



Positive Youth Development **Empowerment of Others**

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

Intended Audience:

4-H volunteers

Learning Outcomes:

- Volunteers will describe the differences between empower and delegate.
- Volunteers will recognize that empowerment takes training and trust.
- Volunteers will identify ways to empower others to be successful and enhance 4-H programs.

Time:

20 – 30 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Pencils and paper
- Markers and flip chart paper
- Power Point, Computer and LCD Projector
- Handouts and Evaluations

Do Ahead:

Prepare handouts.

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Volunteerism for the Next Generation:

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

4-H National Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/>

INTRODUCTION

How do we create an environment in which youth can do their best? What elements need to be present for youth to learn and practice leadership skills? As a 4-H volunteer, you can empower youth and other adults to achieve success. Empowerment is providing a sense of authority to another person so s/he can gain confidence in leadership and assertiveness. When others are empowered, they feel ownership, respect, and pride. They develop their strengths and experience growth. They discover they can make a difference in their organizations and in the world. (Power Point Slides 1, 2)

WHAT TO DO

There is a subtle difference between empowerment and delegation, two words that are often misused interchangeably. (Power Point Slide 3) According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

- Empower means to give authority to somebody, make more confident or assertive.
- Delegate means to give a task or authority to somebody.

The difference between these two definitions is the phrase “*make more confident or assertive*,” which is done by conveying information and developing skills through practical and meaningful application—in other words, through education and training. The positive youth development opportunities you create should develop skills through practical and meaningful application, thereby empowering youth and increasing their confidence.

(Power Point Slide 4) As a 4-H volunteer, you are an essential coach and mentor for youth. It is important for you to build positive relationships with others and gain their trust and respect. In addition, honing your personal leadership and mentoring skills provides modeling for others. Trust and training provide the essential ingredients to empower youth and others and help them achieve success.

Activity 1: Training + Trust = Empowerment

As a group, brainstorm the following two questions. You may want to give the group a few minutes to jot down personal responses on a sheet of paper. Then, in a round robin brainstorming session, record answers to each question on flip chart paper:

- How have you experienced or observed others building relationships in 4-H or other groups?
- What training have you participated in or heard about that would build leadership, mentoring, or coaching skills?



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

<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/comm/vrkc.pdf>

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References for this lesson:

- Fritz, S., Brown, F.W., Lunde, J. P. & Banset, E. A. (2005). *Interpersonal Skills for Leadership*. Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Lee, J.F. & Catagnus, J.M. (1999). *Supervising Volunteers: An Action Guide for Making Your Job Easier*. Energize Inc., Philadelphia, PA.

There are 10 significant ways we can empower others to be successful (Lee and Catagnus, 1999). (Power Point Slide 5)
These include:

1. Model a passion for the mission and goals
2. Demonstrate competency
3. Reflect a caring attitude toward the team
4. Be accessible and approachable
5. Aim for consistency
6. Provide role descriptions for everyone on the team
7. Provide quality training and education
8. Provide feedback
9. Share information
10. Express your appreciation

Activity 2: Creating an Environment for Empowerment

Distribute Handout 1, which defines each of these ten elements, and review it as a group. Have participants work with a partner to complete the handout. Have the pairs share their responses. Record the responses on a flip chart. Have participants respond to: Which of the components appear to be strong in the 4-H program? What components need to be strengthened? What are new ideas you had not considered to support empowering youth and others?

Conclusion:

Empowering others builds confidence, trust, and respect in a group and provides the opportunity for each individual to contribute and learn from each experience. Empowerment also helps organizations to grow and achieve their mission. Volunteers must partner with youth to build their confidence, competence, and citizenship skills through empowerment. "We empower others when we seek to understand them, and we empower ourselves when we see others without the blinders of our own motives and self interests." (Fritz, Brown, Lunde, Banset, 2005) (Power Point Slides 6, 7)

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- What is the difference between empowerment and delegating?
- What two things need to be in place for others to be empowered?

Apply:

- What ways can an environment for empowerment be developed?

EVALUATION

Ask each participant to complete the evaluation tool (Handout 2).

ENHANCE or SIMPLIFY

Ask youth members to share experiences where they have felt empowered. Have them share what created that environment, the roles that adult volunteers played, and the outcomes of the experience for the event/activity and for themselves personally.

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Handout 1

Creating an Environment for Empowerment

Working with a partner, review the key elements in creating an environment for empowerment of others. Identify examples of 4-H activities, projects, and events where these elements are present. Brainstorm additional ways to add these elements to strengthen the learning experience for youth.

Element	Definition/Description	Example in 4-H Activities, Events and Projects	Additional Ideas to Provide this Element
Model a passion for the mission and goals	Includes demonstrating commitment and enthusiasm for the mission and goals of the organization or experience. Communicate how the pieces fit together.		
Demonstrate competency	Understand the work that needs to be done, communicate this, answer questions, and seek resources to answer those questions you do not know.		
Reflect a caring attitude toward the team	Demonstrate a caring attitude to individuals and to the group. See and communicate the value each member brings to the group.		
Be accessible and approachable	Be available to respond to questions and ideas of others. Create an atmosphere where ideas are welcome and considered.		
Aim for consistency	Be consistent in words and actions. Promote orderly ways of change and seek input from the entire team. Explain reasons for change.		
Provide role descriptions for everyone on the team	Provide a clear description of expectations and responsibilities for each member of the group.		
Provide quality training and education	Provide top quality on-going resources, training and support for all members of the team.		
Provide feedback	Provide both positive and constructive feedback to others throughout the experience or event.		
Share information	Be up front with new information or updates.		
Express your appreciation	Express appreciation for work and contributions both formally and informally.		



Handout 2

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 describe the difference between empower and delegate.	1 2 3	1 2 3
2. I can recognize the importance of training and trust to provide an environment for empowerment of others.	1 2 3	1 2 3
3. I can describe ways to empower others to be successful and enhance 4-H projects, activities, and events.	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?



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