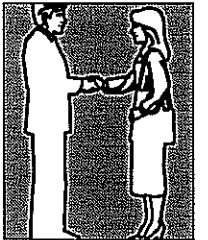


INTERVIEW JUDGING



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Interview judging is an educational evaluation technique. Evaluation and understanding what was learned are important parts of the educational process. Young people need and want specific feedback on their projects and exhibits. They want to know what was done well and what needs to be improved. They need to understand the educational experience, and how they may benefit from the judging experience.

Youth need and want tangible and intangible recognition. A compliment that says what was done well may be all the recognition required for completion of a task. It gives immediate feedback and has reinforcement value.

Evaluation is important and is appropriate at all levels in a program. The most effective learning takes place when the evaluation is done on a one-to-one basis, and based on realistic goals that have been set by the exhibitor.

There are several names for interview judging. Sometimes it is called “conference judging,” “face-to-face judging,” or “one-to-one judging.” The name changes based on the program and locale. In any case, interview judging is the judging process used when the judge and the exhibitor are alone for a one-on-one judging experience. It is done when the youth is present and can talk to the judge. This allows the judge to discover project goals, new skills learned, and what was gained from the experience. Both the interview and standards for the exhibit need to be considered when determining the results of the interview. The judge needs to be someone who relates well with youth and is familiar with the project or exhibit. The discussion between the two (judge and exhibitor) must focus on the learning experience associated with the project or exhibit.

Judging is done in an informal setting. The discussion should center on the goals established by the youth, the learning experiences associated with the project or exhibit, and the standards set for evaluating the finished item. Consideration needs to be given to: age of the youth, skill level, special circumstances, and opportunity for future growth. Interview judging is the most desired method of helping youth evaluate their experiences and growth.

Getting in Gear to Judge:

- Be prepared to give full concentration - get ample rest the night before.
- Be on time and check in with the appropriate person.
- Be willing to judge longer than you may have been asked. Unavoidable delays may occur.
- Keep a positive attitude. Do not let delays and schedule changes upset you.
- This is a serious event for the exhibitor, but a sense of humor often helps.
- Be tactful and concerned about the feeling of the exhibitor.
- Offer constructive criticism, but keep the educational value of the experience in mind.
- Keep your personal likes and dislikes out of the picture.
- Make decisions quickly and with confidence.

You Need to Know:

- The standards and requirements for the projects and exhibits to be judged.
- The capabilities and level of understanding of the age level to be judged.
- Are there additional judging standard or adjustments to the standards?
- Decisions are not to be based on “opinions,” but must be clear factual statements.

Judging is to be consistent among exhibitors.

The exhibitor gets the benefit of the doubt.

Exhibitors compare remarks made by the judge, so personalize remarks about the project or exhibit.

Do not use the same statements with each exhibitor.

Sometimes the exhibitor may challenge the evaluation of the judge, or be critical of a remark. This is not the usual behavior, but be prepared to take criticisms.

Clarify questions and problems with the superintendent. It is best not to guess if you are not sure about a rule or requirement. No one is expected to have all of the answers all the time.

Suggestions regarding improvements in the judging process or repeated problem with exhibits should be shared with the superintendent.

Suggested Interview Procedure:

Ask Questions:

The questions asked should test the understanding of the “why’s” as well as the “how’s.” By asking questions and encouraging active participation in the interview discussion, a better understanding of the exhibitors, their skills, and levels of ability is gained. Asking about strengths, weaknesses and areas of extreme difficulty gives the exhibitor an opportunity for self-evaluation.

Written Critique:

Judges’ comments are very beneficial for the exhibitor. The written critique gives valuable information to the exhibitor about the qualities desired and standards used for judging. This is valuable as the exhibitor continues to grow in project work.

Final Note:

There are variations in counties across the state as to the exact judging procedures. Always check rules and regulations with the department superintendent or the person handling the judging. It is always best to ask, then you can be sure of the requirements.

Interview judging gives exhibitors a sense of personal involvement and makes project work more educational.