Junior Leadership in 4-H

One of the purposes of 4-H is to help youth develop as leaders.

There are two types or levels of leadership in the 4-H Personal Development Report.

Leadership

There is Leadership, which is generally a single act of leadership, and/or being part of a larger leadership unit. Examples of Leadership would be being a committee member or being a room host at a 4-H event. Leadership are recorded in Section 4 of the Personal Development Report (PDR).

Leadership Project

The Leadership Project is a comprehensive, coherent, planned project undertaken by the 4-H member in order to develop his/her leadership skills.

• A Leadership Project requires a minimum of six hours of work.
  • At least 50% of Junior Leader time should be spent working directly with people in a leadership role.
  • The Junior leader should be in ongoing contact with the project leader and the Junior Leadership leader.
  • The Junior Leader completes the first part of the Junior Leader Report at the beginning of the project year.
  • The Junior Leader completes the second part of the Junior Leader Report at the end of the project year.
  • The Junior Leader project gets recorded as a SINGLE leadership credit in Section 4 of the PDR.

Anything the member does as a Junior/Teen Leader may NOT be recorded anywhere else. For example, if a member is a Junior/Teen Leader for a project, they generally will plan and implement activities throughout the project year. At each of six project meetings, the Junior/Teen Leader might give a presentation and assist other project members. The Junior/Teen Leader is doing the equivalent of six communications and six leaderships during the project year. However, he/she can only record ONE credit for this in leadership, and NO communications credits.

What Is Leadership?

Leadership is the ability to influence and support others in a positive manner for a common goal. Leadership is a set of skills and attitudes that can be learned and developed that will help the leader influence the actions of others.

Researchers agree that there are two basic types of leaders. Neither type is better than the other. Both types of leadership are necessary in the world.

Some leadership is "product" oriented. The leader sets up the rules and procedures to make a product, and those led follow the rules to produce the product. This type of leader makes things happen and gets things done. This type of leader is in charge of meetings, makes decisions, speaks to groups, and writes letters or memos.

Some leadership is "process" oriented. It involves helping people transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group, organization, or society. The developing leader considers his or her long-term need for self-development, rather than immediate needs. The leader focuses on the process of leadership and what it means to be a leader.
Junior Leader Project Planning

The purpose of junior leadership project is to teach youth the importance of understanding themselves as leaders and how to apply leadership skills in a team setting, and to assist them in identifying opportunities to practice their leadership skills. Junior leaders learn the value of teamwork, goal setting, and decision making. These skills are put into action as 4-H Junior and Teen Leaders assist club leaders in club management and outreach activities.

A 4-H junior leader serves in the role of assisting the adult club leader. In this way, the adult leader serves as a mentor to the teen. The club leader and junior leader work out an agreement about what the role of the junior leader will be. Responsibilities of the junior leader could include: club record keeping, researching local community service opportunities, planning for a club activity such as a recognition banquet or field trip, and teaching younger members. The junior leader plans his/her goals for the year with the project leader, documents his/her accomplishments for the year, and reflects the knowledge and skills he/she gained in the 4-H leadership project record.

Below is a list of ideas for things to do as a Junior Leader. The individual things you do as a Junior Leader should be part of an overall plan that you develop with an adult leader.

Junior leaders should select what they are interested in doing as a junior leader from these ideas or come up with ideas of their own. The possibilities are endless! Junior leaders should share these ideas with their parents and 4-H leaders. Junior leaders should then develop a plan of action for the year. The plan should be quite specific and agreed upon by the junior leader and the adult volunteer. Junior leaders will need supervision and advice from the adult leaders and their parents in order to be successful.

Recruit two new members to the club - Many young people today have very little knowledge about 4-H and know nothing about the variety of opportunities available to them through 4-H. Personal contact is our best recruiting tool.

Serve as a "mentor" or "big friend" to a new member - Many new members do not have siblings who are in 4-H or parents who are alumni. So they need help to get started on the "right foot" from the very beginning.

Guide new members in the selection of their projects - Junior leaders may be able to share information about projects that they have enrolled in during their years of membership. They may be able to talk about the types of activities and learning experiences that are included in the project manuals. They can show new members samples of project manuals, leader guides, and other resources available to members in their project area.

Assist members in setting project goals - Junior leaders can help members select activities and learning experiences from their project manuals that they would like to work on during the year. They can also discuss ideas that they have completed themselves in the project area as well as talk about the work they have done in project meetings or groups within their club.

Suggest topics for talks/demonstrations in a particular project area - Junior leaders can help generate a list of possible topics for talks or demonstrations in a project area. They can refer members to ideas that are often included in project manuals or leader guides.

Help members in developing and presenting a talk/demo - Junior leaders might demonstrate a "good" and a "bad" talk/demo for a group of members. They may help members develop an introduction, body and summary for their talk/demo using the information in the Public Presentations manual. They may help members secure this publication from their leader or Extension office.

Assist members in the completion of their project records or "My 4-H Activities" sheet - Junior leaders may help members individually or in small groups to complete their project records. This could be spread out
over several meetings during the year. They may also help members make notes on a calendar so they keep track of the information they need to complete the "My 4-H Activities" sheet.

Assist a project leader with one or more meetings for a project area - Junior leaders may volunteer to help an adult project leader conduct one or more meetings in a particular project area that they have had experience or training. They may help set up the supplies for the activities, help explain the steps of the activity, answer questions, or help members complete their work.

Conduct a project meeting for members - Older members may feel confident enough in a project area that they would like to conduct a project meeting on their own. Work with the 4-H organizational leader to set a time, date, and place for the meeting. They will have information on how to plan a project meeting and help junior leaders get started.

Demonstrate the "conference judging" concept for members - Junior leaders can help members learn about judging standards, practice the questions that are often asked by the judge in conference judging, and learn to evaluate their own work and progress.

Help members understand exhibit rules for county show in project area - Junior leaders can help members read through the exhibit guidelines for projects, explain the process and procedure for judging day, share what the ribbons mean, and talk about how to properly put together a display or exhibit in a project area.
Steps to success in the Junior Leader Project:

___ Select project (s) in which you would like to be a junior leader

___ Talk with the project leader and get his/her OK; discuss potential activities you can lead

___ Write out your goals

___ Share your goals with the project leader and the Junior Leader Project leader; have the two leaders OK your goals.

___ Make sure that the week before each project meeting you check in with the project leader and confirm what you will be doing in your role as junior leader for that meeting.

___ Prepare and practice what you will be doing, as a junior leader for the meeting. This means gather supplies, practice your oral presentation, etc.

___ At the end of each meeting where you have responsibilities as a junior leader, record what you did in your Leadership Project Report form; check off the goal(s) you have accomplished.