

CLEARWATER ON YOUR RESUME

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“CAMP CREATES ADVANTAGE”

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills reports that academic institutions and employers are seeking candidates with skills like communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, grit, self-control, optimism and leadership.

‘If you have gone to a summer camp that you love, please return to it in the next few summers. Being a senior leader at camp or working as a counselor can be a rewarding, fulfilling and meaningful experience.’

- Princeton Dean of Admissions, NYT

LET’S MAKE ‘CAMP COUNSELOR’ SOMETHING YOU ARE PROUD OF.

Seek out responsibility and/or leadership opportunities.

Network! Your peers and camp alumnae are your greatest advocates.

Find a way to connect what you are doing at camp to what you are studying in school.

Use camp as a time to learn more about yourself.

Help future employers understand your position as a Camp Counselor.

EXAMPLES

WHEN & HOW I REFER TO CAMP.

I refer to my camp experiences in resumes and cover letters by using the following words (plus examples) to describe what I got from being a counselor:

Resourceful

Resilient

Responsible

Optimistic

Aware

Adaptable

Empathetic

These words are stronger than commonly used ones such as communication and teamwork. Drawing on your counselor experiences are also really great for interview questions. Plan to have a mental list of brief stories or examples that demonstrate the above characteristics.

EXAMPLES

Quality or Skill Learned	Clearwater experience	Translation to work
Public speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leading unit meetings in front of a bunch of antsy Point girls - Instructing waterskiing or other activity - Speaking at Sunday Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running a meeting and encouraging people to pay attention - Hold their attention, and creating messaging that resonates with each your coworkers regardless of experience, learning style, etc.
Ability to read and understand people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -By living with your campers and in close proximity with your peer staff members, you are learning a tremendous amount about each other and human nature. - You are discovering how to tell when people are sad, nervous, stressed, confused, excited, confident, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This experience is directly translatable to the office -You can read and understand people on a deeper level than what they are sharing or have explicitly expressed either through verbal or non verbal. - Understanding ‘what makes people tick’ or not can be critical to galvanizing teams, or gaining buy-in on a project.
Grit/Perseverance/Positivity all at once	<p>I was on a trip once with 12 girls, three counselors and 4 canoes. Also one of the tents had no poles. The bugs were terrible and I kept losing water bottles in the woods. Then on the second day everyone’s stuff got wet and our stove broke and we couldn’t get water to boil on the wet fire. We had a great time, learned a new song, and still to this day is one of the best and most memorable trips I lead.</p>	<p>I was put on an important and visible project at work that was supposed to last 4-6 weeks. Then it lasted for 12 weeks, and ultimately lasted for an entire year. The people on my team remarked about how positive I remained and at many time had to pull together my team (with much senior people) to keep them moving forward effectively. In the end it was successful! I was then given the lead role on the next similar project because of all that I learned and did on the first round.</p>
Risk Assessment and Mitigation	<p>As a counselor I was constantly assessing risk. Where we should take the ski boats based on wind so we don’t wash ashore or hit a sandbar, lifeguarding in the swim area, setting up camp and ensuring we weren’t in a flood area/by a dead tree/ checking for bee hives, waking up to a storm in the middle of the night and assessing whether or not I needed to move the girls to the storm shelter.</p>	<p>Working on a project, I need to constantly assess the risks associated with our plan and create back up plans, timelines, etc. While it is usually not life or death, it could be loss of time, money or productivity. As a counselor I was trained to look at the big picture and it helps me understand where to look for things that might go wrong and provide alternative options. Being a counselor as also taught me how to inquire about things so that I can get a full understanding.</p>
Problem Solving	<p>You’re on a trip and you unpack your tents and its’ missing a main pole and all the stakes and there is a storm coming. So you use your trip rope to tie the tent up and rocks to weigh down the corners. Then you have all the campers weigh down the edges with their stuff to prevent the tent from blowing away and to keep the rain off of them at night. You’re able to see the picture, understand what the end goal is, and create a solution to meet all the needs.</p>	<p>I had a conglomeration of people who are all involved in the headcount tracking process, but for some reason didn’t understand each other’s impact on the rest. The headcount has a big impact on budgeting, hiring, and separation processes. I interviewed and got to know each of the key players, their priorities and their involvement in our joint process. In just 4 months we were able to get together and improve the process, faster than anyone else has in years and ended up gaining visibility at a very high level in the organization because of it’s impact. I read through all of my performance appraisals and this is praised as a strength eight years in a row. This was a DIRECT result of what I learned at camp.</p>

EXAMPLES

Both my husband and I worked at summer camps. We often joke about writing a book about how everything we need to know we learned from being camp counselors.

