



CRAZY SENTENCES

Purpose

To improve 4-H members ability to listen carefully.

Materials

Paper, pens or pencils, two chairs

Background

Listening to details can be very important when trying to solve a problem or attempting to follow complicated directions. Sometimes the details are not essential, but at other times these details are extremely important.

Being able to listen carefully isn't an easy task, and sometimes we must use our eyes and observe body language, facial expressions, and eye movement in order to get all the information needed. The better you listen, the more you will hear and the better you will understand what is being said.

Instructions

Prior to this activity, use your creativity to make up random and crazy sentences on small pieces of paper. Some examples of crazy sentences are: "Big Bird is my idol," or "It is not good to eat chocolate for breakfast." Also, prior to the game set up two chairs in the front of the room.

Ask for two volunteers of similar skill levels (two junior members etc.) to sit in the chairs that you have set up in the front of the room. Give each person a piece of paper with one of the crazy sentences on it.

The two players must read the sentence to themselves and then engage in conversation.

The object is to slip in the sentence without the other person guessing what it is. You may wish to give them a topic to start with such as fishing, country music, bowling, buying shoes, or anything else that has nothing to do with the sentences. Also give them a one or two minute time limit to slip their sentences in during the conversation. After the time limit, allow the people in the audience to guess what the crazy sentence is and whoever guesses correctly is given the opportunity to play the game for the next round.

- Each player may tell a story, instead of engaging in a conversation with one other player.
- This game can be done with three people engaging in conversation at the same time instead of just two.
- Play in teams and allow each team to make up sentences for the other team to use when telling a story to their own team.



DIRECTION DIRECTION

Purpose

To help 4-H members recognize the importance of using good verbal and listening skills.

Materials

Varies

Background

In our society there is a constant transfer of information from one person to another. You must be careful when you pass information on if you want it to stay accurate. In this activity someone gets a set of rules and the group gets to see how easy it can be to make mistakes in passing them on. This can be a fun way to see what can happen when information is not passed on correctly.

Instructions

Choose a game that has a few specific rules that must be followed in order to play the game (and enough rules to make it hard to remember them all). Prior to the activity select one person and give him/her the directions for the game without telling the rest of the group. Verbally explain the game and clearly state all of the rules.

At the time of the game, the person who has heard the rules will give the directions to the rest of the group without any help from you. Allow the group to play the game at least once through before having a group discussion or making any corrections or clarifications in the rules of the game.

- Select a game that requires two teams. Separate the two teams and select one member from each team to receive the directions for the game. Each person explains the rules to his/her team.
- Give each team a different set of directions, on purpose.



EMOTICONS

Purpose

Develop a wide range of emotions in your speaking, and realize how important your facial expressions are in communicating.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

Computer enthusiasts communicate with each other via computer billboards. Messages are posted and read by anyone with a computer and a modem. Interestingly, computer users know how important the visual factor is in communicating.

They know that words are often not enough for effective communication. To really make contact with your listeners, they have to be visual.

Computer users have invented emoticons. The word comes from emotion and icons. (Icons are little pictures or symbols used to convey a function on the computer.)

Emoticons are pictures of faces made out of keyboard characters. These pictures are used to convey emotion. They are an attempt to put the visual factor back into faceless, voiceless, keyboard-only conversation.

Activity

Note: In this activity you will be asked to give a brief (one minute) talk before a small group of 4-H members. What is important in your talk is the range of expressions you can convey to the group. Talk about something you have an interest in so you will be able to show a range of expressions.

1. Review the list of emoticons provided below. Emoticons lie on their sides. You have to tilt your head to the left in order to read them.
2. Someone volunteer to talk to the group for about one minute.
3. The audience is to match the expressions and visual clues of the speaker with the emoticons provided.
4. When the speaker finishes, the audience shares with the speaker the emoticons expressed during the speaker's talk.
5. Have another person in your group give a brief talk. Repeat steps 3 and 4 with the new speaker.
6. Continue for as long as there are volunteers and interest in this activity.



Emoticons

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| :-) feeling happy | l-) Hee hee! |
| :(feeling sad | l-D Ha ha! |
| :-< feeling very sad | :-o Oh, I'm surprised! |
| :-ø feeling undecided | :-l Hmmmmmmmm |
| :-& feeling tongue-tied | :-c Bummer! |
| :-D enjoy talking | .-> Hey! All alright! |
| :-l blank expression | :-O I'm thinking |
| :-} I'm wearing lipstick | 8-) I'm wearing glasses |
| { :-) I part my hair in the middle | *:0) Just feeling good |

Debrief

- Bringing expressions into your talk adds a great visual factor to your speaking. How expressive were you? Can you improve the range and variety of your expressions?
- Can you invent other emoticons on a computer?



EXAGGERATED PLUS

Purpose

Develop the ability to use more of your real self and increase your energy level and that of your audience.

Materials

None

Group Size

Small or large

Background

How expressive are you? There is often a wide difference between how we perceive our gestures, movements and expressions and how others perceive them.

For example, a person with a naturally unsmiling face may think she is expressing her inner happiness in a big smile while others around her think, "What's she so glum about?" Or, a person may think that he really made a point with the extra gestures he used, when others think, "What was he doing? I didn't understand the hand movements he was making."

The fact is, very few people truly exaggerate their gestures or facial expressions even when they try to. They may think they are, but if they saw themselves as others see them, they would realize they were still mild mannered.

The point is we don't have to get wild about our communication. But often, we can work on becoming more expressive and as a result, effective in our communications. This exaggerate plus exercise is intended to help you become more expressive.

Activity

1. Choose one of the skills listed below.
2. Create a story or incident around this skill. How can you use this skill to tell a story?
3. What can you do to exaggerate the use of this skill in the story? Think of one gestures, body movements and facial expressions you can use to tell your story in an exaggerated manner.
4. Tell and act your story in front of a 4-H group (large or small). Provide narration on what is happening.
5. It's the turn of another 4-H member to tell and act their story.
6. Continue this exercise for three or more stories or until the time suitable or available has expired.



Some Skills to Act Out

- Giving a demonstration
- Sewing
- Public speaking
- Climbing a steep cliff
- Skate boarding
- Making a craft item
- Fishing
- Debating

Debrief

- Did you really over exaggerate? How?
- Did you discover some gestures and expressions that were quite effective in telling the story? Could they be used in a modified form in your next speech before the club?



FAMOUS CELEBRITY

Purpose

Develop a broader range of gestures and learn what makes some people very effective communicators.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

One of the best ways to develop your expressive skills like gesturing, voice power, pitch and word pace is to imitate someone else.

Actors, politicians, and sports stars - they can provide you with models of good communication. They have developed some very good communication techniques with practice and experience. For example, the actor has learned how to control his voice, gesture with dramatic effect and speak with clarity and power. The politician has learned how to think on his feet, how to express effectively something that he believes in and how to convince others what he thinks is important.

By acting out one of your favourite communicators, you can become more expressive and confident in your abilities. But to do this, you must become as familiar with the famous celebrity as you can.

So take a few moments now to think of whom you would like to act out. What do they do to make themselves effective communicators? How do they gesture, how do they use their voice, what ways do they express emotions like happiness, sadness, fear and love for something or someone? Your task is to become the person you are thinking of.

