



# The 4-H Project Exhibit: A Judge's Role

## A Message to Judges About Consultative Judging

Consultative judging brings 4-H members and judges together to evaluate project exhibits. It provides a unique opportunity for 4-H exhibitors to learn from the experiences and knowledge of the judge. Consultative judging involves one-to-one communication in which a judge and 4-H member talk directly with each other.

## Philosophy

An exhibit is not the final statement of a child's effort nor does it offer a measurement of all the learning that has taken place. The exhibit offers a display of what the child is capable of doing and that he/she has accomplished a goal.

## Objectives of the 4-H Program

4-H members should: have fun, learn to make decisions, think, feel, and act creatively; be conscious of their community and country; be inventive, resourceful, and original in problem solving; explore aspects of their 4-H project; evaluate their 4-H project; and investigate careers that are related to their project.

## What Can You Do?

### Put the member at ease.

A warm, cordial greeting and friendly manner can make a difference. Smile and introduce yourself to the exhibitor. Help the exhibitor relax by initially discussing something other than the exhibit.

## Evaluating the 4-H Project Exhibit

Consultative judging brings 4-H members and judges together to evaluate project exhibits. It provides a unique opportunity for 4-H'ers to learn from the experiences and knowledge of the judge.

- The purpose of the evaluation is for positive learning. Judges are expected to be objective. If there is a questionable decision, err in favor of the youth.



- Emphasis during the evaluation should be placed on what the member has done and learned.
- There's no such thing as "the 4-H way" of doing things. Many different methods of preparing an exhibit are acceptable.
- Use the score sheets provided. Written comments are extremely helpful. A volunteer may help with this task.

## The Danish System of Judging

The Danish system of judging is a method of evaluation where an exhibit or process is evaluated against a set of standards, and recognition is awarded on the degree to which the standard has been met by each 4-H member. The standards of excellence are often printed on a judge's scorecard and allows for the exhibit to be judged on one's own merit, and not in comparison with others in the class.

All completed exhibits meeting the requirements should receive a Purple, Blue, Red, or White rating. The following ribbons apply:

**WHITE:** Fair, denotes much improvement needed. Fails to meet minimum standards.

**RED:** Good, some improvements needed. Meets minimum standards.

**BLUE:**Excellent, minor improvements needed. Exceeds minimum standards.

**PURPLE:** Superior, outstanding on all standards. (In some cases, this may mean an exhibit is selected for the state fair. Check with your local Extension Agent.)

### Questions to Support Learning:

#### Encourage the exhibitor to talk about the exhibit.

Find out whether the exhibitor feels successful about his/her efforts. Here are some questions you may ask; remember to encourage the exhibitor to ask questions as well.

- What did you want to achieve from this project?
- Did you learn anything new?
- What was the most enjoyable moment of your project?
- How did you do it (processes, steps, plans)?
- What changes would you make?

Some questions prompt the young person to self-evaluate their work and reflect on their project learning experiences:

- What problems did you have?
- What could you do differently next time?
- How do you feel about your exhibit now?

You could also use questions as a way to give suggestions for improvement.

- Did you experiment with different techniques?
- Have you asked your leader or parent to suggest ways to improve your project?

Send “I” messages instead of “you” messages.

- I really liked...
- I felt you might try to...
- I thought this part really worked well...

### Sandwich Method of Feedback

1. Start with two positives.
2. Discuss one way to improve.

### Local Contact Information



3. Add another positive.
4. End with a one- or two-word descriptor (define the 4-Hers capabilities).

#### An example using the Sandwich Method:

1. John, the wood you selected for your jewelry box has a nice, even grain that adds to the overall design. Your choice of finish is attractive and durable.
2. Your lid could close more evenly. What do you think the problem is?
3. The lining you have used adds to the overall appearance and will protect the jewelry.
4. John, you are a skilled wood finisher.

### Tips to Remember

- Smile and be friendly.
- Let the young person do the talking.
- Keep in mind the age and experience of the member.

You can make each 4-H member feel important and successful. Help the young person understand that no project exhibit is perfect. Judging is an educational activity and 4-H members should learn some different and better methods for completing their projects.

