

THE EXTENSION  
WORKER'S CODE

T. J. Talbert



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KANSAS STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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THE EXTENSION  
WORKER'S CODE

by

T. J. TALBERT

Superintendent of Institutes and Extension  
Schools

MANHATTAN, KANSAS

Cooperative extension work in agriculture and  
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H. UMBERGER, Director

### **Think It Over**

Some workers refuse to think. They don't want to be bothered. They know everything already. Others can't think. That's why they never get anywhere. You have found that it pays to think, especially to think ahead. That's why we expect you to read this and think it over.

### **Believe In Your Work**

If you do not believe in your work, you are whipped before you start; your efforts will be fruitless. Besides, it is tremendously difficult to get others interested unless you are a believer yourself.

### **Study and Serve the People**

Study the people and their problems and when you are able to know them they will know you. If you do not have their support and cooperation there is something wrong. Find the reason and if you are at fault, endeavor to correct the error. Develop the spirit of helpfulness and try to be of the greatest possible service to all those with whom you come in contact.

### **Stick to the Truth**

Regardless of the number of errors a worker may make, if he is always absolutely honest in his dealings and relations with others, he may yet succeed. On the other hand, nothing will cause him to lose the confidence and esteem of others, so necessary in everyone's work, as quickly as dishonesty.

### **Avoid Antagonism**

Carefully and tactfully avoid antagonizing people upon any particular question about which they

are contending and divided in opinion. You may express determined views and firm convictions upon all questions affecting the public without making yourself offensive.

### **Make Friends of Folks, Especially Leaders**

It is important to make friends of all the people, especially of those who assume leadership in the community, town, county, and state. It is well not to be too forward but at the same time it is a great mistake to be too backward. Strike the happy medium if possible but go out of your way to become acquainted with the best farmers, bankers, editors, merchants, doctors, lawyers, and other prominent citizens.

### **Have a Smile for Everybody**

It is of the utmost importance that the extension worker be able to meet people in a way which will be conducive to further acquaintance and association. Wear your best smile all the time and give everyone as much attention as if you were a candidate for some political office.

The ability to get along with people, make friends, and secure their assistance in your work generally counts for 75 per cent or more toward success. Practically every person entering the extension service has enough technical knowledge to succeed, but many are not as successful as they should be in securing support from their co-workers or from the public.

### **Unite All the People**

Work for a united people in the county and state. The assistance of all is required. A united pull from town and country is more than twice as strong as the pull from either source alone.

### **Attend Gatherings**

Attend churches, lodges, commercial club meetings, meetings of farmers' organizations, etc. Such gatherings afford an unusual opportunity to meet people, to become acquainted with their problems, and to acquaint them with the objects and purposes of your work. Never miss an opportunity to hit and drive home an effective blow for the success of your work.

### **Reach as Many People as Possible**

Endeavor to reach as many people as possible at each meeting and demonstration. This is important for several reasons, the most prominent of which are as follows: (1) to acquaint larger numbers, covering a greater area, with the work of the farm bureau, the college extension service, the agricultural college, and the United States Department of Agriculture; (2) to justify the expense involved and the time employed; (3) to increase the effect of well-attended meetings and demonstrations upon the community and county; and (4) to justify employing the best available talent and equipment.

### **Arrive Promptly and Remain at Meeting Place**

In order to secure the attendance and interest of farmers it is important that the extension worker arrive promptly on the hour for the gathering and

remain until the work planned has been finished. The worker may be inclined to wander around to the meeting place about fifteen or twenty minutes after the meeting time, and seeing only two or three farmers present, or in some cases no one at all, he may conclude he will go down to the hotel and wait until the crowd gathers.

