



Position:

NCSY Summer Programs Advisor

Qualifications:

Though advisor applicants must be at least one year post high school to be considered, preference will be given to applicants that are two or more years out of high school. Preference will also be given to applicants with previous experience with NCSY and/or informal education. Applicants should be able to create and give educational sessions or shiurim. Additional qualifications are listed below in the section titled, “Key Competencies.”

Job Responsibilities:

The mission of the advisor is to connect Jewish teens with NCSY and provide them with the opportunity to recognize and explore their Jewish potential. NCSY Summer Programs advisors accomplish this mission by cultivating quality relationships with teens and by serving as enthusiastic role models who embrace the beauty of Judaism.

Specific duties may include:

- Recruitment (at NCSY events, word of mouth, speaking with teens, etc.)
- Communication with participants prior to the program
- Administrative tasks such as compiling forms
- Escorting participants to and from airport terminals on the days of departure and arrival
- Day-to-day activities such as wake up and night-time shmira
- Creating and delivering sessions
- Accompanying participants on all trips during the program
- Contributing to an energetic atmosphere
- Ensuring the safety and security of the participants
- Assisting the Program Director as requested

The Summer Programs advisor is accountable to the Program Director and the Director of Summer Programs.

Key Competencies:

The specific challenges inherent in this position underscore the need for advisors who excel in four discrete competencies; being a team player, active listening, cooperation, and relentlessness.

Team Player

As the Summer Programs staff rely heavily upon one another, it is crucial that advisors are team-players. This translates into assisting other advisors as well as the Program Director when needed. Additionally, being a team-player means contributing to a “united front.” This entails actively and verbally supporting decisions of other advisors and the Program Director. This is especially important while in front of NCSYers.

Active Listening

Active listening is an interactive process for improving the degree of understanding between two or more people. Good listening is not a passive skill. It takes effort, attention, and intervention.¹ Active listening involves listening with a purpose. It may be to gain information, understand others, solve problems, and show support.

Given the emphasis on the advisor’s need to cultivate relationships with Summer Programs participants, the importance of active listening skills cannot be overstated. In addition to being available and accessible to Summer Programs participants, advisors must be “tuned in” to the experience participants are having. When needed, advisors will work with the other staff to provide individualized attention to participants who are not connecting with the Summer Programs experience. Additionally, active listening skills also include a talent for reading non-verbal communication and an empathic predisposition.

Cooperation

The advisor needs to understand that while s/he is an indispensable member of the Summer Programs team, it is the Program Director who holds the ultimate authority to make decisions. Respect towards the Program Director must be present at all times. While advisors are encouraged to express their opinions in appropriate settings, dissent may only be expressed in private discussions with the Program Director.

Relentlessness

For many, if not most, Summer Programs are only the beginning of a participant’s exploration of Judaism. Given the emphasis on deepening the connection of participants to Judaism, it is incumbent that Summer Programs advisors are chosen who are eager and committed to maintain their relationship with participants in the months and years following the program’s conclusion. This includes chevrotot, phone conversations, emails, instant messaging, and face-to face interaction. Only those who have a relentless need to cultivate these relationships will achieve long-term success.

¹ http://www.strategicconnections.com/Active_Listen.htm