



# Interview Judging

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## A Message to Judges

Conference 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. Conference judging involves one-to-one communication in which judge and exhibitor talk directly with each other.

### Conference Judging: 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.

**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, also.

- 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 elicit self-evaluating comments from the 4-H'er.

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

You could 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...
- I wasn't quite sure about...

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

### Timely tips to use during the interview:

- Smile and be friendly
- Let the member do the talking
- Keep in mind the age and experience of the 4-H'er
- Begin and end with positive comments, make *constructive* criticism somewhere in the middle

# 4-H Judging

**Philosophy:** An exhibit is not the final statement of a child's effort nor does it offer a measurement of all of 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; and 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.

## Evaluating the 4-H Project:

- The purpose of the evaluation is for positive learning. Judges are expected to be objective. If there is a questionable decision, error in favor of the youth.
- Projects are evaluated, not members, and projects need to be evaluated independently, not compared.
- 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.
- Please use the score sheet, if provided. Written comments are extremely helpful.

Things you may want to learn prior to the show:

- What's in the fair book--what it says about class descriptions and requirements
- The county policies about goals, missing parts of an exhibit, ribbons and awards, written comments, and state fair exhibits.
- The county training or emphasis
- Special circumstances of any exhibitors

Additional questions/comments that you may consider using when conference judging:

- How did you improve your skills?
- Did you enjoy working on this project? Why?
- What the easiest... (Hardest or most difficult)?
- What caused you the most problems?
- Why did you choose this?
- What would you like to do next year?
- Explain to me about the kinds of materials you used.
- Next time you may want to consider....
- You really did a good job!
- What were your goals for this project?
- How does this exhibit fit into your project?
- I noticed you...(or) I could see you felt...
- Who gave you assistance (help) with the project?



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