

COMMUNICATING THE VALUE OF YOUR RESIDENT ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE ON YOUR RESUME

By :The CSU Career Center

Steps to apply your RA experience to your job target:

- 1) Make a list of roles, responsibilities and tasks, accomplishments, and skills gained from your RA experience. This handout as well as job ads and the O*Net <http://online.onetcenter.org/> will help you identify some of these.
- 2) Determine your career objective, and specific job target. Meet with a career counselor if you are trying to sort this out. Based on your job target generate requirements and applicable skills, experiences, etc. employers would seek. Utilize job ads and the O*Net <http://online.onetcenter.org/> to identify these.
- 3) Create your resume (you will have multiple resumes if you have multiple job targets) so that you are including the most relevant information from your RA experience.

Some of the roles you may perform as an RA:

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Mediator | Advisor | Encourager |
| Referral agent | Programmer | Advertiser |
| Counselor | Student | Team Member |
| Friend | Staff Member | Disciplinarian |
| Time Manager | Maintenance Monitor | Listener |
| Leader | Organizer | Teacher |
| Administrator | Innovator | Initiator |
| Role Model | Fire Chief | Facilities Manager |

Transferable skills you most likely possess:

Communication – writing and corresponding, speaking effectively, listening empathically and carefully whenever necessary, portraying ideas clearly and imaginatively

Thinking – defining a problem, evaluating alternative courses to action critically, creating divergent solutions to problems when more than one answer is possible, shaping new ideas in the context of old circumstances

Human Relation – interacting cooperatively with people, communicating orders, instructions and feelings with openness, genuineness and understanding; delegating tasks in ways which show respect for the other person and receptivity to his/her ideas

Valuing – the ability to view and assess an area of work activity in terms of the effects it will have upon human welfare, and the ability to make and enforce decisions in terms that will maximize such welfare

Detective – discovering and identifying people who have information relevant to a task or problem, and identifying resource materials which are necessary to solving the problem

Interviewing – acquiring information from people when the people may be difficult to reach, or reluctant to divulge information; generating trust necessary for future contacts

** When listing transferable skills, it is important to support phrases with a demonstrated action. Try to locate an RA official job description to gain more ideas.*

Additional skills and characteristics you may want to emphasize:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Ability | Abstract thinking | Accommodation | Accountability |
| Accuracy | Administration | Advising | Anticipating |
| Assertiveness | Awareness | Authority | Acting quickly |
| Approachable | Balance | Being truthful | Brainstorming |
| Clarification | Collaboration | Communication | Compromising |
| Confidentiality | Conflict resolution | Confronting | Cooperation |
| Coordination | Counseling | Creativity | Courage |
| Caring | Decisiveness | Design | Diplomacy |
| Delegation | Directness | Decision-making | Dependability |
| Encouragement | Enforcement | Educating | Evaluation |
| Exemplify | Firmness | Fairness | Flexibility |
| Friendliness | Facilitating | Feedback | Follow through |
| Generate alternatives | Goal setting | Group meetings | Guidance |
| Goal-oriented | Handle logistics | Hypothesizing | Humility |
| Humor | Innovation | Improvise | Impartiality |
| Interpersonal skills | Imagination | Influencing | Information |
| Initiating | Instructing | Interacting | Interviewing |
| Intuition | Investigation | Judging | Layout/formatting |
| Knowledge | Knowing limits | Logic | Listening |
| Leadership | Management | Marketing | Meeting management |
| Mediation | Motivate | Objectivity | Organization |
| Observation | Oral presentations | Openness | On duty |
| Planning | Problem-solving | Provide care | Prioritizing |
| Proactive | Productivity | Programming | Promoting |
| Proposing | Public speaking | Patience | Persistence |
| Referral | Reinforcement | Reliability | Reporting |
| Risk-taking | Respectability | Role modeling | Research |
| Self-confidence | Sincerity | Strategize | Support |
| Stress management | Supervision | Time management | Training |
| Trust | Tolerance | Understanding | Writing skills |

Ideas for describing responsibilities:

- Promoted positive community atmosphere through residence hall programming.
- Served as a resource person and representative of Residence Life Office.
- Implemented school policies and procedures for a residence hall housing 60 ethnically diverse undergraduate students.
- Designed and facilitated social and educational programs for students, including topics of diversity, substance abuse, personal development, relationships, security, involvement, and academic performance.

- Managed administrative tasks such as room condition reports, maintenance requests, incident reports, and the room change process.
- Utilized organizational and public speaking skills to create and present hall programs to educate residents about critical issues.
- Mediated conflicts between residents in a diplomatic and sensitive manner.
- Enforced residence hall and University policies and confronted violations of policies.
- Possessed and utilized skills and knowledge of campus resources to counsel students in areas such as sexual assault and drug and alcohol abuse.
- Awarded “Programmer of the Year” for 2003-2004.
- Oversaw 40 first year students in a building of 240 students.
- Worked with a staff of 7 Resident Assistants to facilitate educational and social programs for students.
- Utilized crises management skills.
- Attended both weekly individual and staff meetings.
- Conducted monthly floor meetings with students for information and community building purposes.
- Participated in departmental committees and training programs.
- Worked in Residence Life Office 10 to 15 hours per week, performing duties such as responding to student and staff questions, answering telephone calls, and operating computers and other office equipment.

Tips:

- Have someone in the Career Center and a professional in Residence Life critique your resume.
- Highlight (by moving bullets closer to the top) those responsibilities that most closely match the requirements for the position of which you are applying.
- Do not include anything you are not prepared to discuss in the interview.
- Use the term residence hall rather than dorm, and residents or students, rather than kids.

Interview considerations:

Be ready to share examples of:

- Challenging situations and how you handled them
- How you work with others
- “The one that got away”
- Programs you’ve developed
- Good/poor supervisors you’ve had
- Successes

Share the amount and types of training you’ve accomplished (including diversity training) and the strengths you have developed or enhanced through this experience.