

Middle Manager Certificate of Added Qualification Course Overview

Welcome to the Middle Manager certificate course!! If you currently hold (or maybe hope to hold) a Middle Manager 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 like you who are working as a middle manager in a camp or some other kind of youth setting like afterschool. The term “middle manager” can be a broad job title that includes program directors, afterschool directors, directors of specialized program activities, and some of you may even be considered part of the support staff (i.e. site managers, health care managers, etc). However, you all share the expectation that you often have supervisory expectations for other staff, administrative responsibilities, and are often instrumental in training and evaluation efforts undertaken by your program. You also have a “boss” to whom you answer and often are under the guidance of this person. 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 15 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 middle managers. At the end of the course, you will have completed learning experiences that enhance skill and knowledge development common to middle managers so you can: 1) be a better supervisor to your staff, 2) better meet your supervisor’s expectations of your job performance, and 3) enhance your own professional development.

Where to Start

This course was designed for middle managers 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 middle manager or as you look for (or accept!) that perfect middle manager staff 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 your notebook, talk about what you learned with your boss or mentor, or to just reflect on the information. At times, you will be asked to complete tasks common to middle managers (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 middle manager. 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 "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 Middle Manager Certificate course, you will have the opportunity to receive a certificate of completion for the course.

Course Schedule

This certificate is an intensive 15 hour course. Each learner will work through the lessons for each competency at their own 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
 - Youth Worker Competencies
 - Developmental Settings
 - Setting Goals

2. Learning Environment and Curriculum
 - Teaching to be Teachers
 - Creating Your Camp Culture
 - Learning Styles

3. Program Planning
 - "Nuts and Bolts" of Programming
 - Program Staff Hiring Interview Guide
 - Program Improvement and the Middle Manager

4. Evaluation
 - Outcomes and Program Improvement
 - Tips and Tricks to Administering Camper Surveys
 - Program Evaluation Case Study

A Closer Look at Observations
A Closer Look at Surveys, Interviews, and Focus Groups

5. Professionalism & Leadership
 - Leadership as a Middle Manager
 - Who is a Professional and How to Stay One!

6. Health & Wellness
 - Camper Wellness and YOU!
 - Assessing Your Health Services
 - Creating a Healthy Community
 - The Health Center

7. Risk Management
 - Positive and Negative Risk
 - Risk Management Case Study
 - Risk Management Standards in ACA Accreditation
 - Safety Scavenger Hunt For Your Facility

8. Cultural Competence
 - Personal Identity
 - Bias-Free Communication
 - Managing Diversity
 - Identity Circles Activity
 - Talking With Youth About Diversity

9. Family and Community Connections
 - The Influence of Your Family of Origin
 - Your Program's Involvement In the Community
 - Your Program's Involvement With Families
 - Communication, Communication, Communication!
 - Communication and Your Families

10. Nature and Environment
 - Nature, Stewardship, and Your Program
 - Nature and YOU!
 - What is Stewardship?
 - Becoming Natural Leaders
 - Service Learning: A Way To Put It All Together

11. Business Management and Practices
 - Middle Manager's Responsibilities As A Mandated Reporter
 - Camp Insurance 101
 - How DO You Prepare A Budget?
 - Organizational Mission, Vision, and Staffing

12. Human Resource Management
 - "Gray Area" Policies

Asking Good Questions Of Your Future Staff
Management By Walking Around
Legal Compliance In Your Organization

- 13. Site and Facility
 - Site and Facility Standards
 - Equipment Maintenance
 - Preparing To Train Others To Use Program Resources