

**Intended Audience:**

- Adults and youth providing 4-H Club leadership

**Learning Objectives:**

Club leaders will:

- Recognize the importance of forming club committees
- Discover three reasons for using committees in their club
- Identify different types of committees and their functions
- Gain ideas on how to form committees

**Target Essential Elements:**

*Independence* is learned as committees assume responsibility for planning and carrying out tasks.

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Supplies Needed:**

How Many Ideas? Activity

- Paper and pencil or pen for each participant
- Flipchart or blackboard with question “What can 4-H clubs do to have more interesting meetings?”

Handouts

- Forming 4-H Club Committees
- Evaluation

**BACKGROUND**

We have a problem to solve. How can we make 4-H club meetings more interesting?

**WHAT TO DO**

**Activity: How Many Ideas?**

(Hand out paper and pencil if people need them.) Each of you will need to write down in one minute as many ideas as you can to the question: “What can 4-H clubs do to have more interesting meetings?” (After one minute, count the number of ideas.)

Now we will break into small groups of 3-4 people. Once in your small group, you’ll have one minute to again answer this question: “What can 4-H clubs do to have more interesting meetings?” (Select someone to write down your ideas. After one minute, again count the number of ideas.)

Did you have more ideas as an individual or as a group? What differences in quality or creativity of ideas happened when more people contributed?



*Value of Club Committees*

Consider the benefits of using 4-H club committees:

- Opportunity for youth to learn planning skills
- Opportunity for a group to learn that it can accomplish more than an individual
- Feeling of involvement and ownership of work
- Bringing different perspectives and ideas to task
- Sharing the work and responsibilities among youth members

*Types of Club Committees*

There are different types of committees to serve different purposes. Here is a handout with ideas on 4-H committees that describes some options.

**Short Term Committees:** Focus on specific events or tasks that can be accomplished in a short period of time. Examples include: January 4-H Club Planning Committee or 4-H Club Audit Committee. Some short term committees may only meet once. Others will need more meetings to finish their work. Some clubs have only short term committees. These committees might also be annual or recurring groups.

**Standing Committees:** Focus on more involved or complex tasks and needs. These committees are stronger because they include youth and adults who serve on the committee for longer periods of time. These committees are usually defined in the club by-laws. An example is a 4-H Club Advisory Committee.

**Ad Hoc Committees:** These committees are formed for specific one-time purposes. They can exist a short or long time. Examples include: Fundraising for a Specific Purpose or an event like the 4-H Club 150th Anniversary Party.

**Do Ahead:**

- The best room set-up is a table with chairs for the writing activity.
- Write question on the blackboard or flipchart for activity.
- Have supplies and handouts ready.
- Print handout and evaluation.
- Cut the evaluation handout into two copies.

**Sources:**

- Created by Linda Kustka, Professor Emeritus, Department of Youth Development, UW-Extension.
- Jeanne Baum, "How to Effectively Involve Youth" and "Successful Functioning of Committees & Meetings," Youth Volunteers in Motion, Madison, WI: UW-Extension, 1989.

It's important for clubs to form the types of committees that serve the needs of the members and leaders. The club's yearly plan gives direction as to what committees need to be formed. For an example of a yearly plan format, see [www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/documents/4HClubCalendarPlanner.pdf](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/documents/4HClubCalendarPlanner.pdf).

*Forming Club Committees*

There are several ways of forming committees. It is important to get a mix of perspectives and experience on each committee. Committee work is the ideal place for more experienced youth and adults to engage younger members in expressing their ideas and learning new skills.

Start by deciding what committees are needed. Develop a list with a brief description of what is expected of the committee and when during the year the committee will need to function. At a club meeting, describe the committee opportunities to youth, volunteers and parents. Parents need to know the expectations to support their child's involvement.

Let's look at the handout for some different ways that committees can be formed. What strengths and limitations do you see for the different approaches?