Activity

1. If you haven't done so already, choose an actor, politician, sports star or some other famous personality.
2. Think about this person for a while. What makes him or her a good communicator? Is it the way they gesture with their hands, the power in their voice, the ability to think on their feet? Is it their smile, warm manner, convincing style? Is it the way they get in touch with their audience? What makes them special communicators?
3. Think how you might impersonate this famous person. Try a few of their gestures, how they might use their voice and what they might say.
4. Think up five questions that the media might ask your famous celebrity. Write out these questions on a piece of paper



5. Give the questions to the group who is going to see you in action. Get them to ask you these questions.
6. Without telling anyone in the group whom you are acting out, imitate this famous person as you respond to the questions being asked.
7. Get the group to guess who you are.
8. Repeat this exercise with other members.

Debrief

- What gestures are most important to your celebrity?
- What can you learn about good communication habits from your celebrity?



FILL IN THE BLANK STORY

Purpose

To build listening skills and development of imagination

Materials

None

Instructions

The leader begins a simple story. As the story progresses he may, at any point, stop in mid-sentence to call on an individual member of the group to add the next word of the story. The leader should work to incorporate these added details into the emerging fabric of the whole. Keep the story moving along. Choose places for the blanks where the answers have the potential to be as interesting and as fun as possible.



FOUR WHY'S GUYS

Purpose

Learn how to build a bridge from the audience to the speaker and learn the correct procedure on how to introduce a speaker.

Materials

Pencils and paper

Group Size

4

Background

How would you like to be introduced to your 4-H club when you give your next speech? Here's a tip. When you or others introduce a speaker, use the four why's guys. They are:

1. **Why** this topic?

First tell the audience why this topic has been chosen. This reason may come from the speaker or from the club.

2. **Why** to this audience?

Why is this club hearing this speech? Tell the audience.

3. **Why** at this time?

Why now? Is there something important to mention why this topic is being spoken on now?

4. **Why** the speaker!

What are the qualifications or experiences of the speaker that make him qualified?

Example. "Fellow club members. We have been interested in how to raise funds for our next summer camp. We know that now is the time to get some tips on how to raise money the smart way. Our speaker is a former club member who knows three creative ways to raise funds. Would you welcome Mr. John Smith?"

Activity

1. In your group, assign one person to be the instructor and one person to be the drawer. Give this practice card to the instructor.
2. Sit back to back. Give the drawer a pencil and a piece of paper.



To the instructor

1. Look at the drawing below. Your task is to describe this drawing to the drawer without them seeing it. (Note: Make up your own drawing if you wish).
2. You are to describe this drawing using words only. No gestures.
3. As you describe the drawing, break it down into easy steps for the drawer to complete.

E.g.

1. In the middle of your paper, draw a 2-inch square.
2. One half inch below the top line of the square you have just drawn, draw a straight line, going from the left edge of the square to the right edge of the square.
3. Write a capital 'A' just above the line you have drawn, about 1/4 inch high and in the middle.
4. etc.

Debrief

- Reverse roles. Have the drawer become the instructor and visa versa. The instructor can make up his or her own drawing and then describe it to the drawer.
- How did you both do? It can be hard to give accurate instructions. But with practice you will get better!



GETTING PHYSICAL

Purpose

Develop your ability to become an expressive communicator.

Materials

None

Group Size

Whole club

Background

Whether you realize it or not, when you talk to someone, be it one person or many people, you are competing for their attention.

We tend to have lots of things on our minds. Without you knowing it, your listeners can be tuned in to what you are saying or tuned out with their minds on something else. Sometimes what you say can trigger a person to think about something in their past, present or future. They may recall something into their minds and you have been tuned-out.

Getting and keeping the listeners attention is important if you want to be listened to.

We can develop our abilities as good speakers who are listened to. This exercise is intended to help you command attention of your listeners. You'll be amazed at the abilities you have to get people's attention. All it takes is some determination on your part and a willingness to get physical.

Activity

Note: In this activity, you will be asked to give a brief (one minute) talk. So give some thought about what you want to say. If you speak on something you have an interest in, then you are more likely to speak effectively.

1. Select three people who want to stand up and give a one-minute talk to the club.
2. Three volunteers are to come up together. Each will be speaking at the same time in front of the same group.
3. When the speakers are ready, invite them to give their brief talks. Explain that they will all be talking at the same time. They each want to be heard by the audience, but no yelling will be allowed. They can use other communication techniques to get audience attention. After one minute, applaud and thank the speakers.
4. Now as a whole group, take a few moments to see what each speaker did to get your attention. Did they increase their volume? Did they use gestures and facial expressions? Did they use effective eye contact? Were they animated?



5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 for the next set of three speakers.

Debrief

- Were there any surprises with the participants? What did they do that was creative?
- What did you discover about yourself and your communicative abilities?



GETTING REAL

Purpose

Learn how to express your true feelings and be able to read what others are feeling.

Materials

7 pieces of paper (3x3) and a box or hat

Group Size

4 - 6

Background

Seventy-five percent of our nonverbal communication is done with the face. In other words, when you think of all the nonverbal ways we communicate - hand gestures, body movements - three quarters of this communication comes from just our face.

Of all the emotions we express with our face, there are seven that are universal. That is, there are seven emotions that all people of this world communicate in common. These seven emotions are:

- interest
- sadness
- surprise
- fear
- anger
- happiness
- love

What do these seven emotions look like? How good are you at conveying each of these emotions? Can you get better at communicating nonverbally to ensure that what you mean is what the other person gets from you?

Let's practice our ability to express nonverbally the seven universal emotions.

Activity

1. Read all seven emotions listed below in the boxes. Read each of the clues given about the emotion. Choose one you would like to act out. Do not tell anyone what emotion you have chosen.
2. Begin with your first volunteer. The volunteer is to act the emotion they have chosen using only a facial expression. Try to hold the facial gesture for about five seconds so that the group can get a good look at what emotion you are acting.



3. The group is to use the clues provided below to predict which of the seven emotions the volunteer is acting.
4. When the group has guessed correctly which emotion the participant was portraying, then have another volunteer to act out the emotion they have chosen.

SEVEN EMOTIONS

Interest

- raise eyelids
- raise head
- wrinkle forehead

Sadness

- raise eyebrows
- wrinkle forehead
- depress lower lip

Surmise

- raise eyebrows
- raise eyelids
- open mouth

Fear

- raise eyebrows
- raise eyelids
- stretch lips
- open mouth

Happiness

- raise cheeks
- part lips
- drop jaw
- smile

Anger

- lower eyebrows
- stare hard
- open mouth
- raise lips



Love

- smile slightly
- protrude lower lip
- eyes widen

Debrief

- What emotion is hardest to communicate? Why?
- What emotion is easiest to communicate? Why?
- What other emotions are you good at reading?



GESTURE GUESS

Purpose

Helps you to dramatize your ideas and clarify and support your words.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

A gesture is a body movement that conveys a particular thought, idea or emotion. Although gestures may be made with the head, shoulders or even the legs and feet, most are made with the hands and arms.

Your body has the capacity to make many gestures. In fact, a study once determined that there are more gestures than there are words in the English language.

Gestures can help or hinder our expression of ideas. If we gesture with purpose, then we will help ourselves get our ideas across better. If we gesture very little or excessively, then we may find that our gestures don't account for much in helping others understand us.

To be effective, gestures must be purposeful. They must be visible to others. They must mean the same thing to the observers as they mean to the sender.

