4-H Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

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The Path To Get Here

• NIFA and National 4-H Council partnered to commission a comprehensive national study among current and prospective 4-H volunteers.

• Harris Interactive was hired to conduct the two-phased research project:
  - One-on-one telephone interviews with volunteer specialists
  - Online focus group sessions with current 4-H volunteers
  - Survey of volunteers (both current and prospective volunteers)

• The resulting work was then tested via telephone focus group session with volunteer specialists.
Goals of the Project

• The research sought to explore a number of important areas:
  ➢ What drives people to become volunteers
  ➢ What does a positive volunteer experience look like
  ➢ What attachment is there to volunteering with 4-H (emotional and rational factors)
  ➢ What aspects of the 4-H mission appeal to potential volunteers
  ➢ Which segments of current and potential volunteers are most promising (and which are not)
4-H Volunteer Segmentation
Methodology

• This survey was conducted online within the United States
• Field Dates: August 16-September 10, 2010
• Totals: 2771 total completes split into three groups:
  ➢ 4-H Sample (N=1024)
  ➢ Current volunteers (N=1506), U.S. adults 18+ who have volunteered in the last year.
  ➢ Future volunteers (N=241), U.S. adults 18+ who plan to volunteer in the next year.
• Sample for current and future volunteers came from the Harris Poll online database and were weighted for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income to be representative of the US general population of adults 18+. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.
• The 4-H sample came directly from 33 state 4-H programs.
Executive Summary

• Current and future volunteers tend to volunteer for the same kinds of organizations as do 4-H volunteers, though in smaller numbers. Yet, these groups volunteer less than 4-H volunteers do, and less than they’d reportedly like to volunteer.

• While 4-H, current and future volunteers values related to volunteering are similar, 4-H’ers actual experience comes much closer to that ideal than does the volunteering experience of current volunteers.

• Majorities of all groups agreed that organizations focusing on “life skills” would be most effective in benefiting the country, employers and the economy. Further, relatively few agree that young people today are learning the life skills they need to reach their full potential.
Executive Summary

• Familiarity with 4-H is low compared to other organizations in the competitive set, however favorability and trust were measured closer to the competitive set.

• Top of mind descriptions of 4-H continue to reflect the historical origins of the organization – with majorities of current and future volunteers citing “agriculture/animal husbandry” first.
  ➢ In contrast, 4-Hers first mention the focus on education and not the content of that education.

• The proportion who are likely to volunteer for 4-H nearly doubles after learning a little about the organization
Conclusions/Recommendations

• Focus on getting the right message out about the organization – more education about **how and why** you do what you do and less on the specific subject areas.

• Leverage “**word of mouth**” as method of recruitment – via current, and future participants as well as local organizations, churches, schools, etc.
Leverage the current national discussion on education - position 4-H as an organization/way for young people to **develop life skills** that everyone believes are important and needed and relatively few actually think young people are getting

Provide more opportunities for **episodic volunteering** – current volunteers more likely to describe positive volunteering as “giving back to the needy” perhaps suggesting a shorter term, instant impact event (i.e. serving meals in a soup kitchen) rather than having a longer-term impact. Diverse opportunities may help get people in the door to learn about 4-H.

- Steer people into different kinds of opportunities based on their interests and motivations
Volunteer Segmentation
Segmentation Parameters

• Attitudes toward 4-H
  ➢ Familiarity
  ➢ Favorability
• Skill sets
• Motivation for volunteering
# Recommendations

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Volunteer Engagement & Activation Resource (VEAR)
Volunteer Segments

% of Volunteer Population

- Low Potential
- High Potential
- Medium Potential

- Transformational Leaders (8%)
- Linked Ins (3%)
- Traditionalists (15%)
- Active Mentors (20%)
- Generation Next (18%)
- Sideliners (20%)
- Backgrounders (6%)
- Pre-Occupieds (10%)

Source: Harris Interactive Segmentation Study, September 2010
COMMON MOTIVATORS

• Teach kids enduring life skills
• Have a positive impact on the next generation
• Apply what I’ve learned through hands-on experience

KEY MESSAGES

• Your can have a positive impact on the next generation in your community by sharing your experience and knowledge.
• Help fuel the extraordinary efforts of our youth by joining the Revolution of Responsibility
Transformational Leaders

**Primary Motivators**
Want to be leaders/mentors for future generations
Like working with young people
Believe in the importance of teaching life skills
Like having longer-term engagements
Want to build relationships with kids
Like to set an example

**4-H Relationship**
Extremely familiar with 4-H (72%)
Extremely favorable to what 4-H offers (70%)
1/3 say it never occurred to them to volunteer with 4-H

**Demographics**
70% Female and 49% are 50+
Live in urban/suburban areas
Spend a lot of time volunteering already (26.7 hrs./month)
Most ethnically diverse segment (24% Black, 9% Hispanic)

