



Language for Enhancing Job Descriptions to Attract Staff Committed to Healthy Child Development

Having the right staff on your team goes a long way to continuing to build an afterschool program that is vibrant, energy filled, and committed to healthy habits. To help you attract the best candidates for employment, we've put together some suggested language that you can add to your current job descriptions. Consider including one or many of these phrases to convey your expectations about the qualities you are looking for in a candidate. Remember, people of all ages, genders, and body types can work to promote healthy child development. This language is not intended to identify the best athletes or healthiest eaters, but people who are committed to helping kids live an active, healthy life. You are welcome to adapt this language in ways that may better align with the structure of your job description or mission of your organization.

General description/expectations:

- [Program name] is committed to providing a healthy experience for children after school. Our staff serve as role models for a healthy, active life.

Qualifications:

If your job description succinctly highlights qualities, skills, or experiences you expect your future employees to possess, consider including one of these items that conveys your expectations.

- A commitment to helping children develop healthy habits
- A commitment to including all children in play and physical activity
- Enthusiasm for joining children in physical activity
- Willingness to demonstrate healthy eating and drinking habits in front of children
- Love of playing active games and leading activities with children. Demonstrate the ability to model positive behavior.
- Ability to communicate with and engage families in building healthy habits for their children and themselves
- Experience working with children in active settings like recess, sports teams, or athletic summer programs is a plus.

Competencies/Qualities of [Program] Employees:

If your job description describes in more detail the characteristics that you're looking for in future employees, consider including one of these items.

- Enthusiastic and energetic – Candidate should be committed to encouraging children to get excited about being physically active and provide a range of ways for students to be active throughout the program. This includes offering activity breaks during homework or other “quiet” time.
- Healthy Habits Role Model – Teach children by example by demonstrating healthy habits like drinking water, being physically active, minimizing screen time, and eating fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
- Inclusive – Actively encourage greater and more vigorous participation from all children in play. Create activities that emphasize cooperation rather than competition.

Adapted from YUSA's Hiring Cause-Driven Leaders Leadership Competency Interview Guide



Responsibilities/Duties/Essential Functions:

If your job description highlights what you expect your future employees to do while on the job, consider including one of these items that conveys your expectations about physical activity and nutrition.

Physical Activity

- Create a fun, safe, and inclusive environment for active play time, and participate in activities with children.
- Organize and participate in physical activity both indoors and outdoors with children.
- Actively engage a diverse range of students in respectful and inclusive healthy play. Build rapport, trust and respect with students. [from Playworks]
- Lead movement breaks that allow children to take a 5-10 minute activity break during homework or other “quiet” time.
- Ensure that all children receive at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day.
- Refrain from using or withholding physical activity as a form of punishment. For example, if a student is acting out, you may not threaten to make him sit out while everyone else gets to play outside.

Food and Beverages

- Model healthy consumption of food and beverages when eating or drinking during program time.
- Purchase, prepare and serve healthy snacks.
- Model healthful habits like drinking water, and eating fruits, vegetables, and whole grains when snacking during program time.
- Comply with site policies that prohibit the consumption of junk foods and sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Children are not allowed to consume outside food or beverages during the program. Sugar sweetened beverages are not permitted. We expect that staff will enforce these policies, discuss them with parents, and model healthy behaviors by consuming only healthy foods & beverages during program time.

Screen Time

- Comply with site policies regarding screen time during the program (i.e., no texting, watching videos, surfing the internet).
- Create activities and fun experiences for children both indoors and outdoors. We do not allow TV programs or movies to be shown during program time.



Interview Tips & Questions for Understanding Prospective Hires' Commitment to Healthy Child Development

To help you get a full awareness of the best candidates for employment, below are some tips and suggested interview questions. As you plan your interviews, consider using these 7 simple steps and including these questions to understand how potential new hires fit with your position and think about nutrition, physical activity, and healthy living.