Activity

1. Select one of the following actions.
2. Without saying a word, act out your action to the group.
3. Like all good forms of communication, start at the beginning of your action and work towards a meaningful ending.
4. You may want to take between 30 seconds and one minute to act out your action.
5. Once you have completed the action, the group may guess what action they think you have done.

Actions

- Putting on a pair of skis
- Describing a car accident
- Washing a new born baby
- Building a book case
- Playing a game of tennis



- Painting a favourite landscape
- Changing the oil in a car
- Watching a hockey game
- Putting on a sweater that is too tight
- Looking for a lost contact lens
- Learning to use a skateboard
- Running a marathon
- Or make up your own topic and act it out!

Debrief

- Are you good at particular gestures? Which ones? These may be the gestures that you can use in your speaking.
- What gestures do you find easy to read? Do you know why?
- What gestures do you find hard to read? Do you know why?



GROKING

Purpose

Develop your intuitive abilities and appreciate how important your image is in communicating.

Materials

None

Group Size

Three

Background

Did you ever talk to someone and immediately know that you could trust that person? Did you ever hear a sports caster and immediately turn him off because he turned you off? Did you ever catch the eye of another person and just know that you were going to really like that person? But you didn't know why? Then you know what it is to "grok"!

Grokking, a word invented by the science fiction author Robert Heinlein, is the ability to grasp the inner reality of people and situations. Another word for grokking is intuition. The fact is, we all can grok and we all are being grokked. Whenever you meet someone or encounter a situation, you grok (intuitively form an immediate impression of the person or situation).

And we're all pretty good at grokking! In fact research tells us that it does not take long for us to grok a person or situation - about seven seconds! Yes, in seven seconds you have intuitively grasped the image or impression of that person. It may be a good, trusting feeling, an awkward and stiff feeling, or a compassionate and caring feeling. Whatever the feeling, you have grokked in seven seconds!

Activity

1. In your group of three, count off "one, two and three".
2. Person one is to talk to the other two. Persons two and three are listeners. They are to actively listen by paying attention to what is being said and how it is being said.
3. After one minute, person one (the speaker) leaves the group. The two listeners now consult the Grokking Chart below. Their task is to use their intuition to find two or three words that best describe the communication 'strengths' of person one. Take about a minute to decide. Then call person one back to the group.
4. Provide feedback to person one by telling them the two or three words you observed about them from the Grokking Chart. Tell person one what they did give this impression. Remember you are complementing person one on his or her communication strengths.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 with person two as the speaker. Repeat steps 2,3, and 4 with person three as the speaker.



Grokking Chart

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------|----------|---------|
| confident | positive | content | caring |
| decisive | sincere | happy | calm |
| responsible | accepting | open | patient |
| enthusiastic | trusting | reliable | |

Debrief

- What did you discover about your communication strengths that were new?
- What we give away - our image - forms a lasting impression on others.

Perhaps there are some words in the grokking chart that you would like to include as your communication strengths. What are they? What can you do to develop these traits in yourself?



HAVE YOU EVER?

Purpose

To explore the rich diversity of experiences that different people bring to any group.

Materials

None

Instructions

This activity works best with larger groups. Explain to the group that you will call out different things that may or may not apply to each person. If the item does apply to you, then run into the middle, jump in the air, and do a high 5 with anyone else that runs in.

A list of about 20 items should be tailored to the particular group, setting, and program goals, but some suggestions are below. Usually the items are of a "Have You Ever....?" form, but also free to ad lib. E.g. "Does Anyone Have....?"

Items should be carefully considered in order to prevent embarrassment, ridicule, etc.

The motivation of participants to participate often needs some amping up. Try to do some other warm-ups first. The rest is down to the leader's skill in demonstrating and encouraging.

List of Possible "Have Your Ever?" Items:

- Have you ever climbed to the highest point in your country of birth?
- Have you ever lived overseas for more than 1 year?
- Have you ever sung karaoke?
- Have you ever been without a shower for more than 2 weeks?
- Do you have both a brother and a sister?
- Have you ever ridden a horse?
- Have you ever eaten frogs' legs?
- Have you swum in 2 or more different oceans?
- Have you ever flown an aeroplane?
- Have you broken 2 or more bones in your body?
- Have you done volunteer work sometime in the last month?
- Have you ever had a close relative that lived to over 90?
- Have you ever cooked a meal by yourself?
- Have you ever seen a polar bear?

Participants can generate their own questions. Have all the 4-H members sit in in a circle. Each person has a chair (or rope ring or hula hoop) except the person who is "it", who is standing in the center.



The person in the middle asks a “Have You Ever” question that is true for him/herself.
E.g. “have you ever climbed a mountain?”

Anyone whose answer is “yes” gets up and moves to an empty seat. So, if four people get up they try to exchange seats as quickly as possible. The person who asked the question tries to quickly gain a seat, leaving one other person without a seat and they become the new “it”.

In choosing a question, participants can try for questions which reveal something. E.g., “have you ever trekked the Great Wall of China?” or ask simple questions like “have you ever fallen off of a bicycle?” for which everyone would get up.

Pileup variation: Anyone can ask a question and if you can answer yes to the question you move one space to your right and sit in that chair. If you cannot answer yes to the question, you stay seated in the chair where you are. This means somebody may be coming to sit on your lap from the seat to your left. Sometimes you get three and four people sitting in sort of a lap-style game on top of you. Then, when they ask the next question to go one space to the right by answering yes, they peel off one at a time sit down and you end up on top. It creates some very interesting combinations. Physical touching reveals something about people and it breaks the ice so that people can then begin to feel more comfortable talking about and doing other novel things.



HIDDEN CONVERSATION

Purpose

To develop verbal/vocabulary skills and to draw out shy players.

Materials

None

Instructions

Ask for two volunteers to start a conversation. Have these two players choose a topic of conversation, known only to them. They begin to discuss the topic as fully as possible in front of the other players, without mentioning it by name.

The two players actively try to mislead the other players without making false statements. Other players may not ask questions, but as they begin to suspect what the topic is, they may join in the conversation. Either of the first two players may challenge the new person if they feel he is incorrect.

If the person is correct he stays in the conversation and may challenge newcomers. If he is wrong he must return to the group, but he may try again as often as he likes. The game continues until all the players are in or out.

Variation

Have the topic of conversation come from the subject being studied.

Hints

When referring to the hidden topic try not to use the word "it." Outside players, take a chance. Join in as soon as you think you know what they're talking about. Share your voices.



LISTEN UP

Purpose

Develop your active listening skills and your ability to hear the other person's point of view.

Materials

None

Group Size

2

Background

Listening is a skill. Like speaking, it can improve with practice.

There are two kinds of listening - active and passive.

In active listening, you take the time to really listen to the speaker. You try to hear things from their perspective. You listen for content and information and you are tuned-in to the person's feelings. You look at the speaker and nod or smile when it is appropriate.

Passive listening focuses only on the information - just give me the facts man. It does not pay heed to what the speaker is doing, feeling or believing. It just wants the information. Sometimes, passive listeners are barely listening for even the facts because they are already spending their time thinking what they want to say.

Obviously, the speaker likes active listeners. When people put in the energy to really listen, the speaker appreciates it.

Let's engage in an active listening process.

Activity

1. In your group of two, pick a topic where you both agree to disagree. That is, one of you will take the pro side and the other will take the con side of the topic.
E.g. One loves liver, the other hates liver
One wants school to finish at tenth grade, the other wants school to finish at the normal twelfth grade.
2. Now take a few minutes to prepare two points to support your view.
3. Follow this procedure:
 - Number off - person one and person two
 - Person One: Give your first point of view - one minute
 - Person Two: Paraphrase person one's first point of view (30 seconds) and give



your fast point of view (one minute).

