

**EFFECTS OF EVENING REFLECTIONS PROGRAMS AND RESUME-BUILDING  
FOR SEASONAL CAMP COUNSELORS ON INTENTIONS TO RETURN AND  
INTENTIONS TO RECOMMEND**

A Thesis

by

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## ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the effects of a camp counselor resume-building program and evening reflection experiences on intention to return and intention to recommend serving as a camp counselor among potential or former camp counselors. Each participant was randomly assigned to view one of six videos. All videos depicted a day in the life of a camp counselor, but different versions of the video created the experimental treatment conditions in a 2-by-3 experimental design. Three videos included scenarios in which camps had implemented resume building programs, and three videos did not mention the program. In addition, two videos depicted an evening reflections program in which counselors reflect on instances during their days that their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness were met; two videos depicted evening reflections programs based on the peak and end moments of counselors' days; and two videos did not mention a reflections program. After watching the video to which they were randomly assigned, participants completed measures of intention to return as a camp counselor in subsequent seasons and intentions to recommend camp counselor positions at the camp to other potential counselors. This study's primary goal was to determine if participants would have higher intentions to return and recommend being a camp counselor. The hypotheses tests concluded that only a Resume Building Program had a significant effect on Intentions to Return, but it was not a strong effect. Neither the Resume Building Program nor the Reflections program had any effect on Intentions to Recommend. We then removed all participants who failed to pass the manipulation checks and whose age was under 30 (closer to the age of possible seasonal camp employees). The analysis showed that the effect of the reflections program was

significant ( $p=.02$ ), and the pairwise tests showed the mean of the psychological needs-based reflection was significantly higher than the mean of the Peak-End reflection.

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my loving and supportive parents, brothers, boyfriend, and friends, without whom I would not have made it through graduate school. You all carried me through this journey and never ceased to encourage and inspire me. I am grateful for your positivity that kept me standing through the highs and lows of completing a master's degree. May I continue to cherish the blessings of your love and support throughout the rest of my life.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND RELATED LITERATURE

Retention of summer staff from season-to-season is a challenge for many camps (McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012). For several reasons--long hours in the mid-summer heat, major life transitions, increased fatigue as the summer goes on, working with active young children, missing daily lives such as family and friends, and lack of personal leisure time--many camps face high rates of attrition and turnover. Retention is important for several reasons. It reduces the expense of finding and recruiting new employees, it produces employees who are already oriented to camp operations and policies, and it yields employees who have a history of feeling valued as contributors to the success of the camp and an integral part of a camp community. Research has shown the importance of a sense of community in retaining camp staff (McCole et al., 2012). Retention of a critical mass of employees could facilitate a sustained sense of community across subsequent seasons.

One strategy that may address the challenge of retention is providing a guided reflection program for camp staff at the end of each day. In 2019, the Texas 4-H camp implemented a guided reflection program intended to increase the probability of retention of summer staff. At the end of each day, researchers facilitated discussions among staff focused on the accomplishments of the day. Counselors enjoyed snacks while they reflected on their own accomplishments and the accomplishments of their peers. The reflection program was intended to celebrate successes while communicating camp managers' appreciation for the hard work of the counselors (Ellis, Jiang, Locke, Woosley, Co, Snider, 2020).

The reflection program facilitators guided conversation to focus on recall of accomplishments during the day in which counselors' psychological needs for autonomy,

competence, and relatedness were met (Deci & Ryan, 2000). As Reeve (2018) points out, when psychological needs are activated, interest occurs, and when needs are met pleasure results. Thus, recall of instances of psychological needs being met are rewarding, and those rewards should elevate counselors' intention to return. Based on their anecdotal observations and on time series data the camp staff collected (Ellis et al., 2020), camp managers considered the program successful.

Other approaches to focusing the conversations during reflection programs might be considered. Over three decades of research in psychology suggests that two “moments” during structured experiences (such as a day of camp) have a major impact on subsequent evaluations and memories of those experiences. These moments are the peak moment and the end moment (Kahneman, 2011). The peak moment is the “best” moment of the experience. It is a moment of notable pleasure, insight, or meaning. The end moment is the very last moment of the structured experience; it is how the participant felt the moment the experience ended. The average of the quality of subjective experience at peak and end moments is a strong indicator of subsequent recall and the overall impact of the event. Using this “Peak-End rule” (e.g., Heath & Heath, 2017; Kahneman, 2011; Kim & Kim, 2017) phenomenon to structure reflections programs may yield stronger intention to return and intention to recommend than the approach based on psychological needs.

Other approaches to promote the retention of camp counselors may also be considered. Applied research in camp settings has demonstrated the importance of arranging seasonal camp employment as resume-building activities. Employers report being impressed by resumes that clearly show that seasonal employees who return for subsequent seasons are employed at higher organizational levels or in leadership positions with expanded authority and responsibility.

However, it is not known whether counselors value resume-building sufficiently to encourage them to return for subsequent seasons or recommend their camp counselor position to their friends. This study, therefore, evaluated the effects of the two approaches of reflections and resume-building on intention to return and intention to recommend serving as a camp counselor.

## **Literature Review**

A review of literature on staff retention in the hospitality, tourism, and experience industries follows. The review is divided into five sections: (1) Retention of seasonal employees; (2) Intentions and proclivity to recommend; (3) Psychological Needs based on Self-Determination Theory; (4) Peak-End rule; and (5) Resume-building as an Incentive for Camp Counselors.

### **Retention of Seasonal Employees**

Retention of seasonal staff employees is difficult to maintain for any leisure service organization. Several factors affect seasonal employees such as major life transitions (graduation, family moving, new marriage, opportunity to attend Graduate school), higher-paying summer jobs, college internship requirements that force students to look at other leisure organization opportunities, summer classes, and discontent with job and duties (McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012). This section provides a review of the literature on retention. Included are discussions of literature about the importance of retention and strategies for improving retention.

#### *Importance of Retention*

Retaining staff would save both time and money in recruiting procedures and hiring processes and send a positive message to future employees, program participants, their parents,

and internal and external stakeholders (McCole, 2015). Because guest experience is closely linked with employee performance, it is important that leisure organizations hire the best employees they can to ensure profitability for the season (McCole, 2015). Usually, organizations that can attract and retain high-quality staff have good internal programs to create employee satisfaction, which, in turn, creates customer satisfaction.

