Top Ten Reasons You Should Work At Our Summer Camp!

Each summer over half a million students, teachers, nurses, athletes, artists, undecided-career-choosers and compassionate souls spend their summer working at a camp in the USA. In today’s high stakes competitive career race, why should you consider a summer spent working at a camp rather than struggling to pad your résumé by taking an unpaid internship, a thankless seasonal entry-level job, a or spend the summer on your parent’s couch?

A summer camp job can give you many real career benefits that go far beyond a paycheck. Take a moment just to consider what we think are the top ten benefits of working at our camp:

1. Learn True Leadership Skills
“Leadership is the art of leading others to deliberately create a result that wouldn’t have happened otherwise.”

A leader is someone who can bring people together and can guide them toward a common goal. Effective leadership requires much more than the ability to assign tasks to a group – anyone can do that! As the leader of a group of children or camp staff, you will learn to nurture an environment that encourages cooperation, personal growth, and positive participation. You’ll be that mentor and guide for the campers, requiring you to use your skills to manage group dynamics, to motivate individuals, to set common goals and keep group on track to accomplish them.

2. Effective Communication

You will be required to communicate effectively with people of all ages and abilities in a wide variety of situations. You will learn to give good, crystal clear instruction to a diverse audience. You will learn how to rephrase something when your good, crystal clear instruction left everyone befuzzled. You will learn patience, patience, and patience as you practice the fine art of negotiating (“the pool’s not that cold – really – let’s get in!”). And most importantly, you will learn to really listen, not only to what is being verbalized – but also to what a shy camper or a concerned parent is really telling you.

3. Teamwork

You will collaborate, compromise, sympathize, empathize, build consensus, build trust, build rafts, and build friendships, relationships and pirate ships. Being part of the camp staff is no different from being one of the campers - everyone at camp pitches in. It takes everyone doing their part to make the summer run as smoothly as possible – from the office staff to the kitchen staff to the maintenance crew. You’ll encourage teamwork as you go through activities with your campers, and you’ll appreciate the teamwork with your colleagues as sudden summer storms wash out a tent camp-out, or when the long extra hot days make the camp day a little more challenging.

4. Creativity

The camp program may have schedules and the standard set of activities, but the true spark comes from the creativity of the summer staff. Thinking up new activities to lead for a diverse group of kids takes creativity. Making costumes, inventing sports and coming up with skits and songs takes creativity. Motivating kids and colleagues, keeping it fresh day after day and keeping it a fun environment often requires a little thinking outside of the box. Camp runs on the creativity of abstract thinking!
5. Networking
Our camp hires an amazing team of staff members from around the corner and around the globe. You will work with a diverse group of folks who bring an array of talents to our camp. You will cultivate relationships and friendships with people whose path you would otherwise never have crossed. You'll leave camp having bonded with new friends just as the camp kids do. Your summer experiences will keep these bonds strong long after the last camp bus has left at the end of the summer. Your summer spent on staff will automatically enroll you into the camp's Alumni – a lifetime network of friends and colleagues thousands and thousands of members strong. You may come to camp without knowing a soul but you'll leave with great memories and some new lifelong friends. Goodbye at the end of the summer is seldom goodbye forever.

6. Responsibility
Your job at camp brings with it a great deal of responsibility. Parents are entrusting you with their children, and the camp directors, board of directors, and 100 years of camp history – all have their faith in you continuing the legacy! It can be a little overwhelming when framed like that – but you will hold a position of responsibility like no other. You become tuned in to knowing when a small disagreement between campers could turn physical, and knowing how to redirect the situation. You learn how to put the needs of others first for a while. You learn how to pay attention to the quiet kids as well as the class clowns, and make sure everyone is valued. You learn to get the group to where they need to be on time, make sure the kids change their dirty clothes and brush their teeth each day, make sure everyone is fed and heard and happy and safe and got a letter from home. Camp counselors are truly surrogate parents for as long as the kids are at camp. It is well known that the best counselors act with integrity, accountability and compassion. Those camp counselors are the most important part of a campers’ successful camp experience!

7. Expand Your Own Skill Set!
You will bring your own unique skills to camp, and you’ll leave with so many more. The wide variety in our camp activities will allow you to experience new adventures just as the kids do. There are the true “camp” skills to learn such as pitching a tent or lighting a fire or paddling a kayak or making a tie dye T-shirt. There are the silly skills such as 3-minute zombie makeovers with 8 year olds or learning how to sing 25 campfire songs. And there are the resume building skills such as first aid trainings and lifeguard trainings, behavior management and anti-bullying workshops. Think of summer camp as a ten-week skill enhancement course – where you are paid to participate! And when you do put “Camp Counselor” on your resume, you can list the number of children you were responsible for, the trainings you did and the skills you now possess. The camp will give you many marketable career skills.

8. Save Money!
You get to live rent-free and have all your nutritious meals cooked for you! While you are at camp you will earn a wage (unlike most internships) and won’t have to worry about most out of pocket expenses such as internet, laundromats or electricity bills. Camp also offers several professional trainings at no cost to you, and most transportation to and from local public transport points on your days off.
9. Have Fun
Despite all the hard work and responsibility that comes with the job – it is really a fun job. You get to live, play, and work in the great outdoors on a beautiful camp. You get to work in an inclusive, positive, supportive environment with amazing colleagues and awesome kids.

10. Make a Difference
You will be given the opportunity to create a significant and positive impact this summer. You will become a child's hero. You will become part of an organization that has been making a difference for over 100 years! Now that is a pretty productive way to spend a summer!

-Karyn Bonner
College Settlement Camps