- Person One: Paraphrase person two's fast point of view (30 seconds) and give your second point of view (one minute).
 - Person Two: Paraphrase person one's second point of view (30 seconds) and give your second point of view (one min.)
4. Now spend a few minutes debriefing this active listening exercise. See the suggestions below.

Debrief

- This exercise is a very good one to develop your ability to hear the other person's point of view. How did you do? Were you able to paraphrase effectively?
- What is harder - paraphrasing others or giving your own point of view? Why?



Debrief

- As you read this sentence, can you hear the change in pitch?
- Practice some more sentences. You can make them up like the ones above or simply read sentences from a book, focusing on pitch change.



NICKING THE NONWORDS

Purpose

Avoid nonwords in your speaking and appear more intelligent, in control and assertive.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

Everyone knows language is made out of words. But did you know language is also made out of nonwords.

Nonwords get in the way of your message.

The most common nonwords are “uhh”, “ahh”, and “umm”. Other nonwords include “so”, “well”, “you know”, “Okay”, “like”, and, “sort of”.

We don’t write nonwords. Would you write this: “Well, uhh, my name is, uhh, Joe Smith and uhh I like to sort of talk ahh about effective uhh communication.”

The goal is not to rid ourselves of all nonwords. That’s very difficult to do and perhaps a waste of our time. Rather, it’s fair to expect you to keep nonwords to a bare minimum. Keep them out of your talking to the point that no one notices you use them.

Nonwords can be distracters. They can interfere with your efforts at trying to communicate clearly and concisely.

Stick with words. They’ll be understood!

Activity

1. In your group, take turns talking for one minute each. As each one speaks, their goal will be to utter as many nonwords as possible while still being understood. If you want, you can have someone count the number of nonwords that you use.
2. Now go around the group again, but this time as each person speaks for about one minute, nick the nonwords. That is, avoid using nonwords. Have someone say your first name if you do use a nonword.
3. Tip: When you are tempted to use a nonword, just pause. That’s right, pause and say nothing. By learning to pause, you will be learning to avoid those nasty nonwords.



Debrief

- When a person uses a lot of nonwords, how do they come across to you? What words would you use to describe a person using many nonwords?
- Now, when a person uses few nonwords, what descriptive words would you use to comment on their talk?



ONE WORD LETTER WRITING

Purpose

To develop writing and collaborative skills.

Materials

Paper and pencils

Instructions

Divide the group into teams of two people. Each team has one piece of paper and two pencils. Give each team a two-minute time limit to write a single letter, each of them adding only one word at a time. They are to write as quickly as possible, not going back to re-read anything but the last word added.

No attention should be paid to grammar or spelling. Punctuation should be added only as it is needed for the sense of the letter. There is no need to complete the letter. The team should focus on writing one letter to anyone they wish, in any format that emerges. After the two-minute period, each letter is read aloud to the group.

Note: An interesting sequence of events emerges when this game is played more than once. At first the letters tend to be nonsensical. This "scribble stage" should not be discouraged; besides, the abstract sense of the ridiculous can be very entertaining. As the game is played more often, the letters will become more cohesive.



PAPER AUDIENCE

Purpose

To learn how to focus your thoughts and be able to read your audience.

Materials

Post-it notes

Group Size

Solo or 4 to 6

Background

Eye contact is your number one visual skill. It ranks first because it has the greatest impact in both one on one communications and in large group communications.

Eye contact literally connects mind to mind since your eyes are the only part of your central nervous system that are in direct contact with another human being.

For effective eye communication, you need to look at one person at a time for about five seconds or the length of time it takes to complete a sentence. Then look at another person for five seconds and so on.

Avoid eye darting where you look at a person for a brief second before going onto another person for another brief second. Avoid staring or looking at one person for longer than ten seconds. Eye darting and staring can make individuals and the audience uncomfortable.

Eyes are an effective means of helping to develop rapport or trust with an audience. They help you connect with your audience. The eyes have it!

Activity

Note: In this activity you will be asked to stand before a paper audience and give a one-minute talk. You have the option of inviting a few 4-H members to join the paper audience if you wish. Don't worry about what you're going to say. Just give a talk on something that interests you. What is important is how you use your eyes when you talk to the group.

1. Draw happy faces on six or seven post-it notes.
2. Stick these happy faces on the wall of the room where you are going to give a brief one-minute talk. Make sure you stick a few of the post-it notes on the fringes or corners where people will be seated. This is your paper audience.
3. Now stand before your paper audience. Remember you can do this solo with just you and your paper audience or invite a few 4-H members to sit in with the paper audience. Give a one-minute talk. Remember, what is important, is developing good eye contact with the paper audience.



4. As you give your talk, look at the happy faces - the paper audience. Be sure to give at least five seconds with each happy face that you look at. And be sure to include looking at those happy faces on the fringes.

Debrief

- How did you do? Have you developed the ability to look at one face for about five seconds? It may feel awkward at first, but this skill will go a long way in helping you to connect with your audience.
- If you had some 4-H members in the audience, get them to comment on how effectively you used your eyes to connect with your paper audience.



PITCH IN

Purpose

Learn to control your voice to create special effects and learn the power of pitch for creating interest in what you say.

Materials

None

Group Size

Pairs

Background

When you're excited what happens to your voice? What do you do with your voice to indicate you are serious?

We get meaning from the tone of voice as much as we do from the words spoken. Some voice experts would suggest that we even get more meaning from the tone of voice than we do from the words.

Do you ever send a mixed message, sending one thing but getting back the unexpected?

This activity will help you work on getting across what you really want to communicate.

Activity

1. Read each sentence to yourself.
2. Now practice with another person. Person one reads the first sentence while person two listens for the mood and the pitch that is requested.
3. Person two can read the next sentence. Person one listens for the mood and the pitch that is requested.
4. Complete all the sentences, taking turns a speaking and listening.



| Mood To Create | High Middle Low | Sentence to Say |
|----------------|-----------------------|---|
| • Excited | High | Do it immediately? At once ? Do you hear? |
| • Inform | Middle | We've had a wonderful holiday! |
| • Question | High | Did you know about John? |
| • Fear | Middle | I don't know what I'm going to do. |
| • Excited | High | Oh no! How can you say such a thing? |
| • Informative | Middle | Mary is very capable and will make a good member. |
| • Thinking | Low | To be or not to be. That is the question. |
| • Serious | Low | This is a very serious moment in the history of our country. |
| • Love | Low | I really love that dog. He's the best friend I've of right now. |

Debrief

- Can you say a question without raising your voice at the end of the sentence? Some punctuation marks already give us clues as to what to do with our voices.
- Make up your own sentences including the kind of mood you want to create.



PRESS CONFERENCE

Purpose

Develop agility to think on your feet and develop confidence in your speaking abilities.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

What makes a singer a great singer?

They practice. What singers do to practice varies greatly. A great singer may practice singing scales, may sing with others, may spend time on memorizing the words of songs, may try to write her own songs, may practice by watching others, or may hire a coach to help her develop her vocal abilities.

To help you become better at speaking, here is one practice idea. It works at helping you to think on your feet. Every speaker needs this ability. You never know what may happen during your speech. You might forget a part, drop your notes, or get asked questions.