### *Retention Strategies*

One strong predictor of retention among employees is that they feel a strong sense of community within their place of employment (James, 2012, McCole et al., 2012, Whitacre & Farmer, 2013). When employees have a mutual goal that they work toward together, they feel more connected and, therefore, are happier with their work environment. Organizational culture is a strong predictor for retention than the job market or employee demographics (Sheridan, 1992; Whitacre & Farmer, 2013). When employers provide positive feedback, treat employees professionally, allow employees to help with administrative decisions and projects, and have an overall positive relationship with their staff, employees feel more inclined to return in the future (Rothman, 2004, Whitacre & Farmer, 2013).

Employees are also likely to return because they feel a “sense of place” within their work environment. They feel connected to spaces where they could have a deep experience or meaningful encounter with themselves, a friend, a coworker, or an employer. Further, these places can define who they were, who they are, and whom they hope to be in the future (Whitacre & Farmer, 2013, Greider & Garkovich, 1994).

When planning for the summer 2019 session of the Texas 4-H camp in Brownwood, Texas, camp managers noted they wished to increase their rate of retention of program staff. They estimated their retention rate to be 20% for the past few summers and sought to achieve a

more equal balance of returning and new program staff in future summers. As a step toward addressing the retention challenge and its presumed causes (listed earlier in this section), researchers from Texas A&M University created a guided evening reflections program and evaluated its impact on retention intentions of summer staff. The program was held in the evening, during the dance party into after hours, when counselors had freedom from the responsibilities of watching campers. TAMU program leaders provided snacks that are not part of the typical camp offerings, and a facilitator helped staff reflect on and acknowledge moments during their day where they had successfully achieved autonomy, competence, and relatedness to solve a problem, capitalize on an opportunity or make a connection with a coworker or camper. This reflection exercise was intended to provide adult conversations while also recognizing and celebrating instances where these needs were met by the camp staff, increasing their commitment to the camp and the probability of retention for the summer season of 2020. Results were consistent with the expectation that implementing a psychological needs-based guided reflections activity would elevate camp staff's intention to return and recommend. It is very important to note, however, that the interrupted time series design used in this case study controls for very few potentially confounding extraneous factors (many internal validity threats such as history, maturation, multiple treatment interference, and others) are uncontrolled when an interrupted time series design is used. Nonetheless, the results were promising.

### **Intentions and Proclivity to Recommend**

Fishbein, Ajzen, and their colleagues (1975) pioneered behavioral science investigation of intentions. In the years following, intentions have become the focus of extensive research in many applied disciplines; among these are marketing, tourism, hospitality, health, and youth development (Amaro & Duarte, 2015). Under known circumstances, intentions provide are a



strong predictor of precisely defined behaviors (Ajzen & Driver, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Sarver, 1983). These known circumstances include identifying “modal salient beliefs” about the behavior and its consequences, evaluating those beliefs to form attitudes, and considering subjective norms and the controllability of the situation. If an individual evaluates salient beliefs about the behavior positively, believes other people like him or her typically engage in the behavior and believes he or she can successfully execute the behavior, she or he will likely complete that behavior. Behavioral intentions have been used as proxy measures for guest behaviors in the hospitality industry (Kang et al., 2012)

In a seminal paper in *Harvard Business Review*, Reichheld (2003) argued that a specific type of intention is the single most important measure a company needs to monitor to be successful. Specifically, Reichheld argued that managers should monitor the proclivity of their customers to actively promote the product or service to their friends and acquaintances. Reichheld explained that monitoring intentions provide a much more precise measure of consumer responses than traditional satisfaction, delight, and loyalty measures. Reichheld recommended businesses monitor their “net promoter scores,” which are an indication of customers’ willingness to engage in word-of-mouth (WOM) advertising or, in a more contemporary context, electronic word-of-mouth advertising (eWOM; e.g., Hu & Kim, 2018). Net Promoter Scores can be used to effectively divide customers into actionable deserving different attention and organizational responses. He determined that it must be intuitive to customers when they assign grades and to employees and partners responsible for interpreting the results and taking action. The Net Promoter Score is easy to understand. Outsiders, such as investors, regulators, and journalists, grasp the basic message of intentionality without needing additional interpretation.

Reichheld and his colleagues settled on a scale where ten represents an “extremely likely” intention to recommend, five means neutral, and zero is measured “not at all likely.” When they examined customer referral and repurchase behaviors along this scale, they found three logical clusters: “promoters,” the customers with the highest rates of repurchase and referral, gave ratings of nine or ten to the question; the “passively satisfied” logged a seven or an eight; and “detractors” scored from zero to six. This cluster turned out to provide the simplest, most intuitive, and the best predictor of customer behavior, and it also made intuitive sense.

### **Psychological Needs based on Self-Determination Theory**

For this section, I will discuss Psychological needs based on the Self Determination Theory. First, I will discuss Self-Determination, and what it means to people, then I will discuss the Self-Determination theory, and finally, the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, based on the theory.

#### *Self-Determination*

Self-determination is a quality of human functioning that involves the experience of choice, in other words, the “experience of an internal perceived locus of causality” (Reeve, 2018). It is integral to intrinsically motivated behavior and is also in evidence in some extrinsically motivated behaviors. Stated differently, self-determination is the capacity to choose and have those choices, rather than reinforcement contingencies, drives, or any other forces or pressures, be the determinants of one's actions (Reeve, 2018). Nevertheless, self-determination is more than a *capacity*; it is also a *need*. We have posited a basic, innate inclination to be self-determining that leads organisms to engage in interesting behaviors, which typically benefit from developing competencies and working toward a flexible accommodation with the social environment.

The psychological hallmark of self-determination is flexibility in managing the interaction of oneself and the environment. When self-determined, one acts out of choice rather than obligation or coercion, and those choices are based on an awareness of one's organismic needs and a flexible interpretation of external events (Deci and Ryan, 1985).

### *Intrinsic Motivation*

According to the Self-determination theory, three distinct types of motivation exist: amotivation (literally means “without motivation,” a state in which the person is neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated), extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation reflects the individual's full endorsement of self-determination and pertains to all those instances in which a person's psychological needs generate a motivation to act (Reeve, 2018).

Intrinsic motivation is the innate, natural inclination to engage one's interests and exercise one's capacities, and in so doing, to seek and conquer optimal challenges. Such motivation emerges spontaneously from internal tendencies and can motivate behavior even without the aid of extrinsic rewards or environmental controls. Intrinsic motivation is also an important motivator of the learning, adaptation, and growth in competencies that characterize human development (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

### *Basic Psychological Needs*

SDT's three basic psychological needs are those for *autonomy*, *competence*, and *relatedness*. These needs are inherited within the strivings of human nature and healthy development, meaning that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are organismic needs (Reeve, 2018). These needs provide the motivation that supports initiative and learning. They collectively provide people with a natural motivation for learning, growing, and developing.

