to learn more about the steps it takes to become a professional weaver by July 1. I'm enrolled in the visual art project.

Possible Exhibit Goals(s)

Project Goal

I want to take photos at my family reunion over Memorial Day weekend. I'm enrolled in photography.

Possible Exhibit Goal(s)

Evaluation

As you prepare for the evaluation process or judging, remember to always come back to your exhibit goal. Your goal

will be what the judge works from as she or he looks at your exhibit. Using your goal(s), the judge will check for ways your exhibit meets evaluation criteria. Again, using your goal(s) the judge will evaluate your exhibit to see whether it shows what you learned. The judge also will examine the quality of your work on the exhibit; the way you completed your exhibit; and general appearance and design. You can demonstrate what you learned by your ability to explain, by the exhibit itself, and the ability to use information, etc. The judge will use the correct standards that relate to your goal and exhibit.

From the judging experience, we expect that you will

- feel good about the experience;
- increase what you know about the exhibit and yourself;
- be excited about doing self-evaluation and setting new goals; and
- receive recognition.

In order to gain these results, the judge will be getting to know you, gathering information from you, encouraging you to evaluate your exhibit and think about the process of learning while you made it, giving you feedback, and guiding you to plan for the future. You should be ready to answer the following kinds of questions.

- What did you want to accomplish by creating this exhibit?
- How did you go about working toward your goal(s)?
- What were the most important things you learned as you worked toward your goal(s)?
- What ideas or plans do you have for the future based on what you have learned or discovered?
- What did you consider as you evaluated your work?

Consider Judges Form

Also consider the 4-H publication, *4-H Exhibit Evaluation Form*, VI-1067-SAS, that the judge will use. Ask at your county office for the forms used at your local fair. The judge will check for three major criteria:

- learning involved,
- workmanship and techniques, and
- general appearance and design.

The judge will use the correct standards in each category that relate to your goal and exhibit.

Learning Involved

Ask yourself:

- What was your goal for the exhibit?
- Did you include a clear, concise sentence about your goal for the exhibit?
- What were the most important things you learned as you worked toward your goal?
- Tell about two things: knowledge and skills that you learned.
- How did you go about working toward your goal? (You could tell about the information that you used, decisions you made, problems you faced and how you solved them, what worked well, etc.)

Workmanship and Techniques

If the exhibit is an actual **product**, look at the **item** you made, and ask yourself:

- Does it show that what you learned relates to your goal for the exhibit?
- Did you use appropriate materials for your item?

- Did you use a suitable method to make your exhibit? (You can use 4-H project manuals to get information on acceptable measures of quality for specific exhibits.)

If the exhibit is sharing an **idea**, ask yourself:

- Did you explain what you wanted to do and the goal of your exhibit so people can understand it easily?
- Did you give complete and accurate information?
- Did you organize the writing and display in logical steps?
- Does your exhibit show your creativity and originality?

General Appearance and Design

Look at the overall look and design of your exhibit, and ask yourself:

- Does your exhibit attract and hold the attention of people who see it?
- Does your exhibit look neat and attractive?
- Did you use design elements and art principles when suitable?
- If you made an educational display, is it well designed, attractive, and readable so that it communicates an idea to the people who view it?

Peer Competition

4-H achievement shows or fairs provide an excellent opportunity for you to get feedback on your exhibits. Two evaluation systems are common. The Danish system of placing (blue-red-white ribbons to all without ranking within the ribbon groups) or dual system (blue-red-white ribbons to all, and exhibits are ranked in order of quality within the ribbon grouping) are examples

of how this can be done. But, when class champions are named, this moves the recognition system to the next level because it rewards 4-H'ers for results from competition with others for high ranks. This type of competition is called peer competition.

Peer Competition Can Be Positive

Selecting class champions is a form of peer competition and can cause pressure for you. Peer competition can be a positive experience if it is kept in perspective. Sometimes we feel pressure to win from our parents, friends, or coach. Other times we put pressure on ourselves. To keep activities fun, we try to limit the pressure to win.

One way to limit the pressure is to focus on the skills and abilities we're gaining instead of just on the final score or the ribbon we receive. Can you remember the first time you played your instrument, shot a basket, or made muffins? Think about how you've grown and changed with practice.

As you look to the future, think about skills you'd like to improve or new things you'd like to learn. Set goals that help move from where you are now to where you'd like to be. If you'd like to become a better reader, you might set a goal of reading a chapter each night. Give yourself credit for each time you meet your goal.

Even when you work on the things mentioned above, you still may feel very nervous and even sick to your stomach sometimes when you compete. When that happens, share your feelings with an adult (your

parent, leader, or teacher). An adult can help you look at the whole picture—not just this moment in time. After you've visited, you may decide you don't want to be involved in a particular activity anymore. That is OK.

As you select activities, choose a variety of things. Become involved in some activities in which you work with others, such as cleaning up roadsides, collecting food for the needy, or planning a day camp. You also can learn new skills as you work with others on a common goal.

Remember, you are a winner, not because you can run fastest or because your exhibit gets a blue ribbon, but just because you are you.

Setting Goals

Your process of goal setting should be ongoing. Club meetings, project meetings, and achievement shows are excellent settings to help strengthen your skill of goal setting. Remember the other avenues for using the goal-setting skill, such as record keeping. By setting goals, you can become a more effective communicator, decision maker, citizen, and leader.


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