

## Reflective Essay On Leadership

Leadership is an important skill for everyone to have! Being a leader rather than a follower only be helpful in my future. The self-confidence, teambuilding, and speaking skills I have gained through my 4-H involvement will be a definite asset during my college years and “real life” afterward.

When I first started 4-H it was a challenge to stand up at 4-H meetings and give a talk. It seemed very scary and intimidating to be up in front of others doing this. However, when you do this each year it becomes more a more natural thing and after a few years of club talks and speaking up at club meetings I was ready to be a club officer! I have actually held almost every club office now, including being Club President just last year.

My family has always been very supportive and encouraging to me with my 4-H projects. Working with my 4-H projects and getting advice from my parents has helped us have a close relationship. They are there for me every step of the way in 4-H. I recently was asked to give a talk about my 4-H work to the local Kiwanis group. Talking in front of my club members is pretty easy at this point, but talking in front of adults is a little bit different and you want to do a good job. My Mom was helpful by listening to my speech and giving me feedback and my whole family came to the Kiwanis Banquet which was nice to look out and see them in the audience! Afterward, members of the Kiwanis complimented me on what I had to say and the Kiwanis also have a better idea of how important 4-H is to youth in our county.

4-H Memorial Camp was one of my favorite things each summer when I was young, so when I got hired as a 4-H Cabin Counselor it was a dream come true! Planning activities, giving guidance, and keeping campers involved can be challenging, but I usually make plans and brainstorm with the counselor in the cabin next to me and one way or another we come up with solutions to keeping our campers excited! I have actually gotten letters from some of my campers after the summer because they enjoyed their camping experience so much.

I am a teen 4-H Ambassador in our county and community service and promotion of 4-H have been a focus of our work. Helping prepare weekend “snack packs” for youth who have hunger issues gives you a good feeling to know they will have something nutritious to eat when they are not at school where lunches are provided. I’ve been involved in promoting 4-H leading a learning ‘station’ for “Health” during our Passport to 4-H program at the county fair. We designed a fitness ‘obstacle course’ for youth that came through the program. Many of them were not already in 4-H, so we were able to give information to them on how to join and hopefully some of them will!

In the future I plan to attend college. I am not certain of my major, but the leadership opportunities and self-confidence I have gained through 4-H will only give me an advantage no matter what career path I choose!