Whether they experience such learning, growing, and healthy development depends on whether the environments support or frustrate the expression of their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Reeve, 2018).

Like physical needs, these needs are said to be *objective* phenomena in that their deprivation or satisfaction has clear and measurable functional effects, effects that obtain regardless of one's subjective goals or values (Reeve, 2018). To cause deprivation of any of them will lead to observable negative mental changes in growth, integrity, and wellness to an individual.

The first of the basic needs specified within SDT is *autonomy*, or the need to self-regulate one's experiences and actions (Reeve, 2018). The distinctive characteristic of autonomy is that one's behaviors are self-endorsed or congruent with one's authentic interests and values. When acting with autonomy, behaviors are engaged wholeheartedly in actions that are self-determined by our interests and preferences. What we want guides our decision-making process to engage or not engage in a particular activity (Reeve, 2018).

In SDT, *competence* refers to our basic need to gain mastery of tasks. People need to feel able to operate effectively within their important life contexts. The need for competence is evident as an inherent striving manifested in curiosity, manipulation, and a wide range of epistemic motives (Deci & Moller, 2005). It energizes countless numbers of behaviors, from people in leisure moments playing mobile video games to scientists discovering the laws of the universe (Deci & Moller, 2005). Competence, however, can be obstructed. It wanes in contexts in which challenges are too difficult, negative feedback is pervasive, or feelings of mastery and effectiveness are diminished or undermined by interpersonal factors such as person-focused criticism and social comparisons (Reeve, 2018).

*Relatedness* concerns feeling socially connected. People feel relatedness most typically when they feel cared for by others. Yet relatedness is also about belonging and feeling significant among others. Thus, equally important to relatedness is experiencing oneself as giving or contributing to others (Deci & Ryan, 2014).

#### *Sport Literature on Basic Psychological Needs*

A study integrating basic psychological needs and theories of planned behavior to identify factors associated with young adults' continuation in an organized sport over a 12-month period found that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs was associated with more positive attitudes, higher levels of perceived behavioral control, and more favorable subjective norms. Positive attitudes and perceived behavioral control were also associated with higher behavioral intentions, predicting sport continuation. Organized sport has the potential to promote positive psycho-social outcomes (e.g., increased self-esteem, happiness, life satisfaction, positive peer relationships, leadership skills) and foster personal development. Despite these potential benefits, many people do not participate in organized sports. The reasons *why* people participate in sport (needs satisfaction) influence social-cognitive variables that predict energy and effort towards volitional behavior. When people perceive that their social environment supports needs satisfaction, they feel as though they are the originators of their behavior and skilled and capable in their actions. Recognizing that one of the most dramatic declines in sport participation occurs between adolescence and young adulthood, the identification of factors associated with university students' intentions to remain engaged in organized sport and behavioral continuation is important considering this transitional period creates a shift in routine and habits that were previously predictable and associated with a sense of control. (Guccuardi & Jackson, 2015).

## **Peak-End Rule**

Research on autobiographical memory found that people cannot recall the details of many of their previous experiences and that many details may be reconstructed rather than remembered (Kemp, Burt, & Furneaux, 2008). However, certain specific moments of the experience are better remembered than some. These being the peak and end moments, are critical moments of the experience and can be very important pieces in the overall evaluation of an event or experience and thus predicts whether we will repeat the experience afterwards (Ariely & Carmon, 2000). This section provides a review of literature on the Peak-End rule. Included are discussions of literature and studies over the Peak-End rule.

The Peak-End rule asserts that people often make a retrospective evaluation of an extended experience they encountered based on the most extreme effect they experienced during it (i.e., the peak affect) and near the end of the experience (i.e., the end affect) (Fredrickson & Kahneman, 1993). The rule appears to be good at explaining how people construct retrospective hedonic evaluations in studies examining its effect over a short retention interval rather than over a long retention interval.

When first researching the Peak-End rule, Fredrickson and Kahneman (1993) proposed Peak-End moments as a “snapshot model” on remembered utility (1993). The snapshot model describes how evaluation by moments is applied to the evaluation of past episodes. It asserts that an episode is evaluated by constructing a representative moment—the snapshot—which may combine or pool the attributes of separate moments of the actual experience. Fredrickson and Kahneman proposed that, as a good first approximation, the affective value of the representative moment is a simple average of the most extreme affect experienced during the episode (Peak) and of the affect experienced near its end (End). The affective value of that representative

moment, in turn, determines the global evaluation of the entire episode (Kahneman, 2000). They had subjects view a short series of short, plotless films, varying in content from pleasant to highly unpleasant. There were two versions of each film, one three times longer than the other, and each subject saw the long version of some films and the short version of others. The participants provided continuous ratings of affect while watching each film and assessments of overall pleasure or discomfort at its end. The results of this study suggested that retrospective evaluations were well predicted by a weighted average of the peak moment rating and the end moment rating recorded for each film, thus meaning that the duration of the film did not affect the overall evaluation.

Redelmeier and Kahneman (1993) extended these findings with a subsequent study on peoples' experience of pain during a colonoscopy exam, having them describe the peak level of pain and the end level of pain, and whether or not they would ever repeat the experience. Half of the group of patients were randomly assigned to a condition in which the procedure was extended by one minute. As the Peak-End rule predicted, though distinctly unpleasant, the extension of the procedure yielded a significant improvement in the remembered utility of the procedure. The Peak-End rule explains that there is a difference between rising and falling trends. In a steadily rising trend, the end is as high as the peak, but in a falling trend, the end is lower than the peak (Redelmeier & Kahneman, 1993)

Kahneman, Frederickson, Schreiber, and Redelmeier (1993) also did a study where subjects were exposed to two unpleasant experiments: one was a short trial where they immersed a hand in water at 14°C for 60 seconds the and second was a long trial where their hand was immersed in water at 14°C for 60 seconds and then an additional 30 seconds as the water was gradually warmed to 15°C. The longer trial was still painful but distinctively less so. Participants

were then given a choice to choose which experiment to repeat, and a significant number chose to repeat the longer trial, preferring more pain over less. The results of this study suggested that duration played a small role in retrospective evaluations of aversive or unpleasant experiences. These “aversive” experiences are often dominated by the discomfort at the worst and final moments of experiences, similar to the findings in Fredrickson and Kahneman (1993) and Redelmeier and Kahneman (1993).