Unless the worker is at the meeting place to invite the farmers in and start a conversation, many may come, look in at the door, and seeing no one present, walk away, fail to return, and tell others that there is no one present. A good meeting may, therefore, be prevented on account of an apparent indifference and lack of interest on the part of the worker. Every employee of the extension service should realize that it is just as much his duty to be on time, meet the farmers pleasantly, and make or assist in making all necessary arrangements for the meeting and demonstration, as it is to give the particular lecture or demonstration for which he is scheduled.

"Punctuality meets an engagement. Promptness meets a situation. Proficiency meets both." Someone has also said "Those who are five minutes late do more to upset the order of the world than all the anarchists."

### **Request Names and Addresses**

Secure the names and addresses of cooperators and others at meetings and demonstrations. The names may be listed as follows. Dependable cooperators, unfavorable toward work, indifferent toward work, conscientious objectors, etc. The value of such a list is obvious.

### **Form Close Contact With Cooperators**

Keep in touch with cooperators by sending them literature and questionnaires for making reports from time to time. The literature should be in the nature of timely hints and suggestions in reference to the cooperative work. Let the cooperators know, at farmers' meetings and demonstrations, that they are to keep accurate cost accounts and make reports upon the progress and results of their efforts. In this way more interest will be shown and a greater amount of accurate data secured.

Develop the idea of looking to the farm bureau, the college of agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture for information regarding all lines of production, harvesting, handling, and marketing of farm products.

### **Make Clear, Concise Talks**

Make your discussions clear, concise, and practical. Emphasize the points which you expect the farmers to remember and put into practice.

In lectures and demonstrations use familiar feeds, soils, plants, and animals as illustrations. Charts, lantern slides, motion picture films, and dried and preserved specimens may also be used effectively. No matter how much you may have to say or how important your subject, avoid lengthy, technical, or longwinded discussions. Organize your material in such a way that you will be able to give the boiled-down, concentrated gist of the subject with just enough details to make yourself clearly understood.

Someone has said: "If you want to do substantial work, concentrate; and if you want to give others the benefit of your work, condense."

**Don't Be Afraid to Say, "I Do Not Know."**

When questions upon which you are not informed arise at farmers' meetings and demonstrations, it is much better for you and all concerned to say, "I do not know," than to give incorrect information, or try to appear wiser than you really are. Once the farmers are deceived, they immediately lose confidence in you and they will not believe you when you are right.

Practically all the farmers now know that a man can not be a specialist upon all subjects and they are not disappointed when the extension worker is unable to answer all the questions which may be asked. It may be advisable to state that the information will be obtained at an early date and given to all who desire it.

**Advertise Meetings**

Make use of every available means in advertising meetings and demonstrations. A part or all of the following methods and others may be used effectively: letters, post cards, circular letters, posters, newspaper announcements, telephone calls, announcements at schools and churches, personal solicitation on the part of committees responsible for advertising, and making arrangements. Personal letters or cards addressed to all the persons whom you desire to have present will often secure good results. Each person should be requested to assist in bringing out others to the meeting and demonstration.

The best results will usually be secured by holding preliminary meetings at which definite committees are appointed or elected and made



responsible for the work of securing an attendance. If the preliminary meeting shows that there is not sufficient interest to justify the calling of a meeting, or demonstration, the effort better be discontinued.

The fact that the meeting or demonstration may cost the appropriations for the work anywhere from \$25 to \$50 should be a sufficient stimulus to cause the conscientious worker to leave nothing undone which might help make the meeting a success.

Consider carefully the places for holding meetings and demonstrations, having in mind such factors as the reputation of the cooperator, accessibility to the farmers of the community, crops, livestock, or equipment for demonstrating the work, advertising possibilities, need of the work, weather conditions, and roads.

### **Use the Newspapers**

Make friends of the newspapers; they are one of the best advertising mediums at your disposal. Many workers attribute their success mainly to a wise and efficient use of the press. Use it to its full capacity and you will be gratified at the results accomplished.