Being prepared can in part be done through exercises like the one you are about to engage in.

Activity

1. Imagine that you are a well-known soccer player, farmer, writer, singer, actor, teacher, artist, or computer inventor.
2. Announce to your group who you will be. Give the group about two or three minutes to come up with some questions for this famous person.
3. Now hold a press conference. You are at the head of the group - sitting in an interview chair. The others are around you, members from the press and ready to ask you some questions about yourself.
4. Give each member of the group the opportunity to ask you at least one question.
5. Respond to each question as briefly as you can. This is a pretend press conference, so you can make up your responses as you go. The point here is to get your answers out quickly and briefly.
6. You always have the right to not answer a question. You may want to reply with "no comment". Try to avoid using this too much.
7. After your press conference, another member may want to hold their press conference.



Debrief

- What was the easiest question you were asked? What made it so easy?
- What was the hardest question you were given? Why?
- What do you need to work on to become better at this?



PROP TALK

Purpose

Develop your ability to convince others and how to use a prop in your talk.

Materials

Prop

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

Have you ever tried to sell something to someone?

When you come to think about it, were selling all the time. We may be not selling products like computers or cars, but we do attempt to sell our idea to others. For example, when you want a particular gift for your birthday, you sell your suggestion to your parents. When you want to go to a pop, western or rock concert, you try to convince your friends to join you. When you need more time on your assignment, you try to convince your teacher to give you the time you need. We're selling our ideas all the time!

What is most important in the selling of your ideas? You guessed it, effective communication. Your idea may be a great one, but convincing the buyer to buy your idea depends on how well you present yourself. Do you prepare your thoughts before you open your mouth? Do you think of the buyer and not just about yourself? Do you use a variety of voice skills like different pitch and power levels? Do you look at your buyers with a friendly face?

When you are selling ideas, its always more effective if the buyer can see the idea. In this exercise we will use props.

Activity

1. Choose a common object you might find around the home, school or club. It might be a pencil, lamp, compass, watch, hat, purse, box, milk carton, or whatever.
2. Now think of two or three creative uses this object might have for which it is presently not being used.
E.g. milk carton: cutting one side off - this side can be used as a memo pad cutting the top off of the carton to make into a pencil storage container.
3. With your creative ideas, think how you might present them. Plan your talk to include a brief introduction, your key ideas and how you will conclude your talk. For example, you might want to start with a question to pique their curiosity. Then follow with the three creative uses of your object and conclude with a challenge for the audience to use your object.



4. Include a prop in your talk. (E.g. the milk carton, pencil, etc.). You may want to demonstrate how your prop can be used creatively. Remember, to use your prop appropriately. Don't let you or the audience get distracted by it and make sure everyone can see it.
5. Give your prop talk. Your objective is to sell the audience on the creative uses of your prop.

Debrief

- Did you sell your prop ideas? What gave you the feeling that you did or didn't?
- How did you feel about using a prop? Would you change how you used your prop?



SKETCH TALK

Purpose

Learn how to communicate accurately and become dependable and reliable in your observations.

Materials

Pencil and paper

Group Size

2

Background

Has anyone ever given you mixed up instructions or directions? Maybe it was someone trying to tell you how to get to his or her house? You got the first part okay, but by the time they were done telling you, you were both lost!

Giving clear, concise and careful instructions is something we have been or will be called upon to do. It might be an occasion where you have to describe a highway accident to the police officer that is depending on you to tell him quickly and accurately. Or perhaps it will happen when you have to give instructions to a friend on how to complete a 4-H project.

When it does happen, will you be able to respond with clarity and clearness? This activity will help you to develop your ability to communicate accurately and with the confidence that you can be relied upon to do a good job.

Activity

1. Think of a topic you would like to speak on. Choose a topic where you have some personal experience or you have read about it. It might be on some aspect of a club project, on computers, on one of your hobbies, etc.
2. In pairs, number off 1, 2. Person 2 will interview person 1. Person 1 is the appointed speaker and person 2 is the introducer.
3. In the interview, person 2 is to find out the topic of the speaker and then to answer the four why's guys questions, namely:
 - Why this topic?
 - Why to this audience?
 - Why at this time?
 - Why this speaker?
4. You can make up stuff if you have to. This is practice for when it becomes real. Plan what you can say to introduce person 1.



5. After person 2 is done planning, then they can introduce person 1. Did you mention all four why's guys?
6. Now reverse roles. Person 1 interviews person 2 and will eventually introduce person 2 as a speaker.

Debrief

- Did you get all four why's guys answered in your introduction?
- Note that you leave the name of the speaker till near the end of your introduction. The audience has a better chance of remembering their name.



STORY LINE

Purpose

To increase verbal dexterity, group development, precursor to creative writing.

Materials

None

Instructions

Ask 5 or 6 players to stand in a line and tell a story, each player adding one word at a time. They are all telling the same story together. Encourage the players to speak the first word that comes to mind, while maintaining the continuity of the story. The story continues until the players find their own ending. If getting started is difficult-suggest a title for the story.

When players understand this concept, move on to the variation: Story begins as above, with each player inserting one word at a time. After several rounds the leader calls out "Continue, but add one sentence." The story continues and each player adds exactly one sentence. After several more rounds the players are told to add as many sentences as they like, but they must stop in the middle of a sentence, thought, or even a word.

Players continue the story in this manner for several rounds. The leader calls for players to act out the story, at which point they continue the story, acting it out as fully as possible while continuing the narrative. The players then find the end of the story.

HINT

Tell the same story and work together to ensure it makes sense. Don't think about what you say and look for the ending.



SPEAKING NON-SENSE

Purpose

To reduce poor speaking habits and improve good ones.

Materials

None

Instructions

Choose a 4-H member and give them a topic. Things that you are learning about work great as topics. Have the member talk for 1-2 minutes straight about their topic. They cannot say "um", etc. or use the word "and" more than twice. They must also keep eye contact with the audience at all times and use all public speaking skills. The winner or winners are those who can complete this task using all the rules.



TELL ME ABOUT THE TIME

Purpose

To increase the ability to speak in front of a group with confidence.

Materials

Chair or stool

Instructions

A chair or stool is placed in front of the assembled group. The leader then points to a player and asks him to “Tell me about the time” that some absurd or fantastic thing happened to him.

E.g. “Tell me about the time you sold bird cages on the moon,” etc.

The chosen player has a count of five to get from his seat to a position standing behind the chair (he’s not allowed to touch, lean against, or sit in it) and to begin telling everyone the story of the time he did whatever the leader has asked about. He keeps talking, expanding on the story until the leader releases him. The leader may ask shy players additional questions to draw them out and to keep the story moving along.



THE WINGER

Purpose

Build up your flexibility and creativity in speaking and learn how to think on your feet.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 to 6

Background

When you get a call from your friend who says, "Hi, how are you doing?" you have a wide range of responses available to you.

Some of your responses may include:

- "Just great I aced my math test yesterday. That's the first time I've ever done that."
- "Okay, I guess. So what's up with you?"
- "Oh, not bad. But it's Saturday and I'm in for some fun. What do you want to do?"
- "Super! My dad just gave me permission to go to the country and western concert in Edmonton - you know the one next week. I'm getting tickets tomorrow."
- "Well I'm feeling a little down today. It's all over the argument I had with Joe. What do you think I should do"?

What you're thinking, feeling and doing - all give you choices on how you might respond to the other person. You are thinking on your feet when you respond.

