

Summer Camp Jobs Exposed!

What's really going on behind all of the fun? If you're not careful, you'll develop skills employers really want to see on your resume.

WORKING IN THE CAMP ENVIRONMENT CULTIVATES. . .

Oral Communication Skills. You will be required to communicate effectively with people at every level of the organization — campers, fellow staff, camp directors, and parents.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving. You will be challenged to think on your feet to resolve a myriad of issues from the health and safety of children to how to get 12 campers to make their beds each morning.

Interpersonal and Leadership Skills. You will model professionalism and compassion by managing a group of campers, while contributing to the growth and development of each individual participant.

Collaborative Skills. You will receive on-the-ground, practical, real life training in how to work with a team and help build the culture of your camp community.

Creativity. You will develop innovative and fun ways to engage an audience of two to 200 and implement alternate plans when faced with unexpected changes to the daily routine.

Here's what a former camp counselor had to say about the value of putting camp on your resume.

"Having camp job experience on your resume is a way to set yourself apart from other candidates, because you can so easily translate what you did in your role at camp into the vocabulary of your field. Working as a youth development specialist (camp counselor) provides you the arena to practice responsibility, thinking on your feet, communication, collaboration, creativity, problem solving, management skills (and so much more) in a real world context. I often see resumes from people who interned in a law office stating they "prepared binders," but what that really means is they were making copies. Working at camp gives you valuable firsthand experience. Plus, who knows, your resume may fall into the hands of someone who went to camp themselves and your experience will resonate with them as being the 'real deal!'"

Jaime Moreno-Valle , Attorney / Legal Officer, Organization of American States

Behind All the Fun... Camp Is Serious Business That Builds a Solid Resume!

Working at Camp Is a Real Job!

LEADERSHIP

Is learned in a real-life context (not made-up or contrived!)
You will likely be supervising between 7–15 others, engaging in decision-making, behavior management, and living ethics — all necessary leadership skills for today

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

With other staff and connections to camp alumni can provide a link to possible internships or future job opportunities in a variety of careers

DIVERSE & GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

Camp often provides a global experience without the expense of long-distance travel; it is not uncommon for campers and staff to be from a variety of places and cultural perspectives from around the US and world

TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

You get to keep any additional training you may acquire (like CPR, first aid, and activity specialist certifications) that may also help you land a job at home or school working in a wide range of settings

ROOM & BOARD

Will be provided if working at a resident camp; housing, meals, laundry, utilities, and other living expenses are covered, which means extra \$\$ in your pocket at the end of the camp season when returning to school (or looking for a job)

21ST CENTURY SKILLS

Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Contribution that are critical for success in today's world are developed and practiced at camp; they are skills and traits that can draw employers' attention to your resume

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Camp directors/leaders write great letters of recommendation because they take the time to get to know you as an individual and see you in action on a daily basis

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing professional development sets you up to learn about your job while building a strong team with the people you will be working with and offers support all throughout the summer

COLLEGE CREDIT OR INTERNSHIP

You may be eligible for college credit in some cases or able to use camp as an independent study, practicum, or internship experience — ask your advisor or talk to a professor at your school about how the skills you will learn directly relate to your major and will make you a stronger job candidate

PAYCHECK

You will typically get paid a base salary with add-ons for experience, certifications, leadership roles, extra duties, etc., and may include a bonus for completing your contract (spending the summer at camp is a great way to save most of your earnings!)

Translating Your Camp Employment Experience to Future Employers

The decision to work as a summer camp staff member says a lot about you. No matter the role you will play in your camp community, ultimately you will want to make sure that your resume reflects the experience in such a way that will be meaningful to future employers.

Here are some tips for making sure your camp experience is well represented on your resume.

Job Title

Some camps are expanding the camp counselor position to reflect more of the job duties that are tied to the role. Depending on the position, examples include youth development specialist, team or shift leader, communications coordinator, or programming leader.

Using active language, amplify the job title with descriptive terms that detail your duties, as well as the nature of time commitment you dedicated to your summer camp employer and the results you achieved.

Job Description

Core Qualifications

Select language that best represents your responsibilities, as well as ties your capabilities to 21st Century job skills sought by today's employers.

LEARNING SKILLS

Critical Thinking
Creative Thinking
Collaboration
Communication
Problem Solving

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Business-specific Skills
Media
Technology
Wilderness /Outdoors
Activity-specific Abilities/Certifications
Program Administration
Portfolio (if applicable)

LIFE SKILLS

Leadership
Initiative
Social Skills
Productivity
Flexibility
Sportsmanship
Counseling

ACTIVE LANGUAGE

Administer. Act. Advise. Analyze. Assemble. Assess. Assist.
Balance. Boost. Build.
Challenge. Collaborate. Communicate. Compile. Contribute. Create. Customize.
Decide. Dedicate. Design. Develop. Direct. Discuss. Document.
Edit. Encourage. Enforce. Engage. Entertain. Exercise. Explain.
Facilitate. Focus. Form.
Gather. Generate. Guard. Guide.
Handle. Head. Help. Identify.
Illustrate. Implement. Improve. Inform. Interpret. Issue.
Join. Judge.
Lead. Listen. Locate.

Manage. Master. Mediate. Model. Moderate. Modify.
Navigate. Negotiate. Notice.
Obtain. Operate. Oversee.
Participate. Persuade. Plan. Play. Present. Prioritize. Produce.
Query. Question. Quote.
Record. Recognize. Reinforce. Resolve. Respond. Review. Run.
Save. Schedule. Secure. Shape. Show. Stabilize. Supervise. Support.
Teach. Test. Train. Travel.
Unite. Update. Utilize.
Validate. Value. Verify. Visit. Visualize.
Witness. Work. Write.