

Training 101

Set SMART Goals

It is important to equip your volunteers with the tools they need to be successful. As a group, consider setting SMART Goals. This will ensure the foundation of all volunteering efforts is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. Use the chart below to guide your team as well as hold each committee member accountable throughout the process.

S	Specific	Who, what, when, where?	
M	Measurable	Will it be possible to measure success? It should be!	
A	Attainable	Be realistic about what can be achieved.	
R	Realistic	Focus on achieving real, meaningful change.	
T	Timely	When will this volunteering effort happen by?	

Facilitation Best Practices

Some volunteers are more comfortable in front of groups than others. It's our hope that the tips we share with you will help anyone feel more comfortable with their audience. Here is the facilitation formula for success. It's a simple four-step process to help craft your time in front of your audience. This is perfect for conducting an informative event or visiting a classroom!

Step 1: Hook 'em!

Hook your audience into the content you are about to share. Leave your audience wanting more about the topic.

Step 2: Meet 'em!

The second step is to meet your audience! Depending on the size of the group, you can have participants share their connection to agriculture. Regardless of their responses, be sure to help the audience see the correlation of their purpose for being there and what you are about to share and how it can benefit them.

Step 3: Engage 'em!

This step is arguably the most important step for successful facilitation. We must engage our audience! Rather than thinking about it as teaching them, have the mentality that you are learning alongside your audience and continuing to discover more and more about agricultural literacy with them. Share real experiences or admit that you might not have all the answers, but make it clear you are committed to helping them learn more. The more real you are with your audience, the better! A good measure of engagement is the amount of questions that are asked. We do our best to write our resources with this mentality in mind!

Step 4: Connect 'em!

The final step is to connect them! Once you have concluded your presentation, connect your audience to resources and places where they can continue to learn more about the subject. Whether it is directing participants to the AFBFA website (www.agfoundation.org) or giving out a local Farm Bureau member's contact information, find a way to keep the engagement with agricultural literacy happening.

Engaging the Audience

Reflection is powerful. This is how we ensure that our message was clearly received!

What?

In this phase, we ask our audience, "What?" to start this reflective process. Possible questions include:

- "What happened?"
- "What did you learn?"
- "What did you feel from this experience?"

So, what?

The second phase of this reflective practice is asking your audience, "So what?" This is the theoretical and conceptual phase. Possible questions include:

- "So, what is the importance of this?"
- "So, what is the significance to you?"
- "So, what more do I need to know about this?" These questions will help us continue to process the importance of the experience.

Now what?

At this final phase, we consider other ways of thinking or acting and what we can do now to be proactive in the future. This step encourages participants to think about the next steps in using the knowledge gained from the experience. Potential questions include:

- "Now what should I do?"
- "Now what is my plan of action based on the information I have been given today?"