**Lifestyle Interpretation**
Experiences over things  Active lifestyles
Care about multiple causes  Highly organized
Natural leader, responsible  Invest in what they believe in
Connected/in the know
Transformational Leaders

Primary Motivators
• Want to be leaders/mentors for future generations
• Like working with young people
• Believe in the importance of teaching life skills
• Like having longer-term engagements
• Want to build relationships with kids
• Like to set an example

Key Messages
• Commit to leading the next generation by teaching them how to make a meaningful contribution
• Join the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community and every community in the country

Touch Points*
Community: Libraries, church, restaurants, grocery stores, gardening stores, parks
Online: MapQuest, photo share sites, recipe sites, medical sites, travel sites
TV: Weather channel, FOX news, CNN, Food Network, Lifetime, HGTV, Hallmark, NCIS
Magazines: AARP, Better Homes and Gardens, Good Housekeeping
Other: AM radio, direct mail to home

*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of women 50+ who have volunteered in the past 12 months)
Linked Ins

**Primary Motivators**
- Like to share their experiences/make an impact
- Want to apply what they’ve learned
- Like action and fun
- Inclined to episodic and virtual volunteering

**4-H Relationship**
- Low familiarity with 4-H
- 62% have volunteered with youth organizations in the past
- Interest in 4-H rises when learn more about organization

**Demographics**
- 58% Male
- Highest educated (84% college+) – skills in SET
- Highest income segment
- High concentration of <50-year-olds
- Highest representation of Hispanics at 16%
- Already volunteering about 22 hours/month

**Lifestyle Interpretation**
- Highly engaged parents
- Attend church regularly
- Life revolves around their children

Volunteer at child’s school
- Draw on own childhood
- High value on family time
Linked Ins

**Primary Motivators**
- Like to share their experiences/make an impact
- Want to apply what they’ve learned
- Like action and fun
- Inclined to episodic and virtual volunteering

**Key Messages**
- Apply your (SET) passions to the next generation
- Make a contribution for positive change in your community
- Take an active part in the Revolution of Responsibility in your community

**Touch Points**
- **Community:** Restaurants, fitness centers, parent events, kids sports, home shows
- **Online:** Facebook, YouTube, Weather.com, Google Maps/MapQuest, Amazon, Wikipedia, gmail, ESPN
- **TV:** Discovery, History, ESPN/ESPN2, TBS, TNT, Comedy Channel

*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of men 25-49 with college degrees who have volunteered in the past 12 months)*
Traditionalists

Primary Motivators
Interested in learning new skills
Like working with different generations

4-H Relationship
Average familiarity with 4-H (53%)
Above average favorability to what 4-H offers (62%)
4-H is already highly visible in their community

Demographics
32% rural residents
51% are 50+
66% Female
Least educated segment (46% HS grad or less)
Work/job responsibilities are an obstacle for volunteering but do so 18 hrs./month

Lifestyle Interpretation
Practical people Bargain shoppers
Blue-collar Willing to roll up sleeves
Economic pressure Community is important
Traditionalists

• Primary Motivators
  • Interested in learning new skills
  • Like working with different generations

• Key Messages
  • Learn, grow and work with the next generation
  • Join the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community

Touch Points*

Community: Libraries, church, restaurants, grocery stores, gardening stores, parks
Online: MapQuest, photo share sites, recipe sites, medical sites, travel sites
TV: Weather channel, FOX news, CNN, Food Network, Lifetime, HGTV, Hallmark, NCIS
Magazines: AARP, Better Homes and Gardens, Good Housekeeping
Other: AM radio, direct mail to home

*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of women 50+ yrs who have volunteered in the past 12 months)
Active Mentors

**Primary Motivators**
Want to pass on the skills they’ve learned in life

**4-H Relationship**
Average familiarity with 4-H (47%)
Average favorability to what 4-H offers (49%)

**Demographics**
Fairly equally balanced men/women
Oldest segment (52% are 50+)
Many retired (31%)
Beginning to have more time to volunteer than others
Average volunteering 17 hrs./month
35% are rural residents

**Lifestyle Interpretation**
Experience has given them strong opinions
Concerned about kids today – don’t have skills needed
Active grandparents
Loyal church-goers
Active Mentors

• Primary Motivators
  • Want to pass on the skills they’ve learned in life

• Key Messages
  • Leave a legacy of responsibility in your community
  • Use your skills to push our country forward
  • Empower kids with your knowledge by joining the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community

Touch Points*

Community: Church, community banks, gardening stores, parks, traditional American events, hair salons, barber shops, insurance agencies
TV: Weather Channel, Fox News, CNN, Lifetime, Hallmark, Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade
Magazines: AARP, financial magazines
Online: None
Other: AM radio, direct mail to home, coupons

