

Leader Training Series

A Good 4-H Club Meeting

Doug Hovatter, WVU Associate Professor and 4-H Agent

What Makes a Good 4-H Club Meeting?

Business leaders say that one-third of the time spent in business meetings is unproductive. Here's how 2,000 business leaders* ranked the four most important ingredients of a good meeting.

- Adequate preparation
- Agreement on follow-up action
- Having an effective moderator
- Staying on track

These are good points to consider about your 4-H club meetings. This also shows why learning how to run a good meeting in 4-H now will help later in life. Meetings are held in all careers. Good meetings help to get things done. Poor meetings don't.

If your club would like help in getting organized and running meetings, I encourage all officers to attend the fall officers training and/or contact the Berkeley County 4-H office. The county 4-H staff can help.

A Regular Meeting Day, Time, and Place

A 4-H club needs to meet regularly at a regular place and time. Moving a meeting date to meet the whims of the group may help get more members to a meeting in the short run. However, in the long run, members may become confused about meeting dates. Irregular meetings can also make it difficult for new members to merge well into the club.

The best way to set an acceptable meeting schedule is for the club to vote and to abide by majority rule. This is generally done at the first (organizational) meeting when the club is established. It is included in a club's constitution. After that, it should change only when the membership and its needs drastically change. (A revision of the constitution would be needed.) Obtaining parental support for the meeting schedule is helpful in maintaining member participation.

Meetings Are Held Often

A club can't accomplish its goals if it doesn't meet often enough. How often is enough? This depends on the club, its members, and their projects. However, all clubs should meet at least once a month. Some clubs may meet as often as once a week. Except for a major holiday month, or around county fair time, clubs should meet throughout the year. Remember the Berkeley County Rule for all 4-H meetings due to weather: "No School – No 4-H Meeting."

A Balance of Work and Play

Every meeting should have several parts. The order of these parts isn't as crucial as having *each* part. Each meeting should include:

- a chance for members to interact socially.
- business session. The officers should run this part of the meeting, with leader guidance. (*See 4-H Club Meeting Agenda and Running a Smooth 4-H Business Meeting*)
- educational program/project work. This is generally guided by the leader. The program portion could be work on 4-H projects, a guest speaker, an educational videotape, and/or public presentations given by members.

Variety and Member Involvement

Vary the kinds of things done throughout the year. Encourage officer/member involvement. Help them decide what they want to do most. As an adult leader, your primary duty is to guide the members in making sound decisions and following through with their decisions.

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Sources: *Harrison Conference Services/Hofstra University survey, as reported in USA Today, March 27, 1989.*

Baillere, J. S. (1994) County 4-H Agent, Gloucester County

Bulletin 609, Washington State University.

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