### **Make Use of All Available Assistance**

Keep in close contact with the extension service, the agricultural college, and the United States Department of Agriculture, and make the fullest possible use of their services. Always remember that such assistance usually tends to magnify your work rather than to detract from it. The greatest workers are generally those who are most successful in securing the assistance of all their co-workers.

### **Be Careful In Using the Pronoun "I"**

Avoid personal allusions as much as possible. The too frequent use of the pronoun "I" is likely to spoil your work rather than enhance it. For example, it is much better to request farmers to address the farm bureau, the extension service, the agricultural college, or the United States Department of Agriculture for information and literature than to write to you, John Doe, Jr., Manhattan, Kansas.

If every member of the service works with all his might and main to finish the job to which he has been assigned, the whole program will be a success and every man or woman who has contributed materially toward it will be benefited many times more than he would have been had he been looking after his own personal status and elevation rather than the success of the work as a whole.

To emphasize the work of such organizations and institutions as the farm bureau, the college of agriculture, and the United States Department of Agriculture magnifies your work much more than to lay stress upon your own name and accomplishments, no matter how popular you may appear to be.

### **Keep Cool**

Control your temper and keep cool, whether making out delayed reports and expense accounts, stuck in the mud at midnight without lights, tired, hungry, and almost worn out (but still obliged to be away from home and on the go) or on blue Monday or other days when it seems that everything is going wrong.

### **Know Your State and County**

Know your state and county as well as the leading farmers and citizens. Know the principal types of farming, the leading towns, the community centers, the principal railroads, the county highways, the main industries, the financial conditions, the economic, social and political views of the people, and other factors.

Supply yourself with maps, charts, and up-to-date railway guides. This will enable you to keep your engagements and prevent missing railroad trains, traveling wrong roads, delays at meetings and demonstrations, and needless worry and embarrassment.

### **Cooperate to Mutual Advantage of All**

A helpful relationship must exist among all the extension workers. It is therefore the duty of all to foster this agreeable relationship in every possible way in order to give the work the proper stimulus and support. If the comparatively small number of persons associated in the work cannot cooperate to the mutual advantage of all, and toward the success of all the work, we can hardly expect to receive the fullest support and cooperation of those whom we would serve.

### **Forget Yourself and Boost For All**

Forget your own personal aggrandizement and your status as compared to that of someone else in the service. Brooding over such matters is narrow-minded and has ruined the efficiency and opportunities of many capable persons. Broad-minded, competent, conscientious, hard workers are in great demand in extension work.

Everyone employed in the extension service should know that his own success, as well as the success of the work undertaken, depends to a large extent upon his initiative and his loyal, unselfish, and persistent efforts. Generally speaking, although some lights may shine brighter than your own, the greater your interest and support in the work, the greater will be your success in the end. It is, therefore, wise from the selfish viewpoint to encourage and assist those associated with you in order that they may be able to give the service their very best efforts.

### **Don't Be Ashamed of Your Dress**

Good clean clothes do not make a worker or his position, but they add immensely to his appearance and dignity and give him the required self respect and confidence. No worker can offer a good excuse for wearing shabby, badly soiled, out-of-date, and untidy garments because the clothing which will give him comfort, ease, and assurance costs very little if any more than the undesirable kind.

### **Dress According to Your Job**

Nothing is likely to leave a worse impression with farmers than to have an extension worker appear before them for a lecture or demonstration wearing a corset-fitting coat, silk socks, a loud necktie and other regalia of a faddish nature. Discard the freakish and stylish duds; they are entirely out of place in extension work. Instead don overalls and work shoes if it is necessary to give a sheep shearing, orchard spraying, poultry cutting demonstration or to do other work of a similar nature. It will also be well to remember the couplet:

"Be not the first by whom the new is tried  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside. "

### **Smoke at the Proper Time and Place**

Don't hold a cigar—or worse—a cigarette in your mouth while giving a lecture or demonstration, presiding at a farmers' meeting, or judging livestock or agricultural products. The effect of such a practice is wisely and accurately stated by a farmer in a letter to the Director of the Extension Service:

"He got his cigar into fancy positions and showed them how to blow smoke to such an extent that I heard at least 4 or 5 exhibitors make remarks that a man while judging should at least appear to give more thought to the judging ring than to the weed."

