

## *Tennessee 4-H, A Roadmap to Success*

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As I was sitting at the computer thinking about what *Tennessee 4-H, A Roadmap to Success* meant to me, an image popped into my head. I saw a road. The road ran through a forest, opening out to a field with a mountain in the background. The road was the road to success. The mountain was the future; the top of the mountain was success. This road lead all the way to the top, winding and curving its way up. I amused myself for a little while continuing to embellish the picture and add detail. The picture looked something like this...

A road winds through a lush green forest, the sun streaming through the trees. A person drives down this road, enjoying the spectacular scenery when suddenly it is not a forest any more, it is a field. This signifies how 4-H exposes one to new environments, gives him the chance to try new things. At first, he may be hesitant to dive in, but in the end, this might be something that he truly does enjoy.

As the car travels through this new scenery, it suddenly breaks down. The occupant, having no other option, gets out to fix it. He is not quite sure how to go about this, but there is only one way to learn: by doing. Learning the concept to something and being able to quote it from memory is very different than actually executing it, and 4-H provides the perfect opportunity for this. While working on his car, someone drives by and, seeing him on the side of the road, pulls over to help. Working together, they start talking and soon become friends. As it turns out, this new friend knows quite a lot about mechanics and the car is soon running again. Likewise, 4-Hers make friends, as they work together and compete together. Although you learn by doing, you are not alone.

They continue on down the road and soon reach an absolutely magnificent archery range. The two friends get out to try their hand at archery and soon discover that talent is cultivated, it is not born. But, wanting to become better, they continue to practice. Eventually, after many, many laborious hours of hard work, they became great shots. "Good" was simply not good enough; they wanted to make their very best even better.