

CAMP ADMINISTRATION 101

RECRUITING AND RETAINING STAFF



Staff are your most valuable asset so it is important to get the right people in the door, and when you do get them, keep them around. It can be a challenge to not only recruit enough staff, but recruit quality staff that you can retain. Here are some tips to help you in your recruitment efforts.

1. Research similar pay structures in your area to make sure you are paying at or above market rate. Don't hide or be vague on your rates of pay. Be forward about it and use it to sell the position.

2. Get creative in your job descriptions and make sure it is as accurate and informative as possible. Write it to stand out and get potential applicants excited for the position.

3. Sell your camp and the camp experience when posting an ad. Posting the job description and work related duties is generally not enough to catch the eye of your potential staff. You need to sell them on the experience and benefits of working for your camp.

4. When finding the right outlet to reach your potential staff members, go where they are. Generally your camp staff are going to be younger adults in the 18-25 age range. Recruit through colleges in the area, on social media that appeals to that group, and places in your City that can reach this group. Similar to narrowing your marketing efforts to find campers, you want narrow your efforts to recruit staff to the channels you have the best shot of reaching them.

5. Have a referral program with your current staff members. Sometimes the best new staff members are those that have been referred to you by your current staff. You can incentivize staff to bring in more staff and be your recruiting advocates.

6. Make it easy for someone to apply. Many larger companies have long drawn out application processes that can frustrate many applicants. Save all the paperwork for when you are ready to hire, and streamline the application process to make it as easy as emailing over a resume or cover letter.



7. Start a Counselor in Training program. These are generally high school students that you can hire on as volunteers for their first year and work them into a permanent staff position when they become of age. This can be a great program for those who are in your program and age out. Transition them to a CIT and then to a staff member to have an ongoing pool of trained staff members season after season.

8. Market open staff positions through your participants families. Getting staff that are already familiar with your program or went through your program in the past are generally the best staff members.

9. Host a job fair or attend them at schools within your community. Hosting a job fair to give your community members a chance to see your facilities and apply for a position can be beneficial, especially if you need a good amount of staff. Attending job fairs at schools within your community can also help you reach the right applicants.

10. Be persistent. If potential staff members aren't crashing down your doors to come work at your camp, you have to take the initiative to get out there and find them. Send follow ups and check in periodically with each marketing channel or communication that you sent out to make sure the job opportunity to being seen by those

When you get good staff, it is just as important to focus on retaining them. Turnover is very costly for organizations not only in the amount it costs to recruit new staff, but the costs to train them along with all the administrative work that comes along with it. Here are some tips that you can implement to help you retain your staff:

1. Be as flexible as possible with scheduling. Camp is a commitment, but it is becoming harder and harder to find those staff members that can commit for the entire program without missing a day or taking time off, especially in the summer or over the holidays for Winter Camps. If you allow a little bit of flexibility with schedules and can still get camp covered, it will go a long way with staff.

2. Throw in staff member perks and benefits. Time off, use of your facilities, rewarding good performance, etc. are all things you can add to your benefit package to keep staff coming back each season.

3. Provide paid training, education, and certification. Staff members that are interested in a career in this industry, childcare, education, or anything alike are going to be your best and most engaged staff members. Providing training that will help them in your program, as well as in their career, will help keep them coming back as long as possible until it is time to move into their full time career.

4. Create a fun, positive, and inclusive culture. A great culture can take years to create, but you can flip the switch in just one season to give you the framework to create a culture that makes people want to work for you and your camp. Start with what makes working at camp great and engrain that in your staff from the moment they step foot on your facility.

5. Be a great camp leader and manager. You as the owner, director, and/or manager of your camps is where it all starts in your organizations ability to retain staff. Invest in yourself to learn how to manage people effectively and be a great leader and it will go a long way to creating a great culture. Potential staff will not only want to work at camp but they want to work for you and it will keep them coming back.

The more desirable your job looks compared to others and your ability to reach the right staff members will give you a better chance of attracting the right candidates. Retain staff by having a great culture, adding perks and benefits, and showing them that they are an essential part of your overall operation to make sure your staffing needs are always met year after year.





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