

How to Write Helpful Comments

- Each 4-H member has devoted time and energy in preparing his or her Recognition Application and Deserves feedback on what he has learned and accomplished in 4-H and in activities outside of 4-H. Members also want to know ways to expand the project and develop leadership skills and citizenship activities to make it an even stronger record. Members carefully read judges' comments.
- Write positive comments about what the member has achieved and learned. **Be specific** so the member knows you really read the application. **Personalize your comments** and avoid generalizations. If competition was very close, let the 4-H member know that the committee had a very difficult time ranking the applications.
- Include specific suggestions on ways the member can expand his or her project, develop leadership and citizenship skills; and increase awareness of 4-H in the community. **Challenge the member**. Conclude your comments with a positive statement so the member will be motivated to continue 4-H work and submit another Recognition Application.

Instead of this...	Try this
Excellent records. You can be proud! (This is fine, but tell why)	Your educational display on USDA quality grades for market animals at Food Faire was an excellent way to relate your Beef and Food-Nutrition projects.
Expand your Food-Nutrition skills in community service.	Have you done comparison shopping in your Food-Nutrition project? This information would be good to share with consumer groups and be an excellent project for members to your teen group.
It was difficult to find information on size and scope in your project.	Consider using a chart to summarize your financial statement to clearly see what you have accomplished in your project.
You show excellent skills in citizenship.	We were impressed with your work with 250 Migrant children in the After-School Program. the children benefited from your knowledge and expertise in Creative Arts and Crafts.
Continue more leadership activities.	If a member is in his last year of 4-H, suggest that he continue to develop leadership skills as an adult leader.
Expand citizenship activities in your community.	Your citizenship project skills are commendable. Other youth groups, such as Boys & Girls' Club or Scouts, would benefit from hearing your presentation on Voter Responsibility.
Your leadership in your project was outstanding.	Your work at the Youth Community Outreach Program, sharing your knowledge and skills in your Rabbit project was outstanding.
Words to avoid...	Try these
Can't, Don't, Won't, Never, Always, Wrong, No, Should, Must	Consider, Suggest, Possible, How about, May, Another way, Next time, Have you thought, Have you tried

These are only some ideas to help you write positive comments. You can expand and use your own creative ideas.