The Peak-End rule also explains the paradoxical finding that adding a period of diminishing discomfort to an aversive episode makes it globally less aversive (Kahneman, 2000). Not surprisingly, our predictions about future happiness are often based on our past affective experiences. An approximation to understanding people’s decisions and choices, then, is purely hedonistic. We seek to repeat in the future what we have liked or enjoyed in the past and avoid or dread further experiences with what we have disliked or found aversive. However, of course, it is not so simple. People do not simply maximize pleasant experiences and minimize unpleasant ones (Parrott, 1993). Instead, they knowingly pay to see deeply cognition and emotion (Fredrickson, 2000).

Xiaowei, Chen, Lam, and Zheng (2013) later found that the judgment latency and ratings of the emotional intensity of extended positive and negative emotional experiences become respectively longer and higher over time during short retention intervals and respectively shorter and lower over time when the retention interval extends beyond the watershed.

The primary lesson to be drawn from the existing empirical literature on the peak-and-end rule is that people evaluated certain kinds of past affective experience by referencing just a few selected moments. One or two moments, then, play a privileged role in guiding people’s choices about which past experiences they would avoid and which they would repeat or



recommend to others. In many cases, the privileged moments include the one that contained the most intensely experienced affect and the one that concluded the experience. As such, the peak-and-end rule is a powerful heuristic for determining global evaluations of past affective experiences. Like any heuristic, it is probably useful most of the time. But under certain circumstances, it can also lead to biases and mistakes. A variety of studies have demonstrated that these mistakes may cause people to violate hedonism and choose more pain rather than less (Fredrickson, 2000).

### **\Resume-building as an Incentive for Camp Counselors**

Youth summer camp counselors face many emotional and physical demands. Their days and experiences are filled with many highs and lows, from the excitement of meeting and connecting with their campers to the fatigue of long hours of standing and physical activity (McCole, Jacobs, Lindley, & McAvoy, 2012). Counselors also face time away from their families, lack of pay, and little to no personal time adding to their already heavy and emotional stress. Some may feel that they do not receive any acknowledgment for their hard work and dedication. Therefore, they lack the incentive to continue working as a camp counselor the following summer. This section of the literature focuses on rewards and praise in the form of a resume-building program to be used as an incentive for camp counselors to return to work for subsequent summers.

#### *Rewards*

Rewards sometimes undermine intrinsic motivation, interfere with learning, and forestall autonomous self-regulation. Recognizing this, researchers have tried to use rewards in ways that minimize their detrimental effects. One way to do this is to use rewards that are unexpected and

verbal (e.g., praise) and refrain from using those that are expected and tangible (e.g., bribes) (Reeve, 2018).

### *Praise*

Praise sometimes is used as an extrinsic event to control another's behavior and sometimes to inform his or her competence about a job well done. A supervisor using praise, for instance, might communicate praise in an informational way, saying, "Excellent job, your productivity increased by 10%." Providing clear, specific, and competence-diagnosing feedback typically gives praise a highly informative function (Brophy, 1981). For example, the praise, "Excellent job, I noticed that you greeted the customer warmly and with a sincere tone in your voice," speaks informatively to an employee's sense of competence in a way that a simple and vague, "Excellent job," does not. The conclusion is that the motivational effect is not in the praise per se but in how it is administered (Deci & Ryan, 1987).

### *Resume-Building Program*

One reason that camp staff may have high attrition rates is that counselors (usually high school and college students) do not believe that the camps in which they are employed provide them with opportunities to build their resumes for future employment. However, seasonal camps offer many development opportunities among camp staff, especially those that would benefit their resumes. Camp staff develop in their maturity, their decision-making, and their responsibilities. They take on many leadership roles, either of campers or fellow staff members (Risch, 2012). Because they do develop so much, it is important for camp managers to note these developments in the form of resume-building. Camp managers need to begin sculpting internships and externships opportunities that counselors can use to build their resumes for future employment (Krasner & Reimer, 2018). It is important that camp managers realize how vital

resume-building is to the current generation of college students. Camps need to become more creative in making working at camp a skill-building experience that receives greater recognition from the broader world of employers, including creating higher titles, more experience in camp management and finances, and increased responsibilities that would be pleasing to employers.

### **Hypotheses**

This study examined the effects of implementing a resume building program and reflections program to participants stimulating the roles as camp counselors at a seasonal youth camp and their intentions to return to camp for a subsequent season, and their intention to recommend working as camp staff to a friend. The following hypotheses were tested:

H<sub>1</sub>: A reflection program in which conversation is focused on the Peak-End rule will produce a higher intention to return than camp sessions in which no reflection program is provided.

H<sub>2</sub>: A reflection program in which conversation is focused on instances of psychological needs being met will produce a higher intention to return than camp sessions in which no reflection program is provided.

H<sub>3</sub>: A Reflection program in which conversations are focused on the Peak-End rule will produce different strength of intention to return than reflection experiences in which conversation is focused on instances of psychological needs being met.

H<sub>4</sub>: A reflection program in which conversation is focused on the Peak-End rule will produce higher intention to recommend than camp sessions in which no reflection program is provided.

H<sub>5</sub>: A reflection program in which conversation is focused on instances of psychological needs being met will produce higher intention to recommend than camp sessions in which no reflection program is provided.

H<sub>6</sub>: Reflection experiences in which conversation is focused on the Peak-End rule will produce different strength of intention to recommend than reflection experiences in which conversation is focused on instances of psychological needs being met.

H<sub>7</sub>: Resume-building programs will produce a higher intention to return than camp sessions in which no resume-building programs are provided.

H<sub>8</sub>: Resume-building programs will produce a higher intention to recommend than camp sessions in which no resume-building programs are provided.

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of a resume-building policy (present vs. absent) and structured reflections (psychological needs-based, Peak-End rule-based, and none) on intention to return and intention to recommend serving as a camp counselor. The study was conducted through video simulation. We developed “a day in the life of a camp counselor” scenarios corresponding to the six treatment conditions defined by the two factors. Research participants who have been camp counselors or have shown any interest in becoming camp staff were randomly assigned to view one of the six videos. After viewing the video to which they had been assigned, participants completed measures of their intention to return as a camp counselor during the subsequent season and their intention to recommend being a camp counselor to others. Methodological details follow.

#### **Materials**

Six videos were created to manipulate the two independent variables: resume-building policy of the camp (present vs. absent) and evening reflections program for counselors (psychological needs-based vs. Peak-End rule-based vs. none). Table 1 shows the content of each video.

