



## Facilitator's Guide

# Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations

## *Empower Your Group by Developing Leadership*

### Rationale:

Educating, empowering and equipping organizational participants adds stability, quality and effectiveness to the organization and its programs.

### Goal:

To develop the educational processes that ensure a successful participant experience and continued organizational service.

*The extensive content of this session may be broken into multiple 30-minute programs—one per objective—for more in-depth learning activity participation. Program design should focus on participant needs and timeframes appropriate for selected content delivery.*

### Objectives:

- Distinguish elements of an effective new participant orientation program.
- Examine organizational procedures required for client and participant protection.
- Evaluate resource elements critical for a positive individual experience within the organization.
- Design learning situations for continued participant skill development.

### Pre-Preparation:

- Review CLD2-3 *GEMS Administrative Model Overview* to understand content sequence in overall organizational leadership development process.
- Review CLD2-7 *Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community* fact sheet for content delivery background.
- Prepare copies of CLD2-7 *Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community* factsheet for each participant.
- Prepare sample Orientation Packet with organizational letter and materials.

- Prepare copies of the participant activity worksheets—Project Resource Inventory activity sheet and New Member Orientation Letter (if applicable to group).

### Introduction

**Share:** “Educated, empowered members, volunteers, and leaders are more effective in serving any community organization. Educating adds stability, quality and effectiveness to organizations and the programs that they provide. Participants who understand their duties, roles and responsibilities will not only serve the organization more effectively, but also the clientele with whom they have contact. But all too often, little attention is given to helping a new participant understand the ‘big picture’ profile of the organization, its purpose, as well as the participant’s service opportunities.”

### Introductory Activity

**Ask** members the following questions:

- You just joined Pike County Extension Master Gardeners...what questions would you have as a new member?
- Why would a new member be reluctant to ask questions?
- If Extension Master Gardeners provide excellent opportunities for “learning, educating and serving,” how do you make a new member feel welcome and of service? What needs to be communicated to a new member joining the organization?

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This leadership curriculum was developed by Horticulture agents with University of Kentucky specialists. Examples in the guide are geared toward an agriculture/horticulture audience such as Kentucky Extension Master Gardeners. This guide may be reproduced or modified for educational or training purposes and used with other audiences.

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## Objective 1. Distinguish elements of an effective new participant orientation program

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**Share** points from the content fact sheet: “The initial step in educating a volunteer is orientation. Orientation provides an overview of the organization’s programs and activities, policies, procedures and programs. Additionally, the roles and responsibilities of paid and volunteer staff, organizational leadership structure, and ways that individuals can serve the organization should be covered. Orientation should be presented to all newcomers, both paid and volunteer.”

### Activity One

Divide the group into pairs or small groups of three or four. Provide this scenario for group discussions:

*You have been asked to develop new member orientation packets and provide materials that might answer new member questions regarding the organization’s programs and purpose and how members can be involved. You choose to provide an orientation letter with the packet. Provide copies of the example ‘Who are the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners?’ orientation letter.*

Evaluate the letter for the following orientation components:

- Does the language make new members feel welcome? What additional items could be included?
- What is the organization’s mission?
- Do you understand the organization’s culture?
- Are organizational focus programs clear?
- Do you find opportunities to be of service and be involved in the organization?
- Is the relationship between volunteers and paid staff outlined clearly?
- How is the organization governed? How do organizational officers interact with paid staff?

**What other items would you provide in your new member orientation packet?** (For Extension Master Gardeners, you might include volunteer project information, hour requirements and reporting form, a Cooperative Extension Service Report to the People, an officer/chairmen directory, a membership directory, fliers of various events hosted by the Master Gardener Association, State Master Gardener Conference information, and a promotional incentive such as an organizational pen, notepad, mouse pad, etc.)

**How would you present the orientation packet information?** (For Extension Master Gardeners, packets could be distributed at a monthly meeting, by mail, or at an orientation luncheon for new members)

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## Objective 2: Examine organizational procedures required for client and participant protection

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**Share** the following information from the content fact sheet:

*One of the most unfortunate aspects of group participation in public projects and activities is the issue of liability or risk resulting from participation. Many organizations overlook or ignore making participants aware of risk management. In the protecting phase of the education process, volunteers learn about risk management strategies such as appropriate and acceptable behaviors, conflict resolution, personal liability and confidentiality issues. Risk management education for members, volunteers and leaders includes explaining the concept of risk management, developing an awareness of potential liabilities and alternative methods of insuring losses, and developing procedures to minimize liabilities. Risk can focus on overall organizational protection or specific event risks for identifying necessary procedures. Overall organizational protection examples include a signed photo release on a membership form, allowing individual photos to appear in print or web-based media; a ‘hold harmless’ clause on an organization enrollment form; or other procedures related to specific situations.*

### Activity Two

Present the group with the following scenario for group discussion:

*The Pike County Extension Master Gardeners decide to hold a Community Ribeye Steak Sandwich Sale in conjunction with the Pike County Farmers Market, where sandwiches are grilled at the local farmers market, wrapped on site and sold to customers.*

Lead a discussion with the group focusing on the questions listed below:

- What potential risk or liability issues could the organizations face with this project?
- What steps would the organizations take in educating volunteers to reduce risk?

