



Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program

Building Leaders for Tomorrow

Instilling and developing leadership capabilities in youth and adults.

ACTIVITY 22: “Three Positions”

THINGS TO KNOW:

Verbal and non-verbal communications influences relationships and responsibilities. It contributes to emotional pressures we encounter with life’s successes and challenges. Developing good communication skills assists in our personal and social lives. Constructive communication allows individuals and groups to move forward for the common good of the whole.

Through the 4-H program members are provided opportunities to develop communication skills with their parents, leaders, volunteers, peers and community. Activities, programs, committee work and elected office, each provide opportunities for defining and refining one’s communication and leadership ability and potential. Members learn to work with limitations and boundaries, manage time and resources, as well as compromise and cooperate as they serve as a helper, committee member, officer, workshop coordinator, counselor or teen leader.

All members should be provided opportunities to gain and develop leadership skill through participation in club activities and meetings. There are many levels of leadership and all are important to the success of the group. Each individual needs to be able to identify and develop their talents and skills and contribute them toward the betterment of the team. As you work with young people keep in mind, developing leadership skills is not synonymous with “being an officer.”

There are many levels of leadership: participant, follower, helper, worker, committee member, committee chair, officer, workshop coordinator/instructor, program coordinator, teen leader, etc. At each progressively more difficult or responsible level, the individual acquires and demonstrates the skills necessary for the next challenge.

Challenge membership to experience a variety of leadership positions. Each experience contributes to the individual’s understanding and perspective of being an effective leader (6-Pillars of Character: Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair, Caring and a Good Citizen).

This activity encourages action, creativity, decision making, cooperation and compromise. Individuals must communicate as one to accomplish a common goal. There are no winners or losers in this activity because it promotes teamwork within teamwork – the three teams will work separate but together to achieve a single goal. Individual characteristics will emerge and team members will have to make and communicate decisions to achieve the defined outcome.



Materials Needed: None.

Do: Divide the large group into three smaller teams. Demonstrate the “neutral” position: hands down at your sides, standing up straight. The group must decide on three other positions – standing on one foot, hands on the head, sitting down. More advanced groups might even create positions that require partners or vocalizations. When the group has decided on three different positions, the three individual teams huddle together to decide (within 30 seconds) on one of the three positions to perform when the recreation leader calls “go.” The object of the game is for ALL THREE teams to be in the same position at the same time, without talking or signaling to the other teams.

Reflect:

- 1) What method(s) did your group use to reach its decision each time?
- 2) On a scale from one to ten (ten=most influential) rate your own personal influence on the group’s decision making.
- 3) How many leaders emerged in your group? How were they chosen? Did leadership change? Why?
- 4) What characteristics of these individuals enabled them to gain leadership in the group?
- 5) Were there instances in which you disagreed with the group’s choice of a position? Did you vocalize your objection? Why or why not?
- 6) Was your behavior during this game typical of your leadership style in other situations? What are some similarities and some differences?
- 7) How did you feel about the time limit and other boundaries/rules of the game? Did they help or hinder?
- 8) Did the group establish an overall strategy for meeting the objectives of this game? If so, what was it?
- 9) How did you coordinate and communicate your team’s strategy with the other teams?

Apply:

- 1) Do committees have limitations and boundaries in our club? What are they or what should they be? Why?
- 2) What things can individuals do to overcome challenges resulting from communications?
- 3) What can the club do to establish good communications?
- 4) What can those in leadership roles do to be more effective communicators? What can club members do to be better communicators with leadership?
- 5) How can each of us become a more effective “leader” and “team member?”

Source: Goodman, Joel and Weinstein, Matt. 1980. Playfair, Everybody’s Guide to Non-competitive Play. Impact Publishers, California