Table 1  
 Experimental Treatment Conditions, 2 x 3 Design

<b>Video</b>	<b>Resume-building Program</b>	<b>Daily Debriefing</b>
<b>1</b>	Present	Psychological needs-based
<b>2</b>	Present	Peak-End Rule-based
<b>3</b>	Present	None
<b>4</b>	Absent	Psychological needs-based
<b>5</b>	Absent	Peak-End Rule-based
<b>6</b>	Absent	None

Videos showed a day in the life of a camp counselor, beginning with the counselor waking up in her or his cabin and ending with that person retiring to his or her bed and reflecting on the events of the day. Camper experiences during the day include a flag-raising ceremony, meals, kickball, arts and crafts, a dance, free time, a rest period, and an evening ceremony. Three versions of the video were created to manipulate the resume-building program's present treatment condition. Resume-building was defined as the presence or absence of a formal program directed at enhancing returning counselors' resumes. The program was designed to draw prospective future employers' attention by showing advancement in titles, responsibility, and authority for each successive year of service (Ellis, Jiang, Locke, Woosley, Co, Snider, 2020). Specifically, the following narrative was presented early in the video to participants in the "resume-building-present" treatment conditions:

Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

Near the end of the video, participants in the resume-building, present treatment condition heard the following narrative:

You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. If you do, you'll have a higher title and more management responsibilities, which is exciting! It could be cool to have more things to put on your resume in addition to being a camp counselor. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day. Copies of the complete narratives are included in Appendix A.

While the resume-building factor was manipulated through the videos, the evening debriefing program was manipulated through a questionnaire design within the online survey application, Qualtrics. The operational definition of the debriefing program was followed from research by (Ellis, Jiang, Locke, Woosley, Co, Snider, 2020). A debriefing program is an evening event attended only by counselors. The event affords counselors the opportunity to socialize with other counselors, enjoy snacks, and participate in a guided reflections program focusing on occasions during the day that their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness were met.

Research participants who viewed the psychological needs-based videos were asked to imagine that they are actually in the reflection program described at the end of their video. They imagined that the reflections leader had asked them to share three short stories about things that happened during their day at camp and use their imagination to create these three stories. The first short story they were asked to imagine was related to autonomy. Participants were asked to imagine a story about a time during the day they did something the way they wanted to do it instead of how others might do it. They were given the following ideas of what to imagine:

“Maybe you used a creative technique to help a camper feel more confident in an activity, or perhaps you decided to do something special to cheer up a fellow-staff. Maybe you discovered a new way to do something. Or, maybe you chose to NOT do something that you thought should not be done.”

For their second short story, participants were asked to imagine succeeding at something by using one or more of their talents or their competence. In this story, they imagined something that happened during their day in which they succeeded in doing something they are good at. They were given the following ideas of what to imagine:

“Maybe you were good at helping campers enjoy experiences or at teaching activity skills. Maybe you were good at helping campers learn new skills or develop friendships. Perhaps you knew how to make other people smile!”

The third short story participants were asked to imagine was related to relatedness. They were asked to imagine a story about an occasion during their day in which they felt emotionally close to campers or other staff members. Participants were given the following ideas of what to imagine:



“Maybe you made a new friend. Maybe you helped a camper who was feeling homesick. Maybe you spent some time with a camper or counselor you particularly like or who needed you to be her or his special friend that day.”

We did not ask the participants to write about these moments in which their psychological needs were met, but only to use their imagination to create the stories. Further, we told them to think about the details for these moments they imagined (we want them to answer the following questions: What happened? Who was involved? What led up to the situation? What was wanted? By whom? How did the story end?). Afterward, we asked participants if they could imagine either all three stories, only two stories, only one story, or none of the stories.

Research participants who viewed the Peak-End videos were asked to imagine that they were actually in the reflection program described at the end of their video. They imagined that the reflections leader had asked them to share a short story about things that happened during their day at camp and use their imagination to create that story. They were asked to imagine their peak moment (the best moment of their day) during their day at camp for their story. We provided a simple definition of what a peak moment is and asked them to notice their feelings at that moment, e.g., happy, sad, pleased, proud, frustrated, troubled, unhappy. The focus on “feelings” instead of the event's objective features that occurred is important because the Peak-End rule is based on the emotional consequences of events, not the events themselves. Participants were told that their imaginary peak moment short story could be about anything they want, as long as it is part of their imaginary day as a camp counselor. We did not ask the participants to write about their peak moment, but only to use their imagination to create it. Further, we told them to think about the details for the peak moment they imagined (we want them to answer the following

questions: What happened? Who was involved? What led up to the situation? What was wanted? By whom? How did the story end?).

Procedures for the end moment were similar. Following the imaginary story about the participants' peak moment, we asked them to reflect on their full day at camp (including the events shown in the video and their imagined peak moment). We asked participants to think about how they would feel at the end of that day, again using the terms happy, sad, pleased, proud, frustrated, troubled, unhappy, etc. Afterward, we asked participants if they could imagine either both moments, only the peak, only the end, or neither. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

Research participants randomly assigned to the no debriefing treatment condition were not asked to imagine stories about their peaks and moments nor their psychological needs being met. They proceeded from their assigned video directly to the questionnaire.

### **Population and Sampling of Participants**

Data were collected through the distribution of the videos and electronic questionnaire described in the materials section. After securing permissions from appropriate authorities, recruitment emails were sent to individuals on the following lists:

- Texas A&M University Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences Students
- Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication Students
- Texas A&M University students

A copy of the recruitment email is included in the Procedures section below.

There was a notable difference between the gender of participants, with females comprising 71% of those that completed the study and males comprising 29%. See Table 2.

Table 2  
Participant Characteristics: Gender

Gender	N	%
Female	101	71.10%
Male	41	28.90%

The sampling frame included students enrolled at Texas A&M University, emphasizing those who have the following majors: Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences and Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication, and Sport Management. We also had many participants from the Department of Education and Human Development, as shown in Table 3. These majors and this department were deemed appropriate because significant numbers of students in these majors could be expected to have an interest in camps and camp counseling.

Table 3  
Participant Characteristics: Major

Major	N	%
Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences	53	37.3%
Sport Management	5	3.5%
Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication	13	9.2%
College of Education and Human Development	63	44.4%
None of the Above	8	5.6%

Since we focused so heavily on targeting students in various majors and departments at Texas A&M, it makes sense that our largest percentage for participants' ages are 18-23 at 75% and 24-29 at 11%. These age ranges cover students both in undergraduate and graduate school, except for a few who were not affiliated with the university and heard about the questionnaire through word-of-mouth. We also had a small percentage of participants from 30 to 62 who learned about the study through social media networking sites or had been directly sent the link by friends they had served along with working as camp staff. See Table 4.