Let's develop our ability to think our feet - to develop flexibility in the way we respond.

Activity

1. Look around the room you are in. Pick an object. Let this be your topic.
2. One person says something about that object - in one sentence.
3. The person to their right takes one word out of that sentence and makes it the new topic. He or she then makes up a sentence on that new topic.
4. The next person does the same - picks a new topic based on one word in the last sentence and makes up a sentence on that new topic.
5. Continue going around the group for as long as you can.



EXAMPLE:

First person: I like digital clocks, because they're easy to read.

Second person: The last book I read was awesome.

Third person: Mario LeMeiux is an awesome hockey player.

Fourth person: Hockey has become a big paying sport.

Fifth person: Money is easy to get but hard to keep.

Debrief

- The more you do this the better you get at it - try it again! Maybe this time you might want to say two or three sentences before you pass to another person.



TO TELL THE TRUTH

Purpose

Develop imagination, communication skills, and reasoning exercise.

Materials

Four chairs

Instructions

Place four chairs in front of the group. Divide the whole group into teams of four. The members of each group tell a true story or event that has happened to them. The group then selects one of the stories. Each person will now have to participate in retelling the story.

When every group has chosen its story, the first group sits in the chairs, the other players becoming the audience and judges. The members of the first group tell the selected story together in the first person passing it back and forth among themselves until it is completed, making it as believable as possible.

The person to whom the story really happened must tell his part absolutely truthfully; the other members of the team are free to say anything they want in order to fool the audience.

When the first group has completed its story, the audience is free to ask questions. After questioning, they must vote to choose the truthful player.

Focus on getting the players to tell the story with conviction. You might want to talk about what makes a story or a person believable.



TONGUE TWIST

Purpose

Learn how to speak clearly and crisply.

Materials

None

Group Size

Solo

Background

Did you know that to speak clearly you need at least three things working for you? These three things include the lips, the jaw and the tongue.

The lips act as gates, sending the sound out or sending the sound through the nasal passage.

The jaw acts like a hinge.

The tongue takes on all sorts of shapes to help you formulate the sounds you make. The tongue needs all the space it can get.

When any one of these three items gets lazy or too tight, then your sound is affected. Sometimes a lazy tongue can make us sound as if we are mumbling. Lazy lips can make sounds hard to distinguish. A jaw that is too tight can restrict your sounds and make you appear snobbish.

So, getting all three - the lips, the jaw and the tongue - working together are important. The following exercise will help you develop clarity and a clean crisp voice. Nobody likes soggy chips. Nobody likes a soggy voice either!

Activity

1. Read silently each of the ten sentences that follow. You'll notice each sentence works on the lips, the jaw or the tongue.
2. Read aloud to yourself or with a partner.
3. You may want to tape yourself.
4. Remember, it's not how fast you go, it's how clear you are.

Articulation Exercises

1. She stood at the door of Burgess' Fish Sauce Shop, mimicking him.
2. Does this shop stock short socks with spots?



3. Theophilus Thistle, thistle sifter, sifted a sieve of unsifted thistles; where is the sieve of unsifted thistles Theophilus, the thistle sifter, sifted?
4. I saw a yacht and a yawl over yonder yesterday.
5. The guests drink toasts at the host's behest, 'til one insists that the host fast while he feasts and persists in his boasts.
6. Six silky, slithering snakes slid along, simpering and slyly sneezing, slipping sleazily from side to side.
7. Prize lizard's sizzle in a drizzle, lazy lizards require a blizzard to sizzle.
8. Machines murmured while Manning moaned, meaning nothing.
9. The sixth sheik's sixth sheep is sick.
10. Enthusiastic thousands thronged through the thoroughfare, thrusting themselves into the thick of the thirty-third subway.

Debrief

- Were there any sentences that were difficult for you? That's an indication that you can probably spend some extra time working on the syllables and sounds in those sentences. Note if the tongue, lip or jaw is the trouble spot. Work on making each sound as clear as you can.



TOUCH TONE TALK

Purpose

Develop persuasive abilities on the phone and develop confidence in your communicative abilities.

Materials

None

Group Size

3 (triad)

Background

Canadians are the number one users of the telephone in the world.

Research has shown that the tone and delivery of your message accounts for over 80 percent of whether people believe you or are interested in what you say. In other words, it's not what you say that is most important, it is the way that you say it.

You may not be surprised at this. Perhaps you've been on the phone lately when the caller seemed a little cool to you. What did that do to you? Did you want to end the conversation as quickly as possible?

How we say what we say is also very important in our public speaking. In fact, it can have a similar effect on the listener as the tone of voice can on the phone. If we come across as a warm, caring and attentive person, we'll be listened to much more readily than if we come off being bored and disinterested.

Let's take a try at our touch-tone talk and see what kind of difference we can make.

Activity

Note: Please read all instructions first before completing this activity.

1. Number off in three's. Person 1 will be the caller, person 2 will be the recipient of the call and person 3 will be the observer.
2. Person 1 and 2 can sit back to back.
3. The purpose of person 1 calling is to inform person 2 of an important event for the club within the next few weeks. It may be a mall display, a calf showing, whatever you want it to be. Person 1 is going to try to convince person 2 to get involved in this important event. Person 2 is going to be rather reluctant at first. If person 1 is convincing enough, then person 2 will eventually respond with a yes to person 1's request.
4. Okay, person 1 can dial a pretend phone and make a ringing sound. Person 2 picks up her phone and the conversation starts.



5. Person 3 observes what is being said between persons 1 and 2 and how it is being said. Make notes if you want to.
6. The phone call should last about 3 - 5 minutes.
7. You may want to repeat this activity by exchanging roles.

Debrief

- What vocal techniques did person 1 use to try to convince person 2?
- What vocal techniques did person 2 use to convey her initial reluctance?
- How important was the tone of the conversation to the eventual outcome?



TURNAROUND ROUTINE

Purpose

Learn to control what you give away in your speaking and develop confidence in your speaking ability.

Materials

None

Group Size

4 - 6

Background

Have you ever seen a presentation that was the pits? I mean it turned you off so much you began to groan? Have you ever seen a presentation that you got you excited and interested in the topic that was being presented?

Speakers are like a TV - they can be tuned into or turned off.

What kind of speaker do you want to be? Most of us like to be listened to. We like to share our ideas and be appreciated for the effective way we can do this.

One way to develop good communication abilities is to act out both the pits speaker and the peak speaker. This exercise will let you get a feeling what it is like to be both types of speakers and then to make up your mind how to be the best speaker you can be.

Activity

1. Think of a topic that you can give a one to two minute speech on.
2. When you give your speech, plan to start by turning off your listeners. That's right. Do some of the things that poor speakers do. For example, don't look at the audience, speak in a boring manner, slouch, look disinterested, speak softly so others can barely hear you, be disorganized in your content. Enjoy doing this for the first half of your speech.
3. Half way through the speech, turn it around. Be the best speaker you can be. Use good speech habits like a clear, projected voice, a confident manner, stand tall, be alert and keen, put energy into your well organized thoughts. Yes, you can do it!
4. Invite someone else to take his or her turn at the turnaround routine. It's fun and it's educational!

Debrief

- Describe how you felt being a poor speaker.
- What went through you mind as you began to turn it around?
- Describe how it felt being tuned in.



TWO LIES AND A TRUTH

Purpose

Develop listening, reasoning, familiarity, and ease with words.

Materials

None

Instructions

Have each player make three statements about him/herself, two of them lies and the third true.