7 Steps to a Successful Interview

- 1. Introduction:** Try to determine the candidate's overall fit and motivation for the job.
- 2. Work history and background:** Look for major accomplishments in each job, some upward progress, and performance recognition. Consider whether the candidate's background matches the current job in terms of scope, team size, impact, skills etc.
- 3. Commitment to healthy child development:** Even if a job candidate proves to be highly skilled for a position, it is important to ensure he or she fits with the organization's mission to promote health among children and families. To this end, it is important that potential staff members be questioned about their thoughts on nutrition, physical activity, and healthy living. Asking the questions in this guide will help you determine whether the candidate has a passion for promoting health.
- 4. Major accomplishments:** Ask the candidate to tell you about his or her greatest accomplishment. The response will illuminate important information about their goals and commitment, even if the accomplishment isn't directly related to the job.
- 5. Job-specific accomplishments:** Try to determine how well and in what ways the person fits the actual job needs. Focus on fact-finding questions to better understand the person's capabilities in relation to the requirements & skills in the job description
- 6. Child involvement history:** Assess the candidate's beliefs and approach to discipline and working with parents.
- 7. Candidate Interest:** Finish the interview by gauging the potential employee's thoughts or interest in the job.

Extra interviewing tips:

- Review the candidates' resumes and note any areas that you want to explore further.
- Take brief notes so you can recall important details that will help defend your decision to hire or not hire a candidate, but do not take so many notes that you appear disengaged.
- Wait at least 30 minutes into the interview before forming an opinion of the candidate. First impressions are often based more on emotion, personality, and stereotyping instead of qualifications that are most important to performing the job successfully.

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| Interview Steps & Sample Questions | Tips |
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| <p>Introduction</p> <p>I'd like you to provide a brief overview of your background as it relates to this job. What have you done that is similar?</p> | <p><i>Remember to wait at least 30 minutes into the interview before forming an opinion of the candidate.</i></p> |
| <p>Work history & background</p> <p>Now let's review your background in more detail. Please tell me about your most recent job. Describe your position, the organization you worked for, and any recognition you received.</p> | <p><i>Don't forget to ask about:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Highlights, favorite projects & responsibilities</i> • <i>Dates of work, reasons for leaving, explain gaps</i> • <i>Promotions</i> |
| <p>Commitment to healthy child development</p> <p>How do you think adults can best be role models for children to live healthy lives?</p> <p>What are your favorite ways to stay active? Are there any games or activities that you'd be particularly excited to lead with children?</p> <p>Our program has policies banning food and sugary drinks from outside the program. How do you think it is best to enforce these types of policies and discuss them with parents?</p> <p>Tell me about a time you showed a commitment to healthy living.</p> | <p><i>People of all ages, genders, and body types can work to promote healthy child development. The questions are not intended to identify the best athletes or healthiest eaters, but people who are committed to helping kids live an active, healthy life.</i></p> |
| <p>Major accomplishments</p> <p>Please tell me about something you've done that you are particularly proud of—something where you really went the extra mile. This could be something you achieved at work, as a volunteer, or in school.</p> | <p><i>Listen carefully to the candidate's response for their individual contribution to the accomplishment.</i></p> |
| <p>Job-specific accomplishments</p> <p>Now, let's explore your accomplishments in light of this job. One of the major objectives/roles of this position is _____. Can you tell me about an accomplishment of yours that shows how you handled a similar situation?</p> | <p><i>Focus on key performance objectives from the job description, particularly those you know are most challenging.</i></p> |
| <p>Child involvement history</p> <p>In this position, you will be working with children. Please tell me about a situation in which you were responsible for disciplining a child other than your own.</p> <p>What is it about children that makes you enjoy working with them?</p> | <p><i>Beware for any signs of excessive force; using food, beverages, or physical activity as an award or punishment; or unrealistic expectations about children's needs.</i></p> |
| <p>Candidate interest</p> <p>What are your thoughts now about this job? Is this opportunity something you'd like to consider?</p> | <p><i>As you close the interview, try to listen more than talk—don't "sell" the job.</i></p> |