

Sharpen Your 4-H Project Skills

by

Setting Goals

Setting Your Project Goals

What do you want to do and learn in this project?

Now that you have decided on a project, it's time to set some goals. What do you want to do and learn in this project? Make your goals challenging, but don't make them so hard you cannot reach them.

Ask yourself these questions.

- What do I want to do?
- What can I learn
- Who will help me?
- When am I going to do it?
- Where do I want this project to take me in one, two or three years?
- How will activities be used to support the goals?

Here's an example of what you should be

trying to do. Pretend you are taking a beginning food project, like You Learn to Bake. One of your goals is to learn how to make cookies by May 1.

You have the goal and target date. Now what if your 4-H leader or parents are not able to teach you how to make cookies? Who will teach you then?

There may be several people in your community who could help you. First, tell your 4-H leader what you need to learn to meet your goal in your project.

Ask for suggestions. Maybe you could ask a friend, a relative, a neighbor, or an Extension staff member. It's important that you've planned ahead and thought of a problem that might come up. If you think things through ahead of time, you'll probably meet your goal!

Goal setting could be done individually with a member and parent and/or leader, could be done in project groups, or could be done at a club meeting with members and leaders divided into small groups. What is important is that someone takes the time to help the members plan what they would like to do early in the year. Members then can figure out who can help them with the project and set a reasonable time line to accomplish their goals

before the fair or end of the year. Members should spread the project work over the entire year. Parents can help to determine the number of realistic goals per project.

Goal setting is important because 4-H'ers have a "stake" in their learning. They can match their interests and goals. They are more likely to learn more if it is something they are interested in and members and parents can set their own pace for the work to be done.

Having a goal is like having a road map. It helps members decide how to get from where they are to where they want to go. Project goals are tools that help members look ahead to plan what they want to do. A project goal should have three parts:

1. How they plan to do something
2. What will happen when they do that, and
3. When they will do it.

The three parts are also called

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

Members should check to see that each goal has the three parts and that they can be measured. Once members have written their goals, they help them do a control test. Look over the goal and ask, "Do I have control over what I want to do, or does someone else? Does the action part of the goal tell what you will do? The goal will pass the control test if the action is something the member can do, rather than something someone else will do.

Where Can I go For Help?

Many people in your community can help you with your 4-H project. K-State Research & Extension and your local Extension office can give you lots of 4-H project information. Don't forget your library whenever you're search for information. And, be sure to check out the Kansas 4-H Web site at <http://4-h.k-state.edu>.