

State OHCE Reports Hints

1. Follow instructions and guidelines exactly. Don't risk losing an award because of something small—like printing in the wrong font or including too many photos. For example, in 2017, Times New Roman in 12 point font was required. Double check criteria from the most recent policy book or on the updated OHCE web site at <http://humansciences.okstate.edu/fcs/ohce>.
2. Plan to meet all criteria for report books, and address only the stated goals of the respective committee. Don't stray from those stated goals by including additional information no matter how impressive the additional information may be if it does not address the intended goals.
3. The paragraph and story should be easy to read and understand:
 - write in complete sentences;
 - spell every word correctly;
 - use action verbs to make the events of the project come alive;
 - improve vocabulary while eliminating slang words and phrases to most effectively communicate the importance of event descriptions;
 - concentrate on positive statements and avoid negative statements;
 - punctuate correctly; and
 - eliminate extra words to achieve conciseness.
4. Begin reports early enough ahead of the due date to allow time to edit, edit, edit, and to request additional help with editing. Even famous authors use editors to improve their award-winning writing. If professionals use editors, why wouldn't OHCE members? Enlist editing help!
5. Keep the story concise. The story can be as long as 3 pages, but there is nothing wrong with a much shorter story! Added pages do not add points to the report's score; however, the story should include the project goals, the action taken, and the results produced as is stated in "Criteria for Report Book Entries." Those same "criteria" are used to judge reports!
6. Concentrate information in the Leadership Development report, for instance, on how the reported event expands leadership skills for a stated number of leading or participating members. Just as membership reports include events planned and steps taken to increase member numbers as well as statistics of new enrollees, leadership stories should document leadership skills *used* by a stated number of members and how those leadership skills *increased* (statistically, if possible!)

7. Report as though the reporter is not part of the event. (That is called writing in “3rd person” = as an observer rather than as a participant.) Use *he, she, they, them,* and *it* words instead of *we, our,* etc. even though reporting about what you and your Group did.
8. Sneak additional action verbs into sentences wherever possible by adding *-ed* or *-ing* endings to specific action words and reposition that newly transformed verb form in front of a likely noun. (Example: Sue and Kathy train 7 members. The members examine a set of facts. Then they report the facts concisely. → **Sue and Kathy, the training leaders, encouraged 7 members to report examined facts concisely.**)
9. When reporting an event in **multiple project areas**, begin with a basic story, but tailor that story to the specific goals of each separate project area. **Change the story** (even slightly) to match the changing program goals! **Be obvious** enough about the variety of goals so judges understand the goals that have been met. Concentrate on only one project award folder at a time! That alone can aid in focusing on the respective committee and its goal(s).
10. While writing reports, concentrate on only **one event at a time!** Putting multiple events into one project award report confuses judges/readers and also confuses the stated goals. Multiple events can seldom fully develop in one report. Report on them, but spread them out over appropriate committee goals as additional report entries. The same photos may be used, the same newspaper articles, and the same optional materials; but the same story should never be used! At least, adequately alter the basic story to develop the changing goals for each project area.

Some Action Verbs to Use in Leadership Reports

Lead, chair, discuss, train, demonstrate, explain, _____

Organize, schedule, plan, encourage, establish _____

Invite, publish, post, _____

Devise, develop, utilize _____

Consult, train, network, _____

Determine, decide, conclude, _____

Develop, strategize, _____

Assist, share, direct, _____

Help, show, demonstrate, _____

Share, present, show, train, instruct, _____

Contribute, support, _____

Publish, post, circulate, _____

Purchase, sponsor, _____

Evaluate, analyze, _____

Expect, estimate, anticipate _____

Sample “Leadership Development” Report

Hoping to increase members’ leadership skills in important communication channels, the county OHCE Leadership Development Committee consulted Oklahoma leadership goals and devised a plan to increase OHCE communications skills through writing and news coverage, a perceived county leadership weakness that the committee hoped to strengthen.

The plan developed by the county Leadership Committee comprised of members from each local OHCE groups involved utilizing local OHCE members with the strongest writing skills to lead workshops for improving confidence in abilities to write news articles for members with the interest. The team then decided how to pre- and post- test the participants to identify weaknesses as well as growth in the communications goals. Both presenters and participants tested. With only 6 members pre-enrolled, the workshops were advertised by a Facebook post, a newspaper article, and 50 flyers distributed across the county adding 2 non-members to the participant list.

A local newspaper editor was contacted by a committee representative, and the editor agreed to assist the workshop leaders by sharing information with participants about what the paper looks for in contributed articles, what the new publication deadlines are, how to submit articles by email, and when it is best to purchase ad space rather than rely on articles.

The result of the training was that 3 leaders developed and presented information and pre- and post-evaluations for 8 participants showing a 50% increase in composition skills. Additionally, all participants estimated a personal awareness increase of how to better communicate through news articles. Plus, through community networking, the training shared relevant information.

Two additional measurable leadership outcomes are as follow: 1) an increase in local newspaper coverage of OHCE events from 7 articles and 5 purchased ads last year to 12 articles and 3 purchased ads this year, and 2) an expressed interest from both OHCE members and community partners in repeating the workshops for greater community access to the information.

Some Positive Elements of the Sample Report

- Although only one page, the sample reports a single event concisely and clearly.
- It follows the suggestions for report improvement.
- The story concentrates on **leadership** because it is a **leadership report** and obviously tells why and how it is a **leadership** report using active **leadership** verbs to make the point.
- No additional information is included in the story (however impressive it may be!)
- That “additional information” may, however, be added to this basic story for another report for a different goal/committee which would also emphasize goals and judging criteria peculiar to that other goal/committee. Include only the information requested in “*Criteria for Report Book Entries*” from *OHCE Policy Book: Section XII—16-17.*

This leadership report does not tell who supplied lunch (though that might be reported by the local OHCE group which brought in stew and cornbread as a **Healthy Living** project.) It does not tell who prepared informative displays (though the reuse, recycle, reclaim posters displayed at the event might be reported as a **Resource Management** project by that county committee.) It does not tell the efforts to encouraging community participants by advertising at-large memberships (though the county **Membership Committee** could write that report!) It does not detail the child care arrangements (**Family Living**), who took photos of the participants (a likely **Photo Contest** entry), or the source of educational handouts (though those handouts might be included as “optional related materials” **if** they add positively to the **Leadership** report.)

- At <http://humansciences.okstate.edu/fcs/ohce> the updated goals of each state committee may be accessed through Resources → State Goals → Leadership. Those most recent **leadership goals** were used in this sample **leadership report** to outline the plan for reporting so the story aligns with at least 1 published **Leadership Development Committee goal**, “increase communication,” and exactly follows the reporting criteria found in updated OHCE Polices.