

# 4-H Demonstrations Hints & Tips



## Hints & Tips for Successful Demonstrations

- Be enthusiastic, it's contagious! The audience is only interested if you are.
- Be natural and at ease and not too serious. Smile and enjoy what you are doing. A pleasing voice and friendly manner makes the audience want to listen.
- State things in simple language. Use your own words.
- Use simple expressions in a conversational way. It sets the audience at ease.
- Use proper grammar. Pronounce words distinctly! Instead of using the words "my", "your" or "our" use the impersonal article "the" whenever possible.
- Stop talking when moving from one place to another or when using noisy equipment such as an electric mixer.
- Keep your work surface clean and uncluttered.
- Use safety practices. Always cut away from you.
- Try to avoid unnaturally long pauses. Include science "whys", the source of your information, or something you have learned while practicing the demonstration.
- Watch your timing. If it is a junior demonstration it will probably take less time than a senior member. As a member gets experience and they will need to include more information to make the demonstration longer and keep the audience interested.
- Tape a bag to the edge of the table to hold scraps or garbage.
- Avoid "shot calling" such as... "Now I'm going to ..." This is a universally bad habit of demonstrators, but it can be broken with a little effort. If you must tell what is being done, "the eggs are added next" sounds better than "and now I'm going to add the eggs".
- Plan for the unexpected happenings and decide not to let them throw you. Judges are pleased to see a demonstrator who can handle situations calmly. Example: If you can't get the needle threaded because you're shaking, have a threaded needle handy or ask someone in the audience to help and continue with the demonstration. If you forget a step or an ingredient, explain what effect it will have on the final product and go on with the demonstration.
- Select a topic you are familiar with, then use your imagination to make it original and interesting.
- Choose a topic with enough possibilities for action, such as making an item. A demonstration should show all the steps needed to make or complete something so the audience feels comfortable enough to make it themselves at another time. Some topics are more suitable for speeches than demonstrations.
- Limit the demonstration to one idea.



- Use a catchy title to get the audience's attention - instead of calling it 'Making a Clown Face' use, 'Clowning Around'.
- Your posters should be neatly printed, colorful and easy to read from a distance
- When planning the demonstration:
  - List the important steps in logical order, as they naturally would be done
  - Outline the explanation necessary to go with each step or process
  - List the necessary materials and needed for the demonstration
- Plan posters that will add to the clearness and effectiveness of the demonstration.
- Do not plan to demonstrate details that are too small for the audience to see like unless you can elevate your work surface or show what you are doing on a poster.
- When working as a team make sure that both 4-H members takes an active part in the demonstration. Divide the talking and working between the team members so everyone does their full share.
- Allot a time for each step-to avoid long awkward pauses. Use interesting fillers like nutrition information, humor and jokes, interesting facts about the demonstration.
- As a team or single demonstration, think of the outfit you wear as a costume and an important part of the whole package. Wear matching aprons, hats or t-shirts.

#### **WHEN SETTING UP YOUR TABLE MAKE SURE TO:**

- Use a table cloth that matches your theme, apron or costume.
- Keep the center of the table clear so the audience can see your demonstration.
- Use each side of the table as a space to keep your supplies and work from right to left. For example, take a container of ingredients from the right side, empty it into a bowl in the center and put the empty bowl on the left side. (Reverse this if you are left handed).
- Clean up efficiently and quickly.
- Have a catchy ending to inspire the audience to go home and recreate what you made.