

10 Skills EVERY Summer Job Should Give You.

So you have the **right** kind of experience you need to land your dream career.

It's no secret – today's job market looks nothing like it did 20 years ago. It's now commonly accepted that the job market will continue to rapidly evolve. Dell Technologies goes so far as to predict that 85% of jobs that will exist in 2030 haven't even been invented yet.

This may sound daunting if you're trying to find a summer job that will give you the experience you need to find a career you're passionate about! How will you know if you're getting the "right" kind of experience?

However, in my years at hiring and training counselors and following up with them after the summer, I've discovered one key thing: employers are willing to train new hires in the specific "hard skills" that their company requires. What they can't train, but what's most important to them are the "soft skills."

To find a summer job that will build your resume and equip you with the skills needed to stand out from other applicants, ask yourself, "Will this job help me ACCELERATE my ability to get my dream job?"

Here are the Top 10 "soft skills" that employers **are** looking for and students **should** be looking for in a summer job experience:

1. Adaptability: Employers love having someone who isn't afraid to adjust expectations or job roles, but can easily adapt in a quickly changing environment.

***Eagle Lake Camps Example:** At Eagle Lake because you can't predict what will happen with campers or weather or other fun surprises! It's probably the best place on earth to learn to adapt quickly to ever-changing circumstances.*

2. Creative Problem Solving Skills: *Spoiler alert* Problems will come up in your job that you have no idea how to solve at first. That's a given. The unknown is how you will respond: can you find a solution? Or will you freeze until someone else helps you?

***Eagle Lake Camps Example:** A camper forgets their fancy clothes for banquet! You now become the master fashion stylist and are in charge of making a really cool gown (or suit jacket) in 10 minutes with an old pillowcase and ribbon to save the day. GO!*

3. Conflict Resolution Skills: You're probably (hopefully!) not expecting that you'll just easily get along with all of your co-workers. But are you ready for when the conflict does arise?

***Eagle Lake Camps Example:** Everyone at camp can't all be on the inflatable or the zipline or in the candy store. Enough said.*

4. Emotional Intelligence: This one is so, so important. Why? Because employers want people who can do adulting well: people who have excellent self-awareness and self-regulation so they can work well with others.

***Eagle Lake Camps Example:** Meeting with campers during a summer is essentially training in emotional intelligence because sitting, listening, and understanding the kids in front of you is hard work. You may need to respond to a child without sharing your opinion, you may need to put aside your tiredness to love them well, and you will need to show them they are seen and valued.*

5. Leadership Ability: This doesn't mean you come in ready to climb the ladder with a 10 year plan for a company takeover. Rather, it means that when you see something that needs doing, you know how to take initiative and get it done. It also means you can inspire others to come along with you to accomplish tasks to move the company's priorities forward.

Eagle Lake Camps Example: You have about 8 kids looking to you for direction every day. For 10 weeks. You will grow in leadership at EL!

6. Empathy: This is possibly the most under-looked 'essential soft-skill.' Empathy is the ability to understand the feelings of others. This skill is key in not only dealing well with bosses and difficult co-workers, but also serving your customers well!

Eagle Lake Camps Example: You will begin to see how making an effort to understand your campers' and co-workers' thought processes and feelings opens crazy opportunities to love them and share about Jesus.

7. Resilience: When life gets hard, do you have enough grit and determination to bounce back? Do you quit? Do you understand that sometimes you will make mistakes and fail, but that the important thing is to learn and grow from those?

Eagle Lake Camps Example: Nothing improves your resilience like getting new campers to love on while you do the same thing every. single. week. Personally, I think this is the most valuable lesson I learned at Eagle Lake that continues to change my outlook, actions, and sets me apart. I've also learned my ability to be resilient is shaped by the "why" behind what I'm doing.

8. Ability to Contextualize: This may seem confusing on the surface, but employers want people who can see the big picture. They want you to be able to understand how your job fits into the larger strategy of the company, and they want to know that you can align your tasks and priorities to move that strategy forward.

Eagle Lake Camps Example: At EL, we have 4 Brand Promises, 5 Core Values, and one goal. You'll learn how your daily tasks and activities fit into the bigger picture of our Brand Promises, Core Values, and one goal, and you'll be able to clearly explain exactly how you can contextualize based on experience in your next interview. What are these Brand Promises, 5 Core Values, and one goal? Come and find out.

9. Time Management: What better way to prove you're a capable employee than to get to work or meetings on time, complete projects by the deadline, and stay on task while at work? Conversely, those who can't manage time well usually don't keep their jobs for long.

Eagle Lake Camps Example: As a counselor you not only manage your own time but the campers you are responsible for as well. Try sneaking into a camper rally late with a group of 8 year olds...

10. Essential Communication Skills: Employers want to know you can communicate clearly with co-workers and recognize when there has been a failure to communicate. When communication breaks down, everything else does, too.

Eagle Lake Camps Example: Communication at camp is learning that the phrase "It would be a good idea if you washed your hands" is very different than, "After you wash your hands, we can eat dinner!" and achieves very different results.

Few people are a master of these soft skills straight out of school. That's why a summer job that doesn't just give a paycheck or "hard skill" experience but provides opportunities for you to develop these skills is essential and far more valuable.

When you find a summer job that allows you to grow in your soft skill set, you don't have to worry about missing out on your dream career because you weren't prepared. Rather, you'll have a skill set on your resume that makes you stand out from the rest!

Looking through these qualities, you might think the list impossible: either because you haven't learned all of these skills, or you have no idea how to possibly communicate your ability in these skills on a resume.

Never fear! A good summer job experience not only will train you in each of these soft skills, but will give you roles and responsibilities on your resume that highlight how you've mastered the art of the soft skill set and are ready to be a valuable member of another team.

For example, at Eagle Lake, a counselor's resume entry might look something like this:

Camp Counselor

Eagle Lake Camps of The Navigators.....Summer 2020

- Serve on a team of 10-40 staff to together move the camp strategy forward by meeting individual goals and company priorities each week
- Lead 5-7 campers each week. Explain and demonstrate activities, teach Bible study, and conduct personalized mentorship through strong communication and time management.
- Adapt games and activities to meet certain campers' needs or to account for inclement weather or other problems that arose
- Implement trainings on conflict resolution and empathy as a team so we could persevere and respond to problems appropriately to achieve the goals of the summer together

Skills:

Adaptability: ● ● ● ● ○

Creative Problem Solving: ● ● ● ● ●

Conflict resolution: ● ● ● ● ●

Time Management: ● ● ● ● ○

The best part of this resume entry? It's not just a lot of made up stuff – you will actually learn all of these skills as a staff member at Eagle Lake. So you'll have great talking points in any interview.

Even better? You get lay groundwork for your dream career alongside an incredible community. Most of our staff say they become like family! All this while getting to advance the Kingdom and grow in your relationship with Jesus.

"LinkedIn's CEO Jeff Weiner said soft skills are more important than knowing how to code in today's job environment" states an article from Business Insider. Seriously, soft skills are where it's at.

Don't wait – start the conversation about working with us this summer by starting an application!

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