



Illinois 4-H | Spark Ideas. Ignite Possibilities.

A leader is a person who inspires groups and identifies and achieves goals in a positive manner. In a 4-H leadership development project, members learn leadership skills including teamwork, communication, organization, goal management, meeting management, team building, decision making and problem solving.



Exploring 4-H Leadership

Spark Activity: Follow My Lead



How easy is it to communicate instructions? Try this activity with a small group of friends or family. Give each person a piece of paper and then read directions to them. This exercise requires listening to and following directions. First, close your eyes. Keep them closed. As you hear the instructions perform the task. You may not ask questions. You must keep your eyes closed. This exercise requires no talking.

1. Fold your sheet of paper in half.
2. Tear off the upper right corner.
3. Fold your paper in half again.
4. Tear the lower right corner.
5. Fold your paper in half.
6. Tear off the upper left corner.
7. Fold in half a final time.
8. Tear off the lower left corner.
9. Unfold the paper and hold it up.
10. Open your eyes, look at your product and compare it with others.

Reflect on Your Experience

Was it difficult to not ask questions or ask for clarification? Even with the same instructions, did everyone's product look different? Was it difficult not having a visual to look at?

When you communicate with others, people interpret things differently so they may not receive the message you send. As a leader, you must communicate a clear message and be open to answering questions. How can you do that? Remember, leaders demonstrate leadership by being a role model/ visual model for others to follow.

4-H Project Levels and Goals

Beginner

- Teach new members the 4-H pledge
- Make a "things to do" list and prioritize it - write personal goals for including what, how, when you'll accomplish your goals
- Give a demonstration at a 4-H club meeting
- Participate on a 4-H club committee

Intermediate

- Teach members in your club how to properly give a demonstration
- Join a county 4-H committee
- Teach others to use correct parliamentary procedure
- Attend a leadership training workshop or conference
- Start a resume

Advanced

- Serve as a 4-H Teen Leader
- Volunteer for a county youth leadership role, or participate in a regional or state leadership event
- Teach a 4-H project workshop
- Promote 4-H to others
- Take a personality test to learn your leadership style, strengths, and weaknesses

Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills

- Create a leadership portfolio of all the leadership activities you've done and the roles you've held
- Put together an "ice breakers on the fly" bag with materials to do various fun icebreaker activities

Service and Leadership

- Organize a community beautification project
- Organize a community canned food drive
- Start a book drive for a local library or literacy center
- Attend a City Council or County Board meeting
- Become a club officer
- Help fellow 4-H members with their project areas
- Apply for statewide advisory committees
- Talk to elected officials about your 4-H experience

Entrepreneurship

- Leadership consultant
- Motivational speaker
- Life coach
- Leadership development coach

Technology Connection

- National leadership presentations virtually
- Develop virtual global leadership 4-H clubs

Connecting with a Mentor

- Educators
- Local civil service employees
- Professors at local colleges
- Coaches
- Church minister
- School superintendent or school board president
- Leader or president of a company

Events

- 4-H Legislative Connection
- 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus
- Illinois 4-H Junior Leadership Conference
- Speaking for Illinois 4-H
- Global Youth Leadership Summit
- Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Program (HOBY)



Careers for People Interested in Leadership

Human Resources	Sales Representative
Professional	Strategic Planner
Law Enforcement	Teacher/ Educator
Management Consultant	TV Host
Organizational	Sportscaster
Development Specialist	Medical Field
Organizational Trainer	CEO
Project Manager	-
Public Relations Specialist	All jobs require leaders, this list just names a few

Start a Conversation

Can you name the traits of someone you consider a leader?
Why are leaders important?
How do leaders work with others to accomplish a goal?
What skills are needed for someone to be a leader?
When leading a group, can you delegate tasks? How do you decide how to delegate?

Want to learn more?

go.illinois.edu/4Hleadershipproject

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

4-H.extension.illinois.edu



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Credits: University of California 4-H Project Sheet Series | Texas 4-H Leadership: Leaders Within a Group | University of Illinois Extension staff that contributed to this resource include Dr. Michelle Cox | 4-H Spark Sheets are a collaborative effort of 4-H staff, volunteers, alumni and teens from across Illinois. A big thanks to the many contributors and reviewers!