*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of men 50+ yrs who have volunteered in the past 12 months)
**Generation Next**

**Primary Motivators**
Want to teach skills to kids/be a mentor

**4-H Relationship**
Not very familiar with 4-H (30%)

**Demographics**
- 70% Female
- Youngest segment (41% 18-29 yrs.) (40% 30-49 yrs.)
- On the verge of starting families, many students in this group
- Fairly diverse group (15% Black, 12% Hispanic)
- Highest concentration of urban dwellers (35%)
- Low volunteering pattern (12 hrs./month)

**Lifestyle Interpretation**
- Parents-in-training
- Working at first “real” job
- Trying to figure it all out
- Have many priorities
- Believe the future will be better than the past
- Altruistic – improve the world
- Care about a variety of issues
Generation Next

• **Primary Motivators**
  - Want to teach skills to kids/be a mentor

• **Key Messages**
  - Use your skills to help kids explore and discover what matters to them so they can make an impact today and for the future
  - Use your experience to fuel the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community

**Touch Points**

- **Community**: church, school related activities, parades, grocery stories, fitness centers, pet stores/vets
- **Online**: Facebook, YouTube, Weather.com, MapQuest, Amazon, Wikipedia
- **TV**: Food Network, A&E, Lifetime, ABC Family, TLC, HGTV, Disney, E!, Academy Awards
- **Magazines**: People, Better Homes & Gardens
- **Radio**: Contemporary and urban FM stations

*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of women 25-49 who have volunteered in the past 12 months)*
**Sideliners**

**Primary Motivators**
- Not very interested in youth-related organizations
- Prefer episodic volunteering
- Don’t believe volunteering can open doors to opportunities

**4-H Relationship**
- Low familiarity with 4-H (45%)
- Low favorability of 4-H (44%)
- Committed to what they are already doing
- Lowest SET skills

**Demographics**
- Low volunteering pattern (12 hrs./month)
- 60% Female, 56% are <50 years old
- 70% White
- Lower education levels (44% HS or less)

**Lifestyle Interpretation**
- Weekend volunteers
- Having fun is a priority
- Volunteering is social activity
- Giving back is a “duty”
Backgrounders

**Primary Motivators**
Not very interested in youth-related organizations
Not at all interested in mentoring
Uninterested in learning new skills through volunteering
Don’t believe volunteering can open doors to opportunities

**4-H Relationship**
Low familiarity with 4-H (39%)
Low favorability of 4-H (42%)

**Demographics**
Lowest rate of volunteering (6 hrs./month)
Highest concentration of rural residents (37%)
Least diverse ethnically (81% White)
55% Male, 45% Female
47% are age 30 to 49, 47% are 50+

**Lifestyle Interpretation**
Live in a small town
Self-sufficient
Focused on neighbors
Less religious

Low interest in volunteer attributes
Many are retired
Pre-Occupieds

Primary Motivators
- Not very interested in youth-related organizations
- Not interested in mentoring
- Not motivated by being involved in youth hands-on learning

4-H Relationship
- Low familiarity with 4-H (19%)
- Low favorability of 4-H
- Committed to what they are already doing

Demographics
- Low volunteering pattern (11 hrs./month)
- Highest post-graduate educated (24% post-graduate)
- 65% White
- 64% male, 59% are <49 years old

Lifestyle Interpretation
- Demanding jobs
- Pulled in multiple directions
- No regular schedules – hard for them to commit
- Less inclined to support children’s activities
How To Use This Resource

• Use the **segments** to identify the types of volunteers you are attracting

• Let the provided **key messages** for each segment guide the direction you take with each person you are trying to recruit

• Focus your time on recruiting **the most promising candidates**

• Blend the knowledge provided by this research with the National 4-H **brand campaign** – **Join the Revolution of Responsibility!**
JOIN THE REVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY
The Answer

Young people in 4-H are uniquely prepared to **step up** to the challenges of a complex, changing world.
Portland Video
Campaign Materials

www.4-H.org/revolution
How to use these materials

• Recruit volunteers
  - Talk about the impact volunteers can have on youth and on their communities
  - Explain how volunteers can “Join” to help positively impact their communities
  - Share the chance to be part of an active movement across the country

• Embed these video(s) on your website, share them at events
Our Next Steps

• Formally launch the **Volunteer Engagement & Activation Resource** (VEAR) and accompanying web site.

• Begin work to develop the following materials to continue to aid in the recruitment and retention of 4-H volunteers:
  - Provide “elevator speeches” for each segment
  - Develop a “Frequently Asked Questions”
  - Provide webinar training sessions to discuss how to use the research and recommendations
  - And more…
Where to Download This Resource?

www.4-H.org/information-for/educators-professionals
What additional materials or resources can National 4-H Council look to create to help you and your staff?

Other questions?
4-H is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System.