(Answers:)

### Risk/liability potential:

- Food borne illness related to undercooking meat, cross contamination on handling surfaces, sandwiches not stored at correct temperatures.

### Potential steps to minimize liability:

- Temporary food service permit with local Health Department.
- Safe food handling procedures training with all volunteers—wear gloves when wrapping sandwiches; keep raw meat surfaces separate from cooked meat and other food surfaces; have sanitizing solution available for wiping surfaces; use coolers to keep meat hot—above 140 degrees; use instant read thermometers to check temperatures during cooking and storage; potable water hand washing stand available for volunteers; safe storage available for wrapped sandwiches and other items for deliveries.
- Consideration for different site location for cooking meat—with certified kitchen for storage, food handling equipment.
- Consider organizational liability policy or site liability policy.
- Safe food handling procedure signs posted at event site—under tent.

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## Objective 3: Evaluate resource elements critical for a positive individual experience within the organization

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**Share:** “Leaders, members and volunteers should not be expected to provide their own personal resources in order to serve the community organization. The organization should identify what specific resources are necessary to allow the participant to be successful at all levels of participation: implementing leadership roles and responsibilities, community volunteer service projects for desired impact or simply member education activities. Resource areas can include human resources (identifying other individuals who can provide support, skills, or services); financial resources such as the identification of sources of funding, budgetary guidelines, and fund-raising strategies; education or technology resources such as curriculum, computers, software packages, internet access, wireless service, etc.; or facility resources, such as meeting room space or rental fees for meeting space.”

What resources may be provided by support sponsors or other organizations? As the organization develops its plan of work or action plan, the organizational leadership should educate members, volunteers and leaders regarding resources available for use to insure a positive experience in the organization.

### Activity Three

**Ask** each group to identify the resource elements required for volunteers to complete a specific project or activity, using the following scenario:

*The Pike County Extension Master Gardeners plan to hold a Tomato Tasting Contest in conjunction with the Farmers Market annual Community Festival.*

Using the Project Resource Inventory worksheet, ask small groups to identify the human, financial, technology or facility resources that the organization should provide for project success. (Examples may include):

- **Human:** project chair, subcommittee member volunteers (such as marketing, registration, judging, set-up, educational workshops, security, etc.), support Extension staff
- **Financial:** cash for category winner prize money, Best of Show prize money, ribbons, worker refreshments, complimentary favors for each participant; registration supplies etc.
- **Technology:** software to prepare marketing flyers, registration sheets; posting to Facebook; wireless access for on-site registration in contest
- **Facilities:** restrooms, parking, tent, tables, chairs, private space for voting

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## Objective 4: Design learning situations for continued participant skill development

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**Share:** “Additional teaching or learning opportunities related to specific skills and knowledge can assist members, volunteers or leaders in carrying out their responsibilities. Additionally, teaching opportunities should be presented that will develop personal leadership skills. Education should be conducted in a variety of ways (individually, through group meetings, workshops or classes or online) and address multiple learning styles. One factor that contributes to volunteer turnover is insufficient learning opportunities.”

These education opportunities go beyond initial orientation, risk management, and resource access in developing a participant's personal skills, their skills in making an organization more effective or skills in representing the organization in broader community venue. What tools or ways can member, leader or volunteer education take place?

### Activity Four

Your County Extension Master Gardener Leadership committee wants to add more depth to their tradition—all leadership programs—going beyond distribution of officer and chairmen training materials. How would you design different learning opportunities that offer more skill development for both members, volunteers and leaders? Break into small groups to discuss the following questions:

- What specific knowledge or skills—beyond understanding officer/chairmen roles and responsibilities—would your committee select to educate at all three participant levels (members, volunteers and leaders)?
- What different learning methods could you use to meet the needs of members' different personal schedules?

**Example:** The Pike County Leadership Workshop committee develops a three-part program plan:

- A July class on "Effective Conflict Resolution" from the KELD curriculum Section I—to build skills for all volunteer members.
- A workshop presented at the Annual Kentucky Extension Master Gardener Conference featuring conflict resolution scenarios and role-play situations during the first 30 minutes, in addition to roles and responsibilities training.
- County website postings of all conflict resolution materials and roles and responsibilities for future member online reference.

### Summary:

An organization must think of educating members at different levels for overall successful experiences. "Educating" may be getting a participant off to a good start with orientation, helping participants manage risk with service, providing members resources for a positive experience

or making continued skill education an part of ongoing support activities. Educating at all levels adds stability to organizations and enables and empowers its membership, leadership and volunteers to more effectively represent, lead and serve. They are therefore more likely to be retained in their role and expand the outreach of the organization and its programs to audiences who would otherwise not be served.

