TOOLS TO A SUCCESSFUL YOUTH COMMITTEE
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Types of Committees

There are two major types of committees and the role of each is crucial to the functioning of the club: standing committees and special committees.

**Standing committees** handle part of the club's regular business. They are active throughout the year and have duties that are generally constant over time and clearly stated. They are appointed each year and serve for the entire year. The size of the club often determines how many standing committees are needed. Small clubs may use committees but include all members on the committees. Committee work could be done on alternating meeting dates or prior to the start of the business meeting.

Examples might include:

- program
- membership
- recreation
- fundraising

**Special committees** carry out a specific task for a limited period of time. Some groups tend to put every issue into a committee; other clubs spend time discussing when a committee could resolve the issue more easily. Avoid overuse or underuse of special committees. The responsibilities of a special committee need to be clearly stated so the group can complete its responsibility.

Special committees might include:

- window display
- club tour
- club project day
- community service
- performance showcase
- club banquet
- holiday party
- parent or volunteer appreciation

Each committee should have an adviser who may be a parent or adult volunteer. In clubs with younger members, the adviser role is extremely important in helping provide guidance and parameters to the committee work. As members gain experience and confidence, the adult may play a lesser role.
Advantages of Club Committees

Much of what a club needs to accomplish can be best done by committees. Committees give more club members an opportunity to participate and to assume some of the responsibilities, help to avoid spending too much of the club's time on small details, concentrate the full attention of only a few club members on one subject, and offer the opportunity for training in group leadership.

- With fewer people, there is more opportunity for each member to take part. Therefore committees can work more effectively on many tasks. Determine committee size by the task; however, it's wise to keep the group relatively small.

- The informal committee encourages youth to talk and contribute more freely. Therefore, this can be an important way to involve new or less-active members.

- When individuals are picked for a job, they are likely to be more interested in the task. Larger groups are often hampered in their progress, because they are more likely to include individuals who are not interested or are unfamiliar with the problem.

- Committees reduce the number of decisions that the entire club must deal with.

- Committee members have wider contacts and can provide greater access to various facilities or resources.

- Committees permit wider participation of members. This in turn means a greater sense of commitment and greater attendance at organizational meetings.

- Committees are more flexible and easier to convene.
Selection and Orientation for a 4-H Committee

In selecting a committee, consider three points: 1) the chair; 2) the members; and 3) the committee size. Questions to consider when selecting a committee:

Chair
More care is essential in selecting the chair of a committee than in selecting its members. Generally the chair is the first person selected. The chair is chosen for the ability to lead the group. Then the rest of the committee is selected or recruited. The chair does not simply call and conduct meetings, but has primary responsibility to the group. The chair should have the ability to organize the individual members into a working group. The chair does not have to have the most knowledge about the topic to be considered by the group. It may be an advantage for the chair to have served on a committee previously, but not necessarily have served as a chair.

Members
- Which individuals have an interest in the kind of activity that the committee will engage? Interest and willingness to serve are primary considerations.
- Who in the club has the knowledge and skill, or access to information, needed by the committee? Persons with pertinent information should be given special consideration.
- Which persons could benefit most by working on the committee with members who have had more experience? The opportunity to provide the experience of learning by doing should not be overlooked. Every member is a potential leader.
- Are there individuals who might develop a greater sense of belonging or commitment to the club by working on a given committee?
- Is a representative committee needed? Often it's wise to have a cross section of the membership represented on the committee.
- Which members have the best access to the resources needed to do the job? Care should be taken not to overload key individuals.
- Are there some individuals who will work together more compatibly than others? People who have demonstrated their unwillingness or inability to work together normally would not be assigned to the same committee.
- Do committee chairs have any preference as to who they would like on their committee? It is often good practice to ask chairs for suggestions because the responsibility rests with them.

Committee Size
The purpose of the committee should be the primary consideration in determining how large the group should be. Keep in mind that the major reason for appointing a committee in the first place is the advantage of the greater efficiency and flexibility of a small group over a large one. Size will be determined by the optimum number of people needed to accomplish the purpose of the committee.

Committee Goals
Clearly defined goals increase productivity and personal satisfaction and reduce misunderstandings. To ensure that each member has a clear notion of what is to be done, put the assignment in writing.
Give special committees a date for completing the work. For standing committees, indicate dates for progress reports.
Job descriptions can be very useful in increasing the effectiveness of the committee.
Forming 4-H Club Committees

Types of Club Committees
There are different types of committees to serve different purposes:

Types of Committee:
1. **Standing Committee:** Handle part of club’s regular business. Active throughout year; duties constant over long period of time.

2. **Special Committee:** Carry out specific task for a limited period of time.

Strong Committees have:
- A mix of perspectives
- A mix of experience
- Experienced youth/adults helping younger committee members

Different Ways to Form Club Committees

*Signup Sheet:* Members put their names next to the committee that they are willing to serve. Signup sheet could have numbers indicating how many members are needed.

