



TOP TEN TIPS and TRICKS

Applying for a Shawano County Award Trip



1. **Make your application shine!** Your application is only as good as you make it. The people who are reviewing the applications do not know you or what you have done. It is up to YOU to tell them! This is not the time to be shy –brag about what you have done! Tell them what you heard, saw, did and learned.
2. **Answer every question.** Double check your work and make sure you didn't miss something.
3. **Watch the deadlines.** Late applications will not be accepted, so be sure to get your application in on time. If you are mailing the application, be sure to give enough time for the post office to deliver it. It is also a good idea to call the office and make sure they received everything...take any steps you could to make sure your application gets where it is supposed to go.
4. **Proofread your application**-including the boxes, lines and essay –more than one time. Watch for spelling and grammar errors. It is always helpful to have an adult (maybe your mom/dad...but consider someone else – like a leader – as they will see your application from a different perspective.)
5. **Be honest in your answers.** If you have not participated in an activity, answer the questions honestly.
6. **Remember – neatness counts.** When at all possible, type your application and essays. This will make it easier for the reviewer to look at your application on the same level as all other applicants. (If you can't type it, then make sure your handwriting is neat and using the same color ink throughout.)
7. **Use your record books and history with 4-H to your advantage.** You have learned and done MUCH more than you can remember sitting in front of your computer filling out the application. Consider making a list of all of your projects and the major things you learned in the project years. DON'T forget that you are learning more than just the project information – you are learning life-skills (organization, teamwork, planning, decision making, belonging, public speaking, confidence, etc.) through ALL of your project...don't be afraid to use these skills in your application!
8. **Ensure your club leader can complete your recommendation form with glowing comments!** Your application requires a recommendation from your 4-H club's main leader. If completing the form for younger members, be sure to give the form and your completed application, to your leader with enough time for him/her to fill out his/her part of the application...a few days may not be enough, and your application could come in late (and therefore not meeting tip #3, disqualifying you). Regardless of the form you complete, if you want the best letter of recommendation, give your leader at least a week to work on your application and be sure you tell him/her when the deadline is. Your leader can only write about what they know of you – a great recommendation will come from YOU being involved and active in your club. (Note: your leader recommendation can come directly to the office...when you call to ensure your application has arrived, it is a good idea to see if your leader's letter arrived as well. If it has not, call your leader and kindly ask if the letter has been completed.)
9. **Keep a copy of your application.** That way, if something is missing, you have a copy of it and don't need to rush to complete a new application. Also you can update it as needed for future opportunities.
10. **If you are a first year 4-H member** and don't have a lot to fill in the 4-H boxes, **talk with your leader to discover things you have done in the club that relate to the questions. DO NOT LEAVE THE SECTION BLANK OR WRITE "NONE"!** You are a 4-H'er and have the experience, even if it is not as obvious as serving as a club officer. You may not have been a participant in some of the county-wide events, but have you done anything in your club? Youth Leader? Presentations? Demonstrations? Community Service? All of these things count, and add up on your application!