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# Project Resource Inventory

*What resources do we need to complete this project?*

**Project Name:**

Human	Financial	Technology	Facilities

# Who are the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners?

*Dear Extension Master Gardener Member:*

*Congratulations on becoming a member of the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners! You're beginning an interesting, challenging and rewarding experience. Because we know you have many questions, we hope you will find this information letter helpful! Your fellow Master Gardeners are excited to have you join and share our mission of "Learning, Educating, and Serving" that is now entering the 50th year! Please feel free to ask any questions, any time to a fellow member or just call me at (232-3146) or visit me at your Pike County Cooperative Extension Service facilities (600 East Main Street, Scottsburg). Linda Lewis and Susan Sanders, our Extension staff assistants are also ready to greet and assist you when you arrive at our facilities. If you like, you may also e-mail us at [ces-pike@lsv.uky.edu](mailto:ces-pike@lsv.uky.edu) or visit the Cooperative Extension Service website, where you will find the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners homepage link for current information, forms, and other helpful items at [www.ca.uky.edu/pike/fcs/](http://www.ca.uky.edu/pike/fcs/). Again, welcome to the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners! I look forward to meeting you personally soon!*

*Sincerely,*

*Janie Johnson*

*Pike County Extension Agent – Horticulture*

## Who are the Kentucky Extension Master Gardeners and the Pike County Organization?

The Extension Master Gardener Program was created to meet an increase in requests from home gardeners for horticultural information. This increase derives primarily from the urban and transient nature of modern American life. Consequently, the Extension Master Gardener Program was created in 1973 in the state of Washington. Since then it has spread nationwide. Master Gardeners have become a vital part of Extension's ability to provide consumers with up-to-date, reliable knowledge so they can enjoy and protect the plantings around their homes. Master Gardening also has become a fun and useful volunteer activity that has given its participants a sense of community spirit, accomplishment, and intellectual stimulation. Today, nearly 100,000 Extension Master Gardener volunteers are active in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. These programs seek to engage diverse audiences both as volunteers and through outreach efforts. Local agents, advisory councils and volunteer leaders are committed to offering programs that serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.

## **What does the “County Extension Agent” do?**

The County Extension Agent for Horticulture serves as the local educational advisor, helping the organization with developing educational programming, leadership opportunities as well as coordinating service project opportunities with county committee members. The Horticulture program provides educational training and technical assistance to our community. Our technical services include soil testing, disease diagnosis, and plant, weed, and insect identification. Cooperative Extension is the major provider of research-based information for consumers and horticulture businesses.

## **Who can belong to the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners?**

When you enter the Extension Master Gardener Program, you are entering into a contract. In essence, you agree that in return for the training you receive, you will volunteer a predetermined number of hours back to Extension. Failure to complete this obligation means you are not entitled to wear a Master Gardener badge, nor participate in Master Gardener activities. Upon completion of your training, you have one year to complete the agreed-upon volunteer service commitment, also called payback time. This time requirement varies from one Extension unit to another. After you complete your payback time, you may choose to continue with the Extension Master Gardener Program. Numerous people have worked as Master Gardeners for years and contributed substantial amounts of time to Extension. To be considered an active Master Gardener, however, you must agree to volunteer a minimum number of hours annually. If you choose not to continue in the program, you may not thereafter represent yourself as a Master Gardener.

## **How much does it cost to take the Master Gardener Training Course?**

Currently the cost is \$125 to take the training, and this varies by county.

## **What does a Master Gardener do?**

The local Extension agent will supply the Master Gardeners with a list of volunteer job descriptions (see the Sample Job Description). These jobs will be focused on the needs of that particular agent as well as the needs of the county. No volunteer will be asked to participate in an activity they do not feel comfortable doing, or are not physically able to do. The variety of jobs available should enable any volunteer to find an area in which to perform their payback time. The Extension agent is responsible for providing a number of job possibilities that can utilize the talents and expertise of the Master Gardener. In recent years, creative Master Gardeners and Extension agents have recognized that talents which citizens bring to the Master Gardener program can be utilized in a variety of horticultural activities. Sometimes it just takes a suggestion to create a new area of Master Gardener activity. Don't be afraid to make suggestions.

## Welcome to the Pike County Extension Master Gardeners!

If you have any additional questions, please contact your Pike County Cooperative Extension Service or fellow Master Gardeners at any time

### *Sample Job Description\**

**Job Title:** Senior Citizen Community Garden

**Volunteers Needed:** Two

**Major Objectives:** To be event coordinator for the operation of the community garden

**Responsibilities:**

- Arrange weekly garden work sessions and assist members in running the sessions
- Help plan garden meetings, programs and events
- Help procure supplies and plant material for the garden
- Coordinate the planting and maintenance of the garden
- Generate publicity for garden activities

**Training:**

- One two-hour training
- Update meetings as necessary

**Time Involved:**

- Day time meetings
- Approximately 8 hours per month including meetings, garden visits and preparation
- 64 hours per volunteer

**Length of Commitment:** 8 months

**Program Contact:** County Agent

*\* This job in no way implies employment with the University*