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# JUDGING 4-H PROJECT EXHIBITS

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## 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.

### 4-H PROJECT 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.

### CONSULTATIVE 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 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 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 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...*



You can make each 4-H member feel important and successful. Help the child 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.

### 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 member
  - Begin and end with positive comments, make *constructive* criticism somewhere in the middle
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### Evaluating the 4-H Project Exhibit:

- 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.

Remember that projects are evaluated, not people. All completed projects meeting the show requirements should receive a Blue, Red or White rating. Projects are evaluated individually, not compared.

**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 means an exhibit is selected for the state fair.)



### 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?

### Sandwich Method of Providing Feedback

1. Start with two positives.
2. Discuss one way to improve.
3. Add another positive.
4. End with a one or two word descriptor,(define the 4-H'ers capabilities).

### An example using the Sandwich Method:

1. Juan, 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. Juan you are a skilled wood finisher.

*Adapted by Amy M. Sollock*

*K-State Research and Extension, Southwest Area 4-H Specialist*

*From "Creating a Positive Experience for 4-H Youth at the County Fair," Diane Mack, 4-H Youth Development Specialist K-State Research and Extension*

*and*

*From "Conference Judging," Bill Million & Judy Taylor, 4-H Youth Development Specialists, University of Illinois Extension*