

Your Role As Education Chair Of a Mississippi Homemaker Volunteers Club

Congratulations on being named education chair for your homemaker club or council! If you've had experience on the job, you already may be off and running with projects. If you're new to the position, you may be wondering, "What do I do now?"

By December of each year, you should receive from the Mississippi Homemaker Volunteers Council a State Council Handbook that contains the Program of Work. This program of work is not meant to plan your program for you but to call your attention to some of the concerns in your area. If there are more important concerns in your county or club, you should feel free to plan programs around these instead of, or in addition to, the state suggestions.

On February 1 of each year, the education chairs of the Mississippi Homemaker Volunteers Council will expect reports of the past year's projects from each county chair.

Deciding

Projects that seem to work best are those designed by a majority of the club members who are expected to help. When people collaborate on a project, it becomes "our project" rather than "her project."

People are more willing to help with "our project," and most people are willing to help in the following circumstances:

- they know exactly what is expected of them
- they are doing a part of the job that they enjoy
- they receive encouragement, appreciation, and recognition.

Aren't we all more inclined to help under these conditions?

Before you meet with a group to discuss a project, do your homework! Read the information you receive from the state chair, and watch for information and ideas on television, in magazines, and at any meetings you attend. Ask friends and family members for activity ideas. Work with other education chairs in your county and promote cooperative projects and activities.

Your county or club may at times have a rather large project in your area. At other times, when other program areas take priority, you may have smaller projects. It is unusual for a club or county to give major emphasis to all areas each year. Probably no more than two or three education committees will have large projects in any one year.

Planning

After deciding on the project, list everything that needs to be done, who will do it, and when it should be done. Make sure that participants are committed to the project and that they understand their responsibilities. Double check plans with participants by calling, sending reminders, and meeting with them for further planning and progress reports when necessary.

Plan for the entire project, including a before, during, and after publicity campaign. The larger the project and the more people involved, the more detailed the planning. However, even the smallest of ideas needs planning if it is to be successful.

It is not important to use a certain form or a certain way of planning. The important thing is to plan the project or activity details orally and in written form so that everyone involved knows what to do. Think through the project from beginning to end so that no detail is omitted during planning.



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Implementing

If planning is complete, implementing the project should be easy. The main thing to remember when you are in the middle of a project is to be calm, forgive yourself and others for occasional slip-ups, and carry on from there. Even the best-made plans sometimes have to be changed.

Evaluating

Reward participants through appreciation and recognition. Take your bows and blow your horn by letting the state chairs know what you've done. Meet with your committee after the project is completed to discuss and make note of the things that went especially well, the things that needed improvement, and ideas for making the next project even better.

No matter how big or small the project, you should feel good about having done it. You may never know how many people you have directly or indirectly influenced. Have a productive and exciting year in Homemakers.



Distributed by **Marilyn Bailey**, Extension Leadership Development Area Agent.

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