

4-H Training Topics - **Experiential Learning Model**

Background:

Hands-on learning and learning by doing are commonly used expressions in education and youth development. These reflect a more involved process known as experiential learning which involves a five-part process that incorporates doing something, reflecting upon it and applying what is learned. Experiential learning happens frequently in unstructured settings like 4-H club meetings and activities.

Resource:

4-H 101, pages 35-41;
www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org;
Heads-on, Hands-on: The Power of Experiential Learning

Materials Needed:

Experiential Learning Model (This can be found in *4-H 101* or in many manuals developed by the 4-H/Army Youth Development Project like *Home Alone*, *Do I have what it takes to be Your Babysitter?*, etc.)

Amount of supplies will depend upon the number attending. Each group of three participants will need:
5 sheets of construction paper or 10 index cards
10 straws
10 paper clips
One roll tape

Preparation:

Prior to the training: collect supplies and put enough supplies for each team in an envelope or bag.

Day of training: arrange tables, chairs and materials

Allow 15 minutes for preparation and set-up.

I Welcome and Introductions

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Introduce yourself and ask participants to introduce themselves and give their definition of experiential learning. Ask them to be brief.	Welcome. In this training we will learn more about experiential learning. Before we get started let's have introductions. Tell the group your name, place of work and briefly describe what experiential learning means to you.	5



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Curriculum

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Show the Experiential Learning Model and the <i>Heads-on, Hands-on: The Power of Experiential Learning</i> curriculum.	<p>Because the Experiential Learning Model is so central to 4-H programming it can be found in many of the 4-H project guides as well as most of the manuals written by the 4-H/Army Youth Development Project Specialists. Today we are going to focus on the <i>Heads-on, Hands-on: The Power of Experiential Learning</i> curriculum.</p> <p>The model begins with a planned experience providing an opportunity to learn a specific skill. It will probably be something new for the learner and should push individuals beyond previous experiences.</p> <p>The sharing process begins with asking questions designed to get individuals to share reactions and observations and to discuss feelings generated by the experience. These types of questions are asked to help participants reflect on what they have done. These are generally questions associated with senses (seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, etc.) and levels of difficulty.</p> <p>Next is to identify the process or how the experience was actually carried out. How were specific problems or issues addressed? In this step encourage the group to look for recurring themes. Questions that encourage discussion about process usually involve how participants actually did the activity and if there were any problems. If so, how were the problems handled?</p> <p>Generalizations from the experience begin in step four. This is when the learner begins to apply what was learned to what he/she already knew. This step helps participants determine the importance of the experience. Listing key terms that capture the learning can be a helpful exercise in this step. Questions that encourage discussion about generalizing include: What was learned from the experience? How does this new information relate to other things participants have learned?</p> <p>In the last step, the Experiential Learning Model addresses the “now what” application of the experience and explores how the information learned can be applied to other situations. Questions to encourage application include: How can learners use what they learned? How does what they learned apply to other parts of their lives?</p>	5

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Doing an Activity

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
The activity is modified from <i>Heads-on, Hands-on</i> , pages 46-47. Divide the group into teams of three. Distribute supplies.	Each team has a packet of supplies. The task is to build the tallest tower using only the supplies in the packet. You will have 10 minutes.	12



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4 Applying the Experience

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Process the activity using the Experiential Learning Model. Be deliberate in helping the participants recognize the questions asked in each step of the model.	<p>DO In groups of three, participants constructed the tallest tower possible out of materials provided.</p> <p>SHARE What did the group decide to do? How was that decided? What could have been done differently?</p> <p>PROCESS What are some other times when group work is required or helpful?</p> <p>GENERALIZE In life, what decisions are made as a group? Individually?</p> <p>APPLY Did this activity change any perceptions of working in groups? How? How can what was learned about working in groups be used in other activities at CYS Services this week?</p>	7

5 Making a Plan

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Ask participants to sit with others working in the same program.	<p>Using the Experiential Learning Model doesn't mean planning and preparation is not required. Consider how the activity fits into the Experiential Learning Model. Be intentional in planning and think about questions that are appropriate for each step knowing that questions may change depending upon what happens and responses to other questions.</p> <p>People who work together in the same program areas should be seated together. Consider one activity planned for the week and plan that activity using the Experiential Learning Model. How can the activity be planned and what preparations need to be made to assure the children and youth are successful? What questions are important to ask for each of the stages of the model?</p>	7

6 Closing

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Summarize and close.	Keep in mind the more the Experiential Learning Model is used the easier it becomes. Asking a few well planned questions at appropriate times can move an activity to a meaningful learning experience. Thank you for coming today to learn about the Experiential Learning Model.	1