### **Stand Erect and Look Your Audience in the Face**

Don't assume a lazy or lounging position when speaking before an audience. Stand up straight and look your hearers in the face. It is also well to keep your hands out of your pockets. Drop them naturally at your side and use them when necessary in emphasizing your thought.

### **Use Judgment in Introducing Speakers**

Don't introduce Mr. John Doe, Extension Horticulturist, Kansas State Agricultural College, as is so often done: "Mr. Doe is here and wants to talk to you." You should say something like this: "We are fortunate to have with us this evening, Mr. John Doe, Extension Horticulturist of the Kansas State Agricultural College. He will speak upon the subject of 'More and Better Orchards for Kansas Farmers.'"

Of course, the introduction may be briefer or more extended and be entirely proper, depending in each case upon the character of the meeting and the ability and reputation of the speaker.

### **Watch Your Bank Account**

Don't overdraw your bank account and embarrass yourself and fellow extension workers who have been good enough to cash checks for you. It is a great convenience to be able to cash checks in the field to defray current traveling expenses. When your credit becomes no good, or begins to wane at your bank, your work in the field will usually suffer accordingly.

### **Use Failures as Stepping Stones**

Don't become discouraged at failures but be sure that the number of failures grows less as you continue the work. Profit by the experience obtained and the mistakes made. Redouble your efforts in the next trial, and success will be sure.

### **Use Discretion in Telling Jokes**

A good joke told in the proper way and used to illustrate a point which it is desirable to make may add materially to the interest in the discussion. On the other hand, if the joke is poorly told, has no point, or is out of place, the interest in the subject under discussion may suffer accordingly. Unless you are pretty sure that the joke will add to the interest and effectiveness of the work, you will do better to leave it untold.

### **Profane or Vulgar Language Is Bad**

Some workers frequently use profane or vulgar expressions before their audiences and in conversation with individuals and groups of people. It is difficult to imagine anything that reacts against the worker more decidedly than such a practice. In fact, profane and unbecoming language gives your hearers a very unfavorable idea of you and the institution which you represent, and the principal impression which they carry away is one of disgust and lack of confidence. Even though the members of the audience may themselves be proficient in such language, they object to hearing it from a speaker.

### **Better Talk Too Little Than Too Much**

Some workers literally talk themselves to death while others may not talk enough to attract the attention which their work deserves. The trouble is usually with those who talk too much. They never get any information or ideas from other workers because they do all the talking and give those capable of imparting knowledge no opportunity to talk. He who talks too much makes himself obnoxious to his associates. Be a good listener once in a while. If you have not tried it, you will be surprised at how much you can learn from the other fellow.

### **Report and Answer Promptly**

Answer letters promptly and make reports on time and as required. Procrastination may be the path of least resistance but it leads to a sea of troubles. Your work may be excellent, but if not properly reported, part of its value is lost to you, as well as

to the extension service, the college of agriculture, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

### **Make Opportunities**

"Weak workers usually wait for great or extraordinary opportunities, while wise workers seize common ones and make them great."

### **Remember Somebody Can Take Anybody's Place**

No extension worker is absolutely indispensable. Somebody can take anybody's place. Those who think they are indispensable are very foolish, because there is always somebody who can step into the place and perhaps do the work better.

### **Don't Mail That Sarcastic Letter**

Write that sarcastic letter if you must and get it out of your system. Let the matter rest for 24 hours and then fail to mail the letter. If this course is pursued, you are likely to congratulate yourself many times later on because it may be advisable to ask favors of the person or persons in which you can find no good at the present time.