Communication & Respect - He still talks about how it's made him a better engineering manager having to interact with all different kinds of people. In a management roll the ability to communicate with individuals with different learning styles is essential.

For me personally I agree, the ability to work with different people side-by-side and respect them for their individualism and what they bring to the table is an important part of a healthy work environment. That is easily learned from all the different personalities you work with at camp.

Being flexible - Being able to adapt without getting frustrated will get you very far in life. Whether this is learned from leading camping trips, planning parties last minutes, or having to change up a lesson plan last minutes because instead of teaching 15 year olds you are actually teaching 8 year olds. It's all the same, being adaptable.

Staying positive - UPR might be a little over the top for most work places, but people notice positive people and how they add to the general atmosphere. There are numerous times when you have to be over the top positive for teenage girls, but it does truly make a difference.

EXAMPLES

ON THE RESUME

Leadership Counselor: 2010 - 2011

Guided seventeen-year-old girls through the leadership program which helped them develop skills necessary for being a cabin counselor, camping trip leader, and activity instructor

Cabin Counselor & Activity Supervisor: 2006-2009

Counselor for elementary school age campers. Facilitate cabin group bonding activities, problem solving, conflict mediation, time management and general care for their emotional and physical safety. Designed and taught archery and photography programs.

Unit Supervisor: 2008 - 2009

Liaison between the counselors and camp directors, solved unit problems, supported new staff members. Scheduled staffing and meetings about subjects such as personal hygiene, cohabitation, emergency procedures and planning for camp events

HOW DID CLEARWATER HELP ME AS A PROFESSIONAL/STUDENT/ETC.

As a teacher, camp has only made me stronger when working with groups of children, Especially when it comes to problem solving, behavior and emotional management, and time management skills. Camp has also helped me by teaching me how to work with different people from all walks of life. When you are on your unit or in an activity and you have a disagreement with another counselor, camp has an environment set up that will help you learn how to have a constructive conversation with that other person. By returning to camp year after year it shows my employers dedication and loyalty which shows them that if you believe in a community that you will stick around to grow with it. That's important.

Adrienne Testa, Teacher

EXAMPLES

WHAT DID I DO DURING CAMP?

Cape Unit Head, Cabin/Activity Counselor, & Head of Photography

Lived in Fo'c's'le, and led Cape staff. Provided weekly updates at staff meeting about 'Life on the Cape'. Supported Cape counselors and provided them with feedback when necessary. Taught activities and managed cabin life with my campers. Photographed campers and staff or final photo books. Took pictures at all main camp events and downloaded them to camp archives.

ON THE RESUME: Age Division Manager, Staff Photographer

Managed and supervised an eleven-member team. Facilitated weekly staff meetings and acted as a conduit between staff members and the directors. Recommended and documented changes to the camp program for the next season, including staff evaluations, administrative recommendations, and ideas for improvement in relations between staff and directors. Provided original images for Foundation fundraising campaigns, including a documentary, brochures, and other promotional tools. Photographed staff, campers, and age divisions, including special events and daily life at camp.

HOW DID CAMP EXPERIENCES HELP ME IN INTERVIEWS & MY JOBS.

Resilience. Problem-solver. Solution-oriented. Collaborative in a team environment. Willing to pitch in where needed. Ability to relate to others. These are all things that I called upon as skills and resources at work; these are also characteristics that my coworkers rely on each day. The most valuable skills are those that you don't even realize you are acquiring during a summer as a counselor.

Steph Cotherman, Advertising Professional

EXAMPLES

While interviewing, I usually have a few experiences/situations picked out/in your head that I can refer to/that would answer multiple questions or keep me from getting anxious or tripped up on the question.

For example:

- A camping trip with bad weather and missing or broken equipment could be a great way to exhibit your adaptability and problem solving skills
- Helping campers work through arguments could exhibit leadership and communication skills
- Being a unit head or activity head could exhibit your organizational skills etc.)

Collaboration — the counselors who together manage to get a dozen excited girls to quiet down at bedtime

Adaptability — the Head of Arts & Crafts who, with no notice, translates the open-ended drawing project into something the camper who loves robots will enjoy

Problem solving — the counselor who makes a team of preteen girls. Enough said.

Communication — the Unit Head who makes a call to parents successfully.

Dedication and taking on challenges — well, these don't even need examples, do they?

ARTICLES FOR REFERENCE

[Camp is for Life](#)

[The Camp Counselor vs. The Intern](#)

[Camp Belongs on Your Resume](#)

[Interview Questions you should be ready to Answer](#)

[How to Make 'Camp Counselor' the best thing on your resume](#)