

research in brief

4-H Leader Needs Assessment

A needs assessment among 4-H leaders in Boulder County, Colorado, was conducted. A simple device called MINIMAX (Ivan Scheier, 1974) was used to match the needs of leaders with the identified skills of other leaders. Leaders were asked to identify and write their needs as a leader on a small card and then to write down their skills on another card. Leaders were divided into small groups and needs and skills shared. The major needs and skills of one group of 15 leaders in the study were:

<u>Needs</u>	<u>No. of Leaders</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>No. of Leaders</u>
Self and member motivation	8	4-H project help	11
Help with county fair judging	7	County fair help	5
Project information	6	Teaching skills	1
Leadership skills	6	Driving to meetings	1
Project activities	4	Meetings in my home	1
Getting parents involved	2	Tell of my	
Securing new leaders	2	experiences	1

The MINIMAX technique contributed to better communication between the leaders and many were "matched" during the leader training session to give each other assistance. It also gave the Extension agent ideas for topics of future leader training sessions and some possible clues where leaders might assist in county programs in the future with personally identified skills.

Editor's Note:

The MINIMAX technique was very successful with 4-H leaders in one county. It should be considered for use in other counties, not only with 4-H leaders but with volunteers in all Extension program areas. It might even be a way to identify some of the needs and skills Extension agents or

specialists have that might be shared with other professionals, especially new workers.

"A Study of Needs and Abilities of 4-H Leaders Related to Leader Training in Boulder County." Joan Camp. Master's paper, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, 1976.

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