

What Do County-based Extension Professionals Do?

Educational Roles

Learning Facilitator: Creates a comfortable learning environment; appropriately leads or guides learning activities, e.g., presentations to community-based groups, one-on-one meetings with local citizens, etc.

Subject Knowledge Expert/Technical Resource: Provides information; disseminates research in areas related to academic fields of study and professional experience; provides educational leadership and professional guidance to program-related agencies, educational institutions and related community groups

Scholar/Researcher: Is involved in creative, intellectual work; writes, publishes, and shares articles, curricula and program designs that contribute to new knowledge and understanding; contributes to development of respective academic discipline; designs and carries out applied research, e.g., demonstration plots in local communities, opinion surveys, etc. using effective and appropriate tools (**Note:** As a condition of tenure, this is one of a faculty member's primary roles; academic staff are likely to also be involved in scholarly work and may contribute to the academic discipline, however, assuming such a role is not a condition of employment)

Program Developer and Evaluator: Conducts needs assessments; collects data; measures and reports impacts; makes all reasonable effort to reach diverse audiences

Program Coordinator/ Educational Broker: Arranges educational meetings, e.g., state specialists visiting local groups; identifies local experts on issues unique to county and helps others tap them as resources

Community/Organization Capacity-Builder: Facilitates groups and/or communities interested in building their leadership ability and in taking action for positive change; supports the mission of community-based agencies and groups by assisting them in applying for grants, summarizing data for relevant reports, facilitating meetings, organizing groups, etc.; helps community leaders build infrastructures that will sustain community-based, long-term educational enterprises

Volunteer Developer: Builds the capacity of volunteers to implement Extension programming; develops the volunteer infrastructure necessary for programming to succeed over time; appropriately provides support and mentoring to individual volunteers

Community Partner: Builds and/or participants in community coalitions and collaborates with a diverse network of community-based agencies to accomplish educational goals

Lifelong Learner: Develops and follows a personal plan for professional development; participates in professional association activities

Organizational Roles

Strategic Thinker: Strives to understand the bigger picture of the forces impacting Extension work and takes appropriate actions to better position oneself and the organization

Organizational Roles (continued)

Public Relations/Marketer: Develops and maintains working relationships with public media; works to strengthen the public's understanding and value attached to Extension's work

Resource Developer: Researches extramural funding sources and writes grants in support of Extension's educational mission; uses fiscal/administrative acumen to maintain soundness of budgets

Academic Leadership: Participates in governance and service to respective academic department at the statewide and district levels

Administrator: Maintains office; participates in office/county/state committees to build a stronger Extension organization; maintains records and files; supervises staff

Interpersonal Roles

Leader: Provides guidance and direction (in a style that meets the needs of the situation) to ensure positive outcomes; models and encourages behavior consistent with Extension's overall mission, goals and values; models respect and value for individual and cultural differences

Communicator: Actively listens before speaking; uses language that is understood by others; asks questions to gather information and to check for understanding

Colleague/Team Member: Develops and maintains supportive working relationships with fellow Extension professionals; contributes to programming efforts that cross program area and/or county lines; supports group efforts to accomplish a common good

Coach: Provides instruction, feedback and support in an effort to build the capabilities and capacities of others

Balancer: Maintains neutrality in conflict situations; is able to see a difficult situation from all sides; takes steps to maintain a healthy work and personal life balance; can see the humor in a situation

Technology Roles

Instructional Technologist: Uses computers, compressed video, the web and other tools to provide effective and cost-efficient delivery of educational programming

Computer User: Knows way around a personal computer and is able to use it effectively as a communication/time management/productivity tool