Table 4  
Participant Characteristics: Age

Age	N	%
18 - 23	107	75.4%
24 - 29	16	11.3%
30 - 35	3	2.1%
36 - 47	6	4.2%
48 - 62	10	7.0%

Participants also included individuals who had previously been counselors or camp staff in their lives. These participants were made aware of the study through word-of-mouth from friends, fellow camp staff members, or through social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Some participants had worked as camp staff or counselors for a range of 10-70 weeks. Most participants had attended camp as a camper at some point in their life as well. Whether it was a residential camp or a day camp, some participants had participated in camp as campers for nearly 100 weeks. The Education level of participants had little variation, as the majority of the participants had only completed high school (69%), followed second by

participants who had graduated with a Baccalaureate degree (21.8%). 2.8% of participants completed technical, vocational, or trade school, and 6.3% graduated with a master’s degree.

See Table 5.

Table 5  
Participant Characteristics: Education

Education	N	%
Secondary/High School certificate/Diploma	98	69.00%
Technical, Vocational or Trade School	4	2.80%
Baccalaureate Degree	31	21.80%
Master's Degree	9	6.30%

### Measurement

Two dependent variables were measured: intentions to return and proclivity to recommend the experience to friends. Both of these were based on Reichheld’s (2003) “net promoter score.” Reichheld argued that the single most important customer metric a business should monitor to succeed is the strength of customers’ intentions to purchase the product or service again in the future. Thus, intention to return and intention to recommend were measured with the following item: “Please slide the bar (which will range from 0 to 100% certain) to indicate how certain you are that you would do each of the following: Return to this camp as a counselor the next year, if you wanted to work at a camp that year; and, Recommend working at that camp to a friend who wanted to be a camp counselor.”

### Procedures

Research participants received a recruitment email inviting them to participate in a study about camp counseling. They were informed that participation would include watching a video

depicting a day in the life of a camp counselor and answering a brief questionnaire. The video and questionnaire were delivered to them via a hyperlink embedded in the email invitation or social media post as well as through a QR code embedded through RPTS course announcements about the study. A brief statement introducing students to the study can be found in Appendix C.

Figure 1  
Psychological Needs-based Reflections Manipulation in Questionnaire

Now, please imagine that you are actually in the reflection program that was described near the end of your video. The reflections leader has asked you to share **three short stories** about things that happened during the day. Please note that we will not ask you to write about this, it will be in your imagination only.

Please use your imagination to create each of those short stories. Try to imagine details for each of the stories. What happened? Who was involved? What led up to the situation? What was wanted? By whom? How did the story end?

***Short Story 1: You did something "your way!"*** A story about a time during the day you did something the way you wanted to do it instead of how others might do it. Maybe you used your own idea to solve a problem. Maybe you used a creative technique to help a camper feel more confident in an activity, or perhaps you decided to do something special to cheer up a fellow-staff. Maybe you discovered a new way to do something. Or, maybe you chose to NOT do something that you thought should not be done.

***Short Story 2: You succeeded at something by using one or more of your talents, knowledge, or skill.*** A story about something that happened during the day in which you succeeded in doing something you are good at. Maybe you were good at helping campers enjoy experiences or at teaching activity skills. Maybe you were good at helping campers learn new skills or develop friendships. Perhaps you knew how to make other people smile!

***Short Story 3: You felt emotionally close to someone.*** A story about an occasion during the day in which you felt emotionally close to campers or other staff members. Maybe you made a new friend. Maybe you helped a camper who was feeling homesick. Maybe you spent some time with a camper or counselor you particularly like, or who needed you to be her or his special friend that day.

Take as much time as you need. Please proceed when you are finished.

Figure 2

### Peak-End Moments-based Reflections Manipulation in Questionnaire

Now, please ***imagine*** that you are ***actually in the reflection program*** that was described near the end of your video. The reflections leader has asked you to share ***a short story*** about things that happened during your day at camp. Please ***use your imagination*** to create that story. Details follow.

***1. Short Story: Your peak moment.*** Please imagine a short story about your day's ***peak moment***. Your peak moment is the best moment of your day. Be sure to notice ***how you felt*** at that moment (happy, sad, pleased, proud, frustrated, troubled, unhappy, etc.). Your imaginary short story can be about ***anything you want***, as long as it is part of your imaginary day as a camp counselor. Please note that we will not ask you to write about this, it will be in your imagination only.

Think about ***details*** for the peak moment you imagined. Try to answer such questions as the following: What happened? Who was involved? What led up to the situation? What was wanted? By whom? How did the story end?

***2. Your end moment.*** Please reflect on your full day at camp (including the events shown in the video and your imagined peak moment). Think about ***how you would feel*** at the end of that day (happy, sad, pleased, proud, frustrated, troubled, unhappy, etc.).

Take as much time as you need. Please proceed when you are finished.

The two scenarios in Figures 1 and 2 urged participants to imagine that they were the camp counselor in the “Day in the Life...” video and that the reflections leader had asked them to recall moments in their day that they achieved autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Psychological Needs from the Self-Determination Theory) or a Peak moment and an End moment (Peak-End Theory). Participants were then asked the question, “Which were you able to imagine?” where they were given the opportunity to choose if they had imagined none of the moments, one, two, or in the case of the Psychological Needs reflection, all three moments. It is important to remember that participants who were given the videos with the Psychological Needs-based reflection were asked to imagine and answer the question for achieving autonomy,

competence, and relatedness. Similarly, the participants who were given the videos with Peak-End Moments-based reflection were asked to imagine and answer the question for imagining a peak moment and end moment in their full day at camp.

Following the questions regarding imagining reflections programs, participants were given manipulation checks so that we could see if they were paying attention to their videos. The first manipulation check follows:

“Different people watch different versions of the video you saw. We want to know what you remember about the version you saw. **Did the imaginary camp in the video you watched have a program designed to help "build resumes" of counselors?** That program gave returning counselors greater responsibilities and greater access to learning about how to manage a camp.”

Participants then answered, “Yes, the imaginary camp in the video I watched had a resume-building program,” “No, the imaginary camp in the video I watched did not have a resume-building program,” and “I don’t remember.”

We also wanted to know if participants, based on their own camp experiences, believed the video they watched was realistic in depicting a day in the life of a camp counselor; if they felt like a story was being told; and lastly, how strongly they could relate to the counselor in the video. As you can see in the image, participants rated all three using a nine-point scale, with one being ‘not realistic’ or ‘not relatable at all’ and nine being ‘very realistic’ or ‘very relatable,’ as seen in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3

Realism Questions in Questionnaire

Given your experience with camps, how realistic do you believe the video you watched was in depicting a day in the life of a camp counselor?