### **Be Energetic**

No matter how highly educated or well trained the extension worker may be, he cannot make a success of his work unless he is energetic, anxious to take advantage of every opportunity that will assist or promote his work, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of pushing and doing his "level best" all the time.



### **Do More Than "Get By"**

It is really a sad state of affairs to see a worker drifting along, doing just what is necessary "to get by," because in every case it is just a question of a comparatively short time until such a person will be relieved of his duties.

If you are not conscientious and interested in the work, and willing to put your very best efforts into every undertaking, you should find other employment. The slacker will not get far in extension work and the sooner he radically mends his methods the better it will be for him and for the extension service.

### **Have a Vision**

It is of paramount importance that every extension worker have a vision. When the work for the year has been mapped out and the calendar of work adapted to it, try to visualize the results which should be obtained. Leave nothing undone which might contribute toward success. No really worthwhile undertaking has ever been carried to a successful completion without careful and definite plans being made in advance.

### **Keep Your Eye on the Big Things**

Everywhere we see workers neglecting the big things to attend to the little. While they are doing some little detail that should be left to a clerk, a stenographer, or an office boy, they lose sight of some great advantage which they might have gained—some real problem they might have solved, had they been free to attend to it. No one is great enough to be a leader and at the same time bury himself in details. Either the big things or the little things must predominate; the one is sure to outweigh the other.

### **Do the Things Which Will Count**

"It is a great art to know what to leave undone, to know how to weed out the less important things and to spend one's energies in doing the things which will count."

If we do the things that will count we must have a plan or project and a program of work, either written up carefully and referred to from time to time or so thoroughly impressed in our minds that there is no chance of forgetting it. Once we have formulated a plan and program of work we must stick to it regardless of our tendency to be side tracked by other pressing duties and obligations. Otherwise, all our good resolutions and work begun will amount to little or nothing.

### **Finish What You Start**

It is easy to start many lines of work or projects of great importance and "whoop it up" in great shape for a time and then lose interest in them. Perhaps we find more people of this type than we do of those who have the stick-to-it-iveness to stay with the job until it is finished. It is human nature to want to change work and it happens so often that the possibilities and results to be accomplished look much brighter in the new field.

Our success is not measured by the half dozen or more pieces of work which we have attempted to carry forward to completion, but by the one or two jobs which we have been able to do better than anyone else.

The worker who is constantly changing from one thing to another finishes nothing and is doomed to failure. When his attention is divided greatly, the

energies and abilities of the worker are so dissipated that he cannot make substantial progress. We have all heard the old saying, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." We must have stability and constancy of purpose. Poor Richard, Jr., says "Ability never amounts to much until it acquires two more letters—stability."

It is better to specialize on a few problems, making them an outstanding success, than to spread out over the whole field of the extension work and be unable to report tangible results on anything at the end of the year.

Now is the time to finish the job. A man never catches up with his good intentions for tomorrow.

### **Say Something Good; Be Loyal**

The little cutting remarks made about others and their work always do you much more injury than they do anyone else. Adopt the policy of never saying to others anything about a person which you would hesitate to say to his face. Nothing counts for more than loyalty to the organization which employs you and to those with whom you are associated.

### **Don't Knock; Be an Optimist**

The worker who seldom if ever sees anything good in anyone or any undertaking, may be relied upon to do wrong to all of us, should the opportunity come.

Our greatest comfort and satisfaction should come from being happy in praising and serving others. The disgruntled, displeased worker does far greater injury to himself and his prospects for advancement than to anyone else.

**Be Courageous**

"If you can keep courage when others lose heart; if you can keep pushing on when others turn back; if you can smile and wait when others play the coward and quit; if you can be serene in the face of misfortune and failure; if you can keep your nerve and a level head when others get panicky; if you can carry yourself like a conqueror, keep your fixity of purpose when others waver; and you still refuse to lose courage and grip on yourself, then you may know that your work is a success and that there is a hero or heroine in you as noble as any that ever gave up his life on the field of battle for a great cause."