



Showcasing Your Resident Assistant Experience on a Resume

Resident Assistants have the opportunity to develop unparalleled leadership skills in their roles in campus residence halls. In these important roles, R.A.'s work to facilitate cooperative and considerate group living environments, initiate relationships with residents, plan and encourage participation in floor, hall and area programs, provide assistance with personal and academic concerns, mediate conflicts and inform and hold students accountable for University and departmental policies. The residence halls are a laboratory for R.A.'s to grow and mature the skills most employers look for in a way that is unique to the position.

Before you would communicate your R.A. experience to a prospective employer, it is vital for you to review your experiences, contemplate the competencies gained and strategize how to convey each of your transferable skills through a resume and in an interview.

Step 1: Brainstorm Your R.A. Job Experiences

Your official job description can provide a starting place by identifying your exact job duties, however, be wary of copying your job description onto your resume; readers can easily tell when someone has done this and it rarely highlights skills effectively, let alone showcase accomplishments. Use the table below to help you begin thinking of your responsibilities while on the job.

SITUATION	SKILLS USED
1. Describe the most difficult situation you have encountered as an R.A. (What issues were involved? How did you address it? What was the outcome?)	
2. What one thing are you proudest about from your performance as an R.A.?	
3. In your role as advisor/counselor/friend, what has been a noteworthy experience?	
4. Describe your typical role at staff meetings.	
5. What programs have you planned and implemented during your time as an R.A.? How did you select the topics and presenters? Describe the publicity efforts and outcomes.	
6. R.A.'s have significant administrative responsibilities. What are they? Which do you enjoy the most? Least?	
7. How have you contributed to developing a community atmosphere?	

Step 2: Describe What You Do

Using your entries from the exercise in Step 1, begin constructing descriptive statements about your R.A. experience. Remember to begin each one with an action verb. Think about what makes you unique as an RA. Did you receive any awards? Did you undertake new initiatives? If you find yourself struggling to write down your experiences, check out the CDC resume resources including samples at www.careers.appstate.edu or call the Career Development Center at 828-262-2180 to make an appointment with your career counselor.

Sample Resume Statements:

- Fostered the development of relationships among 55 residents: consisting of graduate, undergraduate, and international students
- Planned and implemented programs to assist transfer students in transitioning into the university
- Received programming award for creating and supervising a sheltered teen volunteer project
- Counseled and advised first year students on academic and personal questions and concerns
- Developed and conducted programs on diversity, chemical abuse, personal development, relationships, and academic performance
- Managed administrative duties including maintenance requests, incident reports, and room transfers
- Interviewed and hired new Resident Assistants

Step 3: What is Important to You?

You may find that your responsibilities as an RA can turn into a rather lengthy listing on your resume. How do you decide what should be included on your resume, especially if what you are applying to is not similar to an RA position? Think of the skills you are gaining in your current RA position as transferable skills. Transferable skills are skills that can be used in any job and are not limited to one position or academic discipline. Examples of such skills include communication, teamwork, and computer skills. The following tool can help you determine what transferable skills you are gaining as an RA.

RESPONSIBILITIES	TRANSFERABLE SKILLS
Counsel and advise first year students on academics and personal questions/concerns	Counseling Interpersonal Skills Mentoring

Compare the transferable skills you wrote above to the requirements of the position you are applying for. These matches can help ensure you are including the responsibilities from your R.A. position that will be most relevant to the new position you are applying for.

R.A.s & Transferable Skills

Skills that are important to employers:

Written and oral communication skills

Interpersonal skills (relate well to others)
Communication skills

Honesty/integrity

Teamwork skills

Adaptability/flexibility

Well-developed work habits; strong work ethic
Responsibility

Decision-making ability

Motivation/initiative

Research skills, analytical orientation and
critical thinking

Exposure to diverse points of view;
Exposure to different cultures and languages

Computer skills

Detail oriented

Leadership

How an RA exhibits this skill:

Write marketing material for a program
Speak in front of residents

Counsel residents as they adjustment to being away from home, to campus life, and community living
Advocate for students with administrators
Mediate conflicts
Relate well with various constituencies: residents, staff, maintenance personal, custodial staff, faculty, parents
Maintain open communication with residents, supervisors, maintenance and custodial staff

Keep confidential personal resident information
Key management

Plan programs with other staff/residents

Work with residents to accommodate varying lifestyles
Negotiate compromise and cooperation
Compromise to accommodate variations in schedules
Negotiate with vendors for programs

Maintain a good GPA
Time management
Key management

Delegate responsibilities
Crisis management – ability to think/act quickly

Develop and initiate events
Taking on more responsibility than is required

Manage budget
Refer to proper University and community resources
Assessment of crisis situations

Participation in diversity training
Participation in staff meetings
Plan and implement hall programming on diversity
Living in the residence halls – in a diverse community

Design and print marketing materials;
Submit required reports

Follow through on staff assignments
Submit required reports
Responsible for critical knowledge of proper protocol involving emergency response
Assist in the detail work of opening/closing halls

Recruit, train and supervise volunteers
Develop community among floor residents
Taking on more responsibility than is required
Confronting peers (residents) in difficult situations while maintaining interpersonal relationships

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are skills you have acquired through any activity including your work as an R.A., college coursework, projects, community service, volunteerism, participation in organizations, hobbies or work experience that can be relevant to a future job or internship for which you are applying. Involvement being an R.A. is a valuable way to gain experience in the skill sets of communication, programming, community development, human relations and leadership. Your R.A. experience encompasses many of the skills listed below, so be sure to recognize and acknowledge these skills through your resume, cover letter and interviews.

Communication

Working on a team
Speaking effectively
Listening attentively
Expressing Ideas
Facilitating group discussion
Providing appropriate feedback
Negotiating
Perceiving nonverbal messages
Persuading
Reporting information
Describing feelings
Interviewing

Organization, Management & Leadership

Managing Time
Teaching

Counseling
Managing groups
Decision making with others
Managing conflict
Initiating new ideas
Handling details
Coordinating tasks
Delegating responsibility
Promoting change
Selling ideas or products

Programming

Setting goals
Identifying problems
Imagining alternatives
Identifying resources
Solving problems
Defining needs
Forecasting, predicting

Creating ideas
Carrying out a plan
Assessment

Human Relations

Motivating
Cooperating
Developing rapport
Being sensitive
Listening
Conveying feelings
Providing support for others
Sharing credit
Counseling
Delegating with respect
Representing others
Perceiving feelings, situations
Asserting