For example: I have an older sister; I once rode Flipper; I have recorded 7 blues albums under the alias Red Hot Burns. The group tries to guess which is the true statement. In the example, the true statement is: I once rode Flipper. Make it clear from the start that you are looking for facts, not opinions or subjective statements such as "I'm rich," or "I'm beautiful."



VIDEO MAGIC

Purpose

See and hear yourself perhaps for the first time!

Materials

Camcorder with film, playback monitor (TV) with cables

Group Size

3 to 4 per session

Background

Today's video technology puts a power at your fingertips that no other generation has ever had.

Walk into any department store or video store and there they are - the camcorders. They have now become a regular photographic tool of the family. Camcorders are used to record family vacations, graduations, weddings, celebrations and other special occasions.

This amazing technology may be available to your club. Perhaps there is a parent who owns a camcorder and who is willing to come to the club to video the members when they speak. Maybe you have one at home and are willing to bring it to the club for use in your speaking events.

This technology - the camcorder - is very powerful! You can use it to see yourself as others see you. That kind of feedback can be very useful to you as you develop your speaking skills. It's one thing for a member to tell you - its quite another thing for you to see for yourself how you communicate. What are your communication strengths? What areas do you need to work on?

Activity

Note: In this activity, you will be asked to give a brief (one minute) talk so give some thought about what you want to say. If you speak on something you have an interest in, you are more likely to speak effectively.

Note: You may want to have three or four speakers per recording session. You can spread this activity out over a number of meetings.

1. Set up the camcorder ready for recording.
2. Prepare to give your one-minute talk. You may want to speak before the club or do this in a small group. Some of you may want to give an impromptu talk - one that is not prepared but one where you have something to say.
3. Each of you that wishes to do so, give your one-minute talk before the camcorder.
4. Now play back each of the speeches (limit to 3 or 4 per session).



5. When you view a speaker, provide feedback to the speaker after you have watched him or her. Your feedback can follow this order.
 - Two things they did well.
 - Two things they can work on for their next talk.
 - The best thing you liked about the speaker.

Debrief

- What have you learned about your speaking? Are there some common things you have all learned? Are there some unique things you have learned about yourself?
- The magic in video is seeing yourself as others see you. The camcorder is a powerful tool to help you become a better speaker.



WORDS PER MINUTE

Purpose

Learn what your word rate is (words per minute) and discover what is the appropriate word rate for speakers.

Materials

A story you can read - the fast 500 words, and a watch with minute hand or digital read-out.

Group Size

2

Background

How fast should you talk in front of an audience?

When you listen to some TV commercials you may have noticed that some people talk very fast. In fact, so fast that it is difficult to hear and understand all that they are saying. You miss some of the details. Actually, in some commercials this is done on purpose, because they only want you to hear a few key words, like “buy, act now or remember”.

With some of your own conversations, you may experience a person that talks quite slowly. You may feel that their word rate is just too slow for you.

Well what is the appropriate word rate for us? More specifically, what word pace is an audience comfortable with? Are you too fast, too slow or just right for them?

The answers to these questions are found in the completion of this exercise.

How fast or slow you speak does have an impact on your audience. Let’s try to make it a positive impact!

Activity

1. Find a story that you can read. Count out the first 500 words of this story.
2. Read the fast 500 words of the story. You may want to read it again to get comfortable with what you’re reading.
3. Now find someone who is willing to listen to you read out loud and to time you while you read.
4. Read the story (the first 500 words) to the listener as if you were giving a speech. Don’t rush through the story just to get it done. Read with expression and interest.



5. When you finish reading, divide your time into 500. For example, if you took 3 minutes and 30 seconds to read the 500 words, then divide 3.5 into 500. Or if you took 4 minutes and 15 seconds, divide 4.25 into 500.
6. The answer you get will be your words per minute (WPM).

Debrief

- A good word rate ranges from 130 words per minute to 165 words per minute. How did your word rate compare to these figures?
- Don't think you have to hold a constant word rate. A variety of pace is more interesting. But on average, your WPM should be in the range of 135 to 165.





5 COACH'S CORNER

THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF COACHING

Every good team in sports, politics, school and yes in 4-H, has a good coach. They have a leader who knows that performance and commitment go hand in hand.

To build a 4-H team requires a 4-H leader who is willing to bring out the best in performance and commitment with each member.

What does this require of the leader? Knowledge of 4-H? Experience in leading 4-H clubs? A ton of ideas to keep clubs active?

All of these factors are important and will go a long way in building a successful 4-H club. But the key ingredient, is not any one of these or a combination of these factors. Rather, it is your ability to relate to your members in a supportive and a meaningful manner. Another word for these abilities is coaching.

What makes a good coach? Someone who:

- walks her talk
- leads by example
- supports and encourages
- provides alternatives
- is flexible
- gives timely and practical advice
- listens, listens, listens
- models what he wants
- strives for excellence

As a 4-H leader, think of yourself as being the coach of a TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More. You are working together on a wide variety of activities and projects. Everyone is important in the club - we all have roles and responsibilities. You can and do achieve when you receive the commitment of each member. You do more when everyone feels a part of the team.

Let's take a look at each of the nine coaching stems provided above as it relates to effective communication.



COACHING TIPS FOR 4-H LEADERS

Walk Your Talk

Learning is self-discovery, teaching is mutual discovery. Discover together what it takes to be an effective communicator.

Lead by Example

Modelling is an important part of learning. Do you want a club that is on time? Then be on time yourself. Do you want a club that strives to be better communicators? Then work at communicating better. Do you want members giving constructive feedback? Then work on giving concise, thoughtful, insightful feedback.

Support & Encourage

Be proactive. Take the statement "I'll believe it when I see it (reactive) and change it to, "I'll see it when I believe it" (proactive). Put the responsibility on yourself to support members where ever you can. Your belief in them inspires and encourages.

Provide Alternatives

We all learn and change in different ways. There is no one method or way to teach or lead. If we are flexible enough to think and provide alternatives, we provide the opportunity for that same creativity and spontaneity in our members.

Giving Timely Advice

When it's time to open your mouth, make it timely and relevant. Fit in with the moment and build on making it better. Be concise and be thoughtful.

Listen, Listen, Listen

You must actively listen to members. Respond both to their messages and the context of feelings in which the message was given. Once their ideas and feelings have been responded to, then they are ready to listen to you.

Strive for Excellence

You have a standard for your club. Expect it - don't demand it; anticipate it - don't beg for it; get it - don't quite until you do!



HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK PART ONE: SOME SCENARIOS

Scene #1: You've just listened to a speech from a club member. In your opinion, it had a lot of room for improvement. You're concerned about how you are going to encourage this member.

Scene #2: You've just seen a great speaker - she was excellent! Will this frighten the younger members into thinking "I can never be this good".

Scene #3: The speech you just heard was all fluff - not much substance. It was full of opinions with little content. You're concerned because you don't want this approach to spread to other members.

Scene #4: Someone is giving a speech and freezes. They can't remember what they want to say - it has all gone blank for them. You have to coach right now - what do you say to the speaker and to the club?

Scene #5: You're coaching one on one. But you sense a wall - some reluctance and/or passivity. How can you connect?

All of these scenarios require a response. There is no leader who can tell you what to do in every circumstance. Your experiences are contextual - they are unique and tempered with your own set of special and timely circumstances.

But there are some guiding principles to giving effective and useful feedback. Let's examine these feedback principles on the next page.

