



4-H Organizational Skills **Delegating**

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

Intended Audience:

4-H volunteers

Learning Outcomes:

- Volunteers will explain the goal of delegating.
- Volunteers will identify the key elements of explaining a task to others.
- Volunteers will develop a plan for delegating tasks in their 4-H club or group.

Time:

20 – 30 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Pencils and Paper
- Markers and Flip Chart
- Power Point, Computer and LCD Projector
- Handouts and Evaluations

Do Ahead:

Copy handouts

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Volunteerism for the Next

Generation:

<http://nextgeneration.4-h.org/volunteerism/>

4-H National Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-h-headquarters.gov/>

INTRODUCTION

There is an old adage that says “work smarter, not harder.” An effective leader and manager quickly learns the benefits of motivating others to become involved. All too often, we attempt to do it all ourselves, thinking we can do it more quickly than taking time to explain the task to another person. By effectively delegating, we involve more people in the tasks and in the end, come out with a better product with a larger, more motivated group of people behind it. (Power Point Slides 1, 2)

Building relationships with other adults who care about youth is an important aspect of volunteering. People who are asked to volunteer want to know they have the support of others rather than being expected to take on a large task by themselves. No one likes to feel they have the responsibility of doing it all. Just as we hope youth enjoy a safe place among peers and caring adults, we should provide a welcoming and cooperative atmosphere for adult volunteers to enjoy their experience. (Power Point Slide 3)

By effectively matching peoples’ talents and interests with appropriate tasks, we invite them to take an active role and feel valued in the program. Adult volunteers will become involved and continue to stay involved if they feel what they are doing is useful and appreciated. They may even encourage others to get involved.

Activity 1: The Sky’s the Limit Part 1

Ask participants to make a list of things their club or group would like to do. In a second column, identify what is keeping them from moving forward with these ideas. Ask the group to share the items on their list. Record these on a flip chart. Are there items that were shared that you had on your list? What items were new ideas that you might want to add to your list? Are there people in the room who could help you find resources for your ideas? As you get to know other adults better, you will see the potential of utilizing their skills for these and other projects. Your scope of outreach will no doubt broaden once you learn the many interests and skills of the adults involved with your group.

People will stay involved in groups where they are given responsibilities and made to feel an integral part of the team. No one wants to take valuable time to come to club meetings and only *hear* about what has happened or what is going happen. It’s important to make sure that each person is actively involved in some way. Some delegating can be done through the normal course of club meetings but a lot will probably occur in informal gatherings before or after club meetings or during other activities where you come in contact with parents.



VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy for 4-H Youth Development:

<http://www.national4-h.org/headquarters.gov/comm/vrkc.pdf>

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References for this lesson:

- Jones, D. (2003). *Retaining 4-H Volunteers by Effectively Delegating 4-H Program Responsibilities*. Available at Utah State University Extension website at <http://extension.usu.edu/html/publications/index.cfm>.
- McBee, S. (2003, Feb. 12). Overwhelmed? Take it easy. *Volunteer Management Review*.
- Westwood, G., Mullen, S., Adkins, P., et. al. (1994). *TAXI: Taking anybody into expanded involvement*. National 4-H Council.

We all want to be treated with respect, and to be given the appropriate information and tools with which to do our jobs. Take time to explain the task and you will be rewarded with the many accomplishments of those who are now taking shared ownership of the group. (Power Point Slide 4)

- **Define the task in terms of expected results.** Be sure the person understands the end result, and don't be too concerned about how they will achieve it. You may give them an example of how it has been done in the past to get them going, but have faith in their methods, even if they're different from the way things have traditionally been done. You may learn some new time-saving techniques or find that they are reaching a new audience that may not have felt welcome to participate in the past.
- **Define how much authority the person has in carrying out the assignment.** If you are familiar with the person's skills, you may have him or her carry out the task and report back to you. If you have doubts or have not worked with this person before, you may ask how he or she would carry out the task and report to you with the strategy prior to implementation.
- **Be sure you inform the volunteer of any relevant policies, guidelines** or other parameters within which the task must be done. For example, with a livestock show superintendent there may be participant contracts, tagging/weigh-in dates, and fair premium book guidelines that must be followed. The volunteer must be aware of these as he or she assumes the role of show superintendent.
- If you know of any **other resources** that would make the job easier, let the volunteer know. It could be files from previous events or contact information for people who have served in the role previously.
- If you're looking at an overwhelming task, **divide the work into smaller increments**. Rather than recruiting 48 people yourself, recruit eight people who are each willing to recruit six others. Just be sure that everyone understands the overall task so they can answer others' questions or know who the questions should be referred to.
- **Establish timelines or deadlines** for certain parts of the task if necessary, and maintain regular contact with volunteers to see how they are progressing. These contacts may be more often if you are unfamiliar with the volunteer's work and less often once you feel comfortable with his or her skills and work styles.

In some cases, there may be things that you do not particularly enjoy doing. Find someone who enjoys that role, give him or her any needed information and resources, keep in touch regarding progress, and let the volunteer assume the responsibility. You may find individuals with particular skills who are more suited to the role than you are. Our communities contain a wealth of skilled individuals who are willing to share their expertise with us, if only they are asked.



Activity 2: The Sky's the Limit Part II

Ask participants to create a list of parents and other adults associated with their club or group. Next to the potential volunteers' names, list their skills, hobbies, interests, and careers. Compare this list to the list of things that your club would like to do (from Activity 1). Are there areas where volunteers might be able to help your club accomplish its goals? If so, make a commitment to approach that person or persons about helping your club in that specific area. Are there big gaps in your knowledge of your volunteers? If so, make a commitment to get to know your volunteers better.

Conclusion:

(Power Point Slide 5) The goal of delegation is to clearly establish responsibilities and deadlines so you can let go of control and empower others to carry out tasks. If you're new at delegating, it may take a while to become comfortable with turning over aspects of the program. As you put the right people in place for each task and become used to their work style, you'll find that you can rely on them to take responsibility for various aspects of the program. An effective program recognizes not how much one person or a few people have accomplished, but how *many* people are empowered to accomplish the many tasks inherent in carrying out the program. (Power Point Slide 6)

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- What is the goal of delegating?
- What benefits could delegating bring to your 4-H club or group?

Apply:

- How can your 4-H club or group delegate tasks to increase parent and member involvement and ownership?

EVALUATION

Ask each participant to complete the evaluation tool (Handout 1).

ENHANCE or SIMPLIFY

Assemble 4-H volunteer role descriptions. Review the descriptions and identify how parts of the role description could be delegated to other youth or adult volunteers to share the role. Rewrite the role descriptions so each volunteer is clear on what is expected of them.

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Evaluation

Please complete the following evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be shared with those who work with the program. Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary. Your responses will be combined with the responses of all other participants and you will not be individually identified on any report prepared.

Please answer the questions by circling the number that indicates your level of understanding of the topics listed before and after the training.

1 = Very little understanding

2 = Understand somewhat

3 = Clear understanding

	NOW – After the training			THEN – Before the training		
1. I can explain the goal of delegating.	1	2	3	1	2	3
2. I can identify the key elements of explaining a task to others.	1	2	3	1	2	3
3. I can develop a plan for delegating tasks in my 4-H club or group.	1	2	3	1	2	3

- Please list at least two ideas or skills that you learned as a result of this presentation.

- How will you use what you learned in this presentation?