*Indicate their Interests:* members review committee options and put their name on a card and list which committees interest them. Then, the club leadership team reviews these preferences and finalizes committee membership with the goal of getting a balance of experiences and perspectives.

*Appointment:* The club leadership team considers the interests of the youth and adults and appoints committees. They take their proposed committee lists to a club meeting for reaction.

*Chair/Others Recruit Members:* The committee chair or club officers identify potential committee members. They contact them to find out willingness to serve and make the committee list public after people have agreed to be on the committee.

*Identify Chair and Members Signup:* The club leadership team identifies the committee chair and after she/he agrees, they bring a signup sheet to the club meeting. This sheet indicates who is chairing the committee and has spaces for the number of members needed.
# Generic Committee Role Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To complete the tasks given to the group by the 4-H club.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Success Criteria</td>
<td>Opportunity for each committee member to develop leadership skills by participating in committee work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
<td>Report given to 4-H Club on completion of work. Attend meetings of committee. Become informed on issue or business to be discussed. Express opinion clearly and allow others to express theirs. Accept responsibilities to share work load. Accept decisions of the majority. Fulfill committee assignment. Report back to full club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Dates</td>
<td>One month between club meeting dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources Available</td>
<td>Club Committee Adviser. Club Committee Chair. Other committee members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report to</td>
<td>Committee Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>For Questions, Contact</td>
<td>Committee Chair. Club Committee Adviser.</td>
</tr>
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## Generic Committee Chair Role Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To lead the committee through the business given to the committee by the club.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Success Criteria | Committee builds a sense of teamwork.  
| | Committee completes tasks assigned to group.  
| | Committee presents report to club. |
| Responsibilities | Makes arrangements for meeting and notifies members of date, time, and place of meeting.  
| | Calls meeting to order.  
| | Prepares agenda for meeting.  
| | Delegates responsibilities to committee members.  
| | Involves all members in the decision making.  
| | Reports work of committee to club and organizational leader.  
| | Keeps a written file of work of committee. |
| Target Dates | Time for making arrangements for committee to meet  
| | Time for committee to discuss business and make recommendations  
| | Time for committee to report to club  
| | Time to conduct activity/event if part of the committee role  
| | Time to report accomplishments to club |
| Resources Available | Working with Committees Packet  
| | Club Committee Adviser  
| | Other committee members |
| Training Opportunities | Consultation with Club Committee Adviser |
| Report to | Club |
| For Questions, Contact | Club Committee Adviser |
Committee Reports and Club Action

Committee reports are necessary to keep the entire club informed as to the progress of the committee. The report is usually given verbally at the 4-H Club meeting. Sometimes it may be a written report. It is important that the report be reviewed by all members of the committee before it is finalized and shared with the club.

Often clubs treat all committee reports in the same way. Many times the person giving the report automatically moves that it be accepted or approved. Actually a club has several options in handling a report based on the nature of the committee.

- **Accepted or filed.** When no action is required, the chair can accept the report without a vote.
- **Approved or adopted.** This means that the club binds itself to all the recommendations of the report. Before doing this, the club should be certain it agrees with the entire report and the suggestions of the committee.
- **Rejected.** The club may reject any or all of the report.
- **Postponed.** A decision on the report can be postponed.
- **Returned to the committee.** If additional clarification is needed, the report can be sent back to the committee. Be certain to give clear instructions as to what needs clarification.
- **Referred.** Reports can be referred to another committee or officer instead of being accepted.

4-H Clubs need to handle reports in the best way for their members, which usually means keeping it simple.

Top Ten List for Committee Members

1. Come prepared to group meetings.
2. Seek common direction in working with others.
3. Share oneself as a resource in the group.
4. Be open to listen to ideas of others.
5. Take responsibility for helping the group make decisions and solve problems.
6. Speak only for oneself.
7. Evaluate the group effort.
8. Evaluate one's own contributions.
9. Help celebrate and honor successes.
10. Follow up and do that which is agreed upon after the meeting of the group.
Committee Membership List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Committee Adviser</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
<th>E-mail Address</th>
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Committee Planning Sheet

Committee: __________________________

Date: _______________________________

Type:  
  _____ Standing Committee
  _____ Special Committee

Chair: _______________________________

Committee Adviser: __________________

Objectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
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Timetable:

Resources:

Evaluation:
Committee Reporting Sheet

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<th>Committee</th>
<th>__________________________</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Adviser</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Members Present:

Business Discussed:

Decisions Made:

Business for Next Meeting:

Date of Next Meeting:

Report to Full Club:
Committee Final Evaluation Form

Committee
Date
Chair
Committee Adviser

Other Committee Members:

Report to 4-H Club:

Accomplishments:

Improvements:

Recommendations for Next Year:

Additional Information:

Keep this form (results) to use in planning next year's club program!

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