Options to place people on committees:

- A. Sign-up Sheet: Members put their names next to the committee that they are willing to serve. Sign up sheet could have numbers indicating how many members are needed.
- B. Indicate Their Interests: Members review committee options and put their name on a card and list the committees that interest them. Then, the club leadership team reviews these preferences and finalizes committee membership with the goal of getting a balance of experience and perspectives.
- C. Appointment: The club leadership team considers the interests of the youth and adults and appoints committees. They take their proposed committee lists to a club meeting for reaction.
- D. Chair/Others Recruit Members: The committee chair or club officers identify potential committee members. They contact them to find out willingness to serve and make the committee list public after members have agreed to be on the committee.
- E. Identify Chair and Members Sign Up: The club leadership team identifies the committee chair and after she or he agrees, they bring a sign-up sheet to the club meeting. This sheet indicates who is chairing the committee and has spaces for the number of members needed.

*Closing*

Establishing club committees offers benefits to the 4-H club, member, volunteer and parent. Getting them started is part of the process. The second and most important part is providing committees support as they begin and continue their work. Help with supporting committees will be (mention training on this topic, as well as web or print resources).

Your reactions to this discussion will be used to plan future training. Please complete this short survey before leaving.



## TALK IT OVER

### Reflect:

- What is important about forming 4-H club committees?
- What would you do if no one wanted to serve on a committee?

### Apply:

- What tips would you give others about forming a 4-H club committee?
- What idea might you use to help your 4-H club form a committee?

## ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY

### Enhance:

- If time allows, ask one or more leaders to share how their clubs form committees.
- Combine this lesson with “Supporting 4-H Club Committees.” If you are unable to teach or provide information about supporting committees in the future, give out resources on this important topic.
- When discussing forming committees, ask the participants to share examples of how a technique worked for them. Encourage both positive and challenging experiences to be shared.

### Simplify:

- If you have less time available, skip the opening activity and simply share this information: “A common problem is making club meetings interesting. If you gave one person the challenge to come up with ideas for more interesting meetings, they’d probably develop 4-5 good ideas. Now, when a small group is given the same challenge, they typically develop 10-20 good ideas. Why do you think this happens? A group of people brings different views to solving problems and you get more ideas.”

## EVALUATION

It is important to use an evaluation that is consistent with your teaching objectives. The short evaluation in the handouts can be modified to meet your needs. An alternative to a written evaluation is to record the Reflection discussion under “Talk It Over.” Recruit someone ahead of time to take notes while you are leading the discussion. Remember to share the evaluation results with 4-H Youth Development Extension staff in your county.

## ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

- “Planning Guide for 4-H Clubs: Working with Committees,” University of Illinois Extension at [www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/committees/](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/committees/).

***Finalized by the Strengthening 4-H Club Leadership Work Team on September 2005.***



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## Forming 4-H Club Committees

### Types of Club Committees

There are different types of committees to serve different purposes:

| Type of Committee   | List Examples |
|---|---------------|
| <i>Short Term or Ad Hoc Committees:</i> Focus on specific event or task that can be accomplished in short period of time. |               |
| <i>Standing Committees:</i> Focus on more involved or complex tasks and needs for longer periods of time.                 |               |
| <i>Ad Hoc Committees:</i> Formed for specific, one-time purposes.   |               |

### Strong Committees have:

- A mix of perspectives
- A mix of experience
- Experienced youth/adults helping younger committee members

### Different Ways to Form Club Committees

*Sign Up Sheet:* Members put their names next to the committee that they are willing to serve. Sign up sheet could have numbers indicating how many members are needed.

*Indicate their Interests:* Members review committee options and put their name on a card and list which committees interest them. Then, the club leadership team reviews these preferences and finalizes committee membership with the goal of getting a balance of experiences and perspectives.

*Appointment:* The club leadership team considers the interests of the youth and adults and appoints committees. They take their proposed committee lists to a club meeting for reaction.

*Chair/Others Recruit Members:* The committee chair or club officers identify potential committee members. They contact them to find out willingness to serve and make the committee list public after people have agreed to be on the committee.

*Identify Chair and Members Sign Up:* The club leadership team identifies the committee chair and after she/he agrees, they bring a sign up sheet to the club meeting. This sheet indicates who is chairing the committee and has spaces for the number of members needed.

## **Forming 4-H Club Meetings**

### **Evaluation**

1. How useful will this information be to help form club committees? (Circle one response.)

Very Useful      Somewhat Useful      Not Sure      Not Useful

2. Do you feel better prepared to form club committees?

Yes      No

3. What will you do as a result of this program?