Not realistic at all                Very realistic

---

While you watched the video, to what extent did you feel like a story was being told?

Not at all                Very much

---

How strongly could you relate to the counselor in the video? Were your thoughts and actions like or unlike what you would actually think and do?

I could not relate to the counselor at all                I could relate very strongly to the counselor

We also had a question to measure the dependent variables of participants' intention to return to this camp as a counselor the next year and their intention to recommend working at that camp to a friend who wanted to be a camp counselor. For this question, we used a slide bar that ranged from 0 percent to 100 percent, as seen in Figure 4 below.



### **Method of Data Analysis**

Distribution scores for the two dependent variables were evaluated before hypotheses were tested. Means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis values were calculated, and the distributions were plotted to evaluate the conformity of the data with the assumption that scores are from populations that are normally distributed. Outliers indicated by box and whisker plots were removed. Descriptive statistics were reported both overall and within the treatment conditions defined by the 2x3 design.

Hypotheses were tested using factorial analysis of variance. Separate analyses were conducted for the two dependent variables: intention to return as a counselor and intention to recommend.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### Overall Data

This chapter summarizes data analysis results and reports the descriptive statistics and hypothesis tests from the study. Hypothesis tests are reported in two sections. The first of these reports analysis of variance results was based on 142 cases who completed the study in no less than ten minutes and no more than 30 minutes. The ten-minute limit was selected because the shortest video was 7 minutes in duration. The 30-minute limit was selected, assuming that it would be a reasonable time within which participants could recall details of the simulation. Analyses are based on 142 respondents. Cell sizes range from 20 to 29 (see Table 6).

Table 6  
Number of Participants per Treatment Condition

		Reflections Program		
		No Reflections Program	PsychNeeds Reflections Program	Peak-End Reflections Program
Resume Building Program	No Resume Building Program Provided	22	27	20
	Resume Building Program Provided	20	24	29

The second set of hypothesis tests is based on more stringent requirements. Data analysis results reported in that section are limited to all responses in which the participants passed all of the manipulation check items. Further, the data for these analyses included only individuals 29 years old or younger. Thus, these analyses were limited to participants who seemed to attend

most closely to the treatment combination to which they were randomly assigned and to an age group of individuals who might actually serve as camp counselors.

*Descriptive Statistics*

Descriptive statistics for the measures of intention to return and intention to recommend are presented in Table 7. Means were notably high for both variables, 79.35 and 82.61 on the 100-point scale. Yet, scores in the entire range of values (from 1 to 100) were reported. Intention to recommend had substantial kurtosis (4.60), and both variables showed negative skewness.

Table 7  
Descriptive Statistics for Measures of Intention to Return and Intention to Recommend

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Intention to Recommend	142	1	100	82.61	17.50	-1.72	4.60
Intention to Return	142	1	100	79.35	18.80	-1.26	1.80
Valid N	142						

Group and marginal means for both intention to return and intention to recommend are reported in Tables 8 and 9. Marginal means are consistent with the hypothesis that resume building and reflections programs increase intentions. The resume building treatment condition produced higher means than the no resume building treatment condition for both variables. For the reflections program, the largest mean was for the psychological needs-based program, followed by the Peak-End-based program, and no reflections, respectively. This pattern was consistent for both intention to return and intention to recommend.

Cell means are also reported in Tables 8 and 9. For intention to return, the group that had the highest mean was Resume Building program provided, Psychological Needs-based reflections program provided (M=86.35, SD=12.58). The group with the lowest intention to return was no Resume Building program provided, no reflections program provided (M=77.38, SD=17.22). For Intention to Recommend, the group with the highest mean was No Resume Building program provided, Psychological Needs-based reflections program provided (M=87.44, SD=13.74). The lowest mean was no Resume Building program provided, no reflections program provided (M=80.43, SD=16.42).

Table 8  
Intention to Return Cell Means

	No Reflections	PsychNeeds Reflections Program	Peak-End Reflections Program	Marginal Means
Resume Building Program Provided	84.11 (11.68)	86.35 (12.58)	85.74 (8.60)	85.49 (10.79)
No Resume Building Program Provided	77.38 (17.22)	80.22 (16.36)	77.41 (21.20)	78.57 (17.77)
Marginal Means	80.57 (15.05)	83.04 (14.92)	82.52 (15.12)	82.13 (14.95)

Table 9  
Intention to Recommend Cell Means

	No Reflections	PsychNeeds Reflections Program	Peak-End Reflections Program	Marginal Means
Resume Building Program Provided	83.11 (15.55)	87.13 (12.51)	84.45 (10.36)	84.99 (12.52)
No Resume Building Program Provided	80.43 (16.42)	87.44 (13.74)	80.56 (18.24)	83.33 (16.04)
Marginal Means	81.70 (15.86)	87.29 (13.05)	82.96 (13.85)	84.20 (14.29)

### Hypotheses Tests

Results of hypothesis tests are summarized in Tables 10 and 11. The interaction effect was non-significant in both analyses. The main effect of the Resume Building Program was significant for Intention to Return ( $p < .01$ ). No other effects were statistically significant for either dependent variable.

Table 10  
Analysis of Variance: Intention to Return

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2_p$
Resume Building (RB)	1,621.48	1	1621.48	7.43	<.01	.05
Reflections (RE)	152.44	2	76.22	0.35	0.71	.01
RB by RE	28.68	2	14.34	0.07	0.94	<.01
Error	27,931.93	128	218.22			

Table 11  
Analysis of Variance: Intention to Recommend

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2_p$
Resume Building Program	145.216	1	145.216	0.71	0.4	.01
Reflections	846.083	2	423.041	2.08	0.13	.03
Resume Building by Reflections	112.65	2	56.312	0.28	0.76	<.01
Error	26,909.841	132	203.862			

## Hypothesis Tests of Data with Manipulation Check Failures and Ages 30 and Higher

### Excluded

This section reports results of analyses in which data from all participants who failed to pass the manipulation checks and whose age is under 30 (closer to the age of possible seasonal camp employees) were removed. The analysis is based on 107 respondents. The group (cell) sizes range from 14 to 24 (see Table 12).

