

Camp Director Staff Training Certificate Overview

Welcome to the Camp Director Staff Training Certificate Course!! If you currently hold (or maybe hope to hold) a Camp Director position in a youth program, the new knowledge you learn and the skills you develop in this course can help you feel more confident and qualified as you function in this position or consider one of these jobs in the future. So get ready to enter into your own world of learning and professional development!

General Course Description

This certificate course is specifically designed for people who are working as a newer camp director in a camp or some other kind of youth setting like afterschool. The term “camp director” can be a broad job title that includes owners, administrators, directors, afterschool directors.

However, you all share the expectation that you often have responsibilities for the management of your operations and programs, supervisory expectations for other staff, administrative responsibilities, and overall responsibility for training and evaluation efforts undertaken by your program. Some of you may be full-time, year-round employees; others of you may be year-around part-time employees; and still others of you may be seasonal employees.

This course is an intensive 20 hour course built around the ACA thirteen core competencies. It has been designed to provide you with some of the most typical skills and activities encountered by camp directors. At the end of the course, you will have completed learning experiences that enhance skill and knowledge development common to camp directors so you can: 1) be a better administrator and supervisor to your staff, 2) better meet expectations of your job performance, and 3) enhance your own professional development.

Where to Start

This course was designed for camp directors working in camp and/or youth work settings and programs. By the time you finish the coursework and your overall self-assessment, you will have gained valuable skills and knowledge that will be beneficial as you work as a camp director/administrator or as you look for (or accept!) that perfect camp director or administrator position.

Course Expectations

The online format of the course leaves much of the responsibility for learning and assessment to the integrity of the individual learner. The following list of expectations is important for the learner to accept:

- We assume that each of you has an interest in becoming more skilled in working with youth and fulfilling your job responsibilities.
- We expect that you will complete all the required activities in the lessons.
- We expect you to communicate with your boss or seek out a professional who can act as a mentor for you as you work through this course.
- We expect you to keep a course notebook (paper or digital - it is up to you).
- We expect you to complete the self-assessments with honest, thoughtful effort.
- We expect you to be responsible for your own learning, which means that you will seek help from appropriate sources if necessary.

Assignments and Evaluations

A Word about the Assignments....

Generally, you will be asked to read articles, watch short video clips, or listen to audio files. Many times you will be asked to respond to a set of questions in a notebook or the online learning journal, talk about what you learned with a mentor, or to just reflect on the information. At times, you will be asked to complete tasks common to camp directors (design a training, analyze a budget, etc.), and sometimes you are asked to complete a process that you will likely encounter in your job as a camp director. We strongly encourage you to access your organization's specific forms, processes, trainings, policies, etc. to add relevance and authenticity to the activities designed for each competency. We also believe that learners should be encouraged to complete the optional and/or "Just for Fun" activities. While not required for certificate completion, these optional activities offer learners additional valuable, often more in-depth, experiences that extend the learning of that competency.

A Word about Evaluation...

Remember that assessment is about learning. We expect that adult learners are responsible for self-reflection and critical self-assessment that reflects your understanding of a topic or subject. The required assignments for each lesson are designed for the learners to complete as self-reflection in your course notebook or journal, through quizzes, and checklists. As you complete the self-assessment at the end of each competency module, it is important that you recognize not only the new level of skill you have gained, but that you are also ethically accountable for these new skills. Upon completion of the entire Camp Director Certificate course, you will have the opportunity to receive a certificate of completion for the course.

Course Schedule

This certificate is an intensive 20 hour course. Each learner will work through the lessons for each competency at their own individual pace. There is a recommended order to the course, because some competencies build on knowledge and skill development and learning experiences from earlier assignments.

Course Outline

1. Youth/Adult Growth & Development
 - Apply the camp experience to how youth and adults learn and develop
 - Embrace inclusive positive youth development practices
 - Align with current youth development practices
2. Learning Environment and Curriculum
 - Manage influences that affect learning and development
 - Apply experiential learning theories and research
 - Design, implement, and evaluate curricula to improve developmental outcomes
3. Program Planning
 - Determine the optimal overall program design
 - Develop strategies to increase participant outcomes
 - Determine unique opportunities for year-round program potential for the camp operation
4. Evaluation
 - Create systematic evaluation plans include including outcomes and program improvement
 - Select outcome measures and set goals for outcomes
 - Evaluate staff behaviors that contribute to positive youth outcomes and program improvement
 - Allow participants, staff, and parents to evaluate the program experience
5. Professionalism & Leadership
 - Leadership as a Camp Director

Create a culture of best practices
Explore working with volunteer leadership

6. Health & Wellness

Promote health and wellness best practices for staff and campers.
Respond to developments that may affect the Health and Wellness of the camp community
Assessing Your Health Services
Creating a Healthy Community
The Health Center

7. Risk Management

Analyze risks within your organization
Identify resources and subject matter experts to help reduce risk and mitigate loss
Assess current emergency procedures and revise if needed
Construct a risk management plan for your organization

8. Cultural Competence

Create an environment that builds capacity within the camp community to understand, accept, value, and honor the unique contributions of all
Administer enrollment practices to ensure cultural diversity
Build cultural knowledge and adapt practices for your program
Differentiate between a culturally competent organization and having an organization with a culture of competence.

9. Family and Community Connections

Support the engagement of the camp in all of its communities
Help staff learn about the influences of the community/families on the youth attending your camp
Create connections with community leaders and organizations
Communication and Your Families

10. Nature and Environment

Nature and your childhood
Research on children's nature contact today
Youth outcomes of nature contact
Resources and partners for promoting nature contact among youth and families
Strategies for promoting nature contact among youth and families
Evaluating nature-based outcomes

11. Business Management and Practices

An Integrated Planning Process
Strategic Planning vs. Financial Planning
Marketing and Customer Service
Marketing Analysis
The Marketing Plan and the Critical Tools for Today's Market
Financial Planning
Budget Planning
Financial Reporting and Monitoring
Operational Financial Risks and Internal Controls

12. Human Resource Management

Personnel Organizational Model
The Recruitment Process
Staff Training
The Supervisory Plan

Staff Development, Advancement, and/or Termination

13. Site and Facility

Facility Management

Managing Hard Asset: Land, Buildings, Equipment

Managing Soft Assets: Staff, Knowledge, Skills

Regulatory Requirements

Sustaining the Future