PART TWO: FEEDBACK PRINCIPLES

Be descriptive

Avoid evaluative comments. Rather describe what you saw and leave the member free to use it or not. Evaluative language can make a member defensive.

Be specific

Get to the point. Avoid general comments. For example, if someone talks too long, you might say; "When you were given the responsibility of preparing this talk, you were advised to keep it to one minute. You spoke for four minutes. It's easier to talk much longer than required. Audiences like brevity. Work on this for next time!"

Two -way Needs

Take into account the needs of the coach and the member. If comments only serve the coach, feedback can become self-serving and destructive. Make it constructive. Work together.



Can Use

Can the member change their behavior? Frustration is only increased when the member is reminded of something over which they have no control. Ensure they can use your advice.

Is Solicited

Feedback is most useful when the member asks a question which those observing can answer. When solicited, feedback can better meet the needs of the learner.

Timely

Feedback is most useful when given as soon after the observed behavior. This depends of course on member's readiness to receive it.

Checked with the Member

One way to check is to ask the member to rephrase the feedback he has received. This helps all to ensure clear communication has taken place.

Checked with Others

Do others share your impressions? Check to see what others think. This is particularly appropriate when a group evaluation is being given.

COACHING TECHNIQUES

There are three easy to use coaching techniques to help your members communicate more effectively. Each technique will have its advantages and limitations. When and where you use them will depend on your judgement. This section will outline each technique and how the technique can be implemented.

TECHNIQUE #1: THE HAMBURGER

A hamburger, to state the obvious, has three parts - the bun, the meat and the extras. The hamburger technique has three parts:

The Bun: Identify one or two things you liked in the member's speech - things the member did well or was willing to take the risk and learn from. This can include comments from all aspects of speaking - the visual, the vocal and the verbal. For example you may comment on his varied pitch, his well-organized thoughts and his good use of gestures to emphasize points made in the speech.

The Meat: Identify one or two things the member can work on for the next speech. Notice the use of the words work on rather than wrong. (We're being descriptive here, not evaluative.) You can phrase this by saying, "If you were to give this speech again, you may wish to consider using some more vocal variety and organizing your speech into three parts."



The Extras: For many hamburger lovers, the best things about the hamburger are the extras you put on it. With the speech, what was the best thing you noticed? Save this for the last. It leaves a very good taste in the member's mouth - a taste that will last and encourage their best for the next time they speak.

Once you've used this technique a few times, you'll find it easy to use. It is particularly helpful at getting your ideas across in an organized and concise manner. It can be very effective with members because it always ends with on a positive and encouraging note.

TECHNIQUE #2: THE PUMP

Essentially the process of this technique is very similar to the hamburger, except that you use the member's data, not your own.

Like the hamburger technique, the pump consists of three parts.

The handle: Get a handle on things by asking the member to identify two things they enjoyed about their talk. Don't proceed to the next step until you've two items to discuss. If they give more, focus on the best two.

Pumping: Ask the member for two things they would change in the next speech. Keep the conversation focused on change not excessive negativity. Remember negativity drains energy. It's easy to feel that one does not have the power to change.

The Water: The best thing about pumping is what you get - the water. So ask the member to identify the best thing he/she did today in their speech. They may go back to your initial discussion (the handle) and repeat something from this segment. That's okay, as long as they can view this as the best thing about their speech.

When using the pump, members can often be their own worst critics. They can easily focus on the negative. They may assume that because they feel this way, that all members in the audience must feel this way too. In other words, they can be very evaluative rather than descriptive.

By drawing out the best thing at the end of your discussion you are reaffirming the member's worth and efforts. And you're giving what she needs to work on another speech - the water to grow.

TECHNIQUE #3: THE TARGET

Your senior members may be at the stage where they want to develop more advanced speaking skills. Their target is to work on one thing at a time to make sure they get better at it before moving on to another speaking skill.

When coaching with this technique, you look at one or two specific items. It may be their organizational skills in speech making. It may be that they want to develop their hand and facial gestures. Whatever it is, focus on that skill and avoid getting distracted with other skills. The major task here is for the coach to keep the member on target.



Your coaching is more proactive here. For example, you may find yourself coaching both during the speech and after it.

SESSION ONE: SETTING THE GOAL

After hearing the first speech, review what you and the member observed and felt. Identify one skill the member can work on for the next speech. If there are several skills the member wants to work on, then prioritize all skills. Determine the most important skill to work on now. You can cover the other skills in future coaching sessions.

Spend the remainder of time in session one with how you and the member will work on this most important skill. Perhaps the member wants to work on eye contact. Agree how you will do this for the next speech, such as using a paper audience (activity 1 in section 4), some coaching signals, etc.

SESSION TWO: ACHIEVING THE GOAL

After hearing the next speech, meet with the member to discuss how well they did in achieving the one skill they identified in the fast coaching session. For example, did they develop better eye contact?

You can take one of two paths here: continue on with the same skill for more work or advance to the next speaking skill the member wants to develop. In either case, conclude the session with a target and how to achieve it.

Future sessions depend upon the goals you and the speaker set.



SUMMARY TABLE OF THREE COACHING TECHNIQUES

| Technique | Orientation | Advantages and Disadvantages |
|------------|-------------|--|
| Hamburger | Leader | <p>ADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good method to use with novice speakers. Can be highly supportive. • You model good coaching - you are providing valued information to the member. • You restrict negative comments because you are the one giving most of the feedback. • Efficient use of time. <p>DISADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback is limited to your data and impressions. • Members can get too passive with this technique. |
| The Pump | Member | <p>ADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good method to use with more experienced members because they have more speaking experience to draw upon. • You're always dealing with the members' data and impressions - they will value what they say. • You're teaching self-coaching skills by drawing out member ideas and expanding upon them. <p>DISADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member doesn't benefit from your insight. • This method takes time to draw the member out. |
| The Target | Growth | <p>ADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very useful for senior members who are looking for more challenge. • Especially appropriate for preparation with speech competitions. • Easily monitored with the setting of specific goals. <p>DISADVANTAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a committed member to stay with the targets. • Can be time consuming. |



CONCLUDING COMMENTS ON COACHING

COACHING COACHES

You may be asking where do I find all the time to do this kind of coaching? As a 4-H leader my hands are full at the meetings and I don't have a lot of extra time available between meetings. So when do I do it?

There is no assumption that you will do all the coaching. In fact you may coach the coaches. The senior members of your club can learn a great deal about speaking just from the responsibility of coaching younger members. The Hamburger and The Pump techniques are easily grasped and implemented by senior members. The Target technique is the only one where you may find yourself involved. Some clubs have members in the Senior Opportunities Project work with younger members all through the year.

BELIEVING IS SEEING

We've talked about the four A's as the strategic design in this manual. The fourth A is 'action'. Action occurs when you see changes in the behavior of the members. With regard to this program, action occurs when you see members communicating more effectively.

One of the most powerful ways to get action is coaching. Why? Because coaching combines a number of motivational techniques, including: accountability, modelling, mentoring, and personal care.

As you coach, you make the member accountable to you for ongoing improvement. You provide a model of what they can aspire to. You give advice and suggestions that can make you a great mentor. Your personal care can make a world of difference to each member.

Show them how to hit home runs as effective communicators. Start with the ball nearby and work until they're delivering home runs in speaking.

Believing is seeing! Your coaching will make all the difference.



6 APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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