Table 12

Crosstabulation: Group Sizes of Resume Building Program by Reflections Program

	Reflections Program Tx		
	No Reflections Program	PsychNeeds Reflections Program	Peak-End Reflections Program
No Resume Building Program Provided	17	24	14
Resume Building Program Provided	15	18	19
Total	32	42	33

Group and marginal means for both intention to return and intention to recommend are reported in Tables 13 and 14. Marginal means are consistent with the hypothesis that resume building and reflections programs increase intentions. The resume building treatment conditions produced higher means than the no resume building treatment condition for both variables. For intention to return, the largest reflections program mean was for the psychological needs-based program, followed by the Peak-End-based reflections program, and no reflections. For intention to recommend, the largest mean was for the psychological needs-based program, followed by no reflections program and then the Peak-End-based reflections program.



Cell means are also reported in Tables 13 and 14. For intention to return, the group that had the highest mean was Resume Building program provided, Psychological Needs-based reflections program provided (M=84.87, SD=17.90). The group with the lowest intention to return was No Resume Building program provided, Peak-End-based Reflections program provided (M=70.47, SD=26.35). For Intention to Recommend, the group with the highest mean was Resume Building program provided, Psychological Needs-based reflections program provided (M=90.60, SD=10.09). The lowest mean was No Resume Building program provided, Peak-End reflections program provided (M=75.20, SSD=26.447).

Table 13  
Intention to Return Cell Means

	No Reflections	PsychNeeds Reflections Program	Peak-End Reflections Program	Marginal Means
Resume Building Program Provided	72.79 (27.73)	84.87 (17.90)	83.21 (11.52)	80.69 (19.64)
No Resume Building Program Provided	75.50 (20.60)	80.52 (16.509)	70.47 (26.35)	76.27 (20.85)
Marginal Means	74.14 (24.01)	82.24 (16.97)	77.59 (20.21)	78.39 (20.30)

Table 14  
Intention to Recommend Cell Means

	No Reflections	PsychNeeds Reflections Program	Peak-End Reflections Program	Marginal Means
Resume Building Program Provided	81.07 (23.28)	90.60 (10.09)	81.32 (15.98)	84.15 (17.25)
No Resume Building Program Provided	83.00 (17.04)	87.43 (13.29)	75.20 (26.447)	82.71 (19.21)
Marginal Means	82.04 (20.04)	88.68 (12.08)	78.62 (21.11)	83.40 (18.21)

*Hypotheses Tests*

Hypothesis test results are summarized in Tables 15-18. Only one effect was found to be significant. For the intention to recommend, the main effect of the reflections program was found to be significant ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 15  
Test of Between-Subjects Effects on Intention to Return

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Resume Building (RB)	286.059	1	286.059	0.735	0.393	.01
Reflections (RE)	1,403.712	2	701.856	1.802	0.17	.03
RB by RE	569.695	2	284.848	0.731	0.484	.01
Error	39,330.073	101	389.407			

Table 16  
Test of Between-Subjects Effects on Intention to Recommend

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Resume Building (RB)	145.955	1	145.955	0.468	0.496	<.01
Reflections (RE)	2527.716	2	1263.858	4.051	0.020	.07
RB by RE	223.518	2	111.759	0.358	0.700	.01
Error	31513.799	101	312.018			

Table 17  
Means of Resume Building Program for Intention to Recommend

95% Confidence Level				
Resume Building	Mean	Standard Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No Resume Building Program	82.060	2.441	77.217	86.903
Resume Building Program	84.432	2.462	79.548	89.316

Table 18  
Means of Reflections Program for Intention to Recommend

95% Confidence Level				
Reflections Program	Mean	Standard Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No Reflections Program	82.480	3.129	76.274	88.687
Psychological Needs Reflection	89.451	2.754	83.988	94.914
Peak-End Reflections Program	77.806	3.111	71.635	83.977

Pairwise tests (Table 19) show the mean of the psychological needs-based reflection is significantly higher than the mean of the Peak-End reflection. No other pairs of means differ significantly, i.e., psychological needs reflections and no reflections means are not significantly different, and no reflections mean and Peak-End means were not significantly different. There were no significant effects found on the dependent variable, intention to return.

Table 19  
Pairwise Comparisons on Intention to Recommend

(I) Reflections Program	(J) Reflections Program	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	Sig.
No Reflections Program	Psychological Needs Reflections	-6.971	4.168	0.098
	Peak-End Reflections	4.674	4.412	0.292
Psychological Needs Reflections	No Reflections	6.971	4.168	0.098
	Peak-End Reflections	11.645	4.155	0.006
Peak-End Reflections	No Reflections	-4.674	4.412	0.292
	Psychological Needs Reflections	-11.645	4.155	0.006

### Exploratory Analysis

A general goal of this study was to find features of camp experiences that would tend to increase intention to return and intention to recommend. Given that purpose, I calculated the average of peak and end enjoyment (creating PK, End Avg) and examined the Pearson correlation between enjoyment of the camp experience and each of the two intention variables: intention to return and intention to recommend. Both correlation coefficients were significant at  $p < .05$  (they were both  $p < .001$ ), and they were moderately strong: .525 for intention to return and .521 for intention to recommend. These results suggest strategies that camp managers might use to enhance enjoyment during the day will increase intention to return and intention to recommend among their camp staff.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a discussion of the results of this study. It restates the purpose of the study and summarizes the findings. It also discusses the study's limitations, integration with previous research, directions for future research, and implications for camp managers.

#### **Summary**

This study examined the effects of implementing a resume building program and reflections program on youth camp counselors' intention to return to camp for subsequent summers and their proclivity to recommend being a camp counselor to a friend. Results of the first analysis indicated that the resume building program had a significant effect on intention to return but not on intention to recommend. Neither the Psychological needs-based reflections nor the Peak-End-based reflections program affected intention to return and intention to recommend. There was also no evidence of an interaction effect for the resume building program nor the reflections program. The second analysis results included only individuals who were 29 years old or younger and who passed both manipulation checks, which showed that the reflections program had a significant effect on intention to recommend, but no other effects were significant. Even though we did not find consistently significant results, the overall evidence does provide treatment effects for both factors. The exploratory analysis indicated that as enjoyment of the camp experience increases, both intention to return and intention to recommend increased. Both correlation coefficients were significant, and they were moderately strong, suggesting that strategies promoting enjoyment may increase intention to return and intention to recommend among their camp staff.

## **Limitations of the Study**

It is important to highlight the limitations of this study. The first is that this study was heavily impacted by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. Previously, when implementing the reflections program to the Texas 4-H camp staff in 2019, the researcher had the opportunity to physically attend the camp and hold the evening reflections program in-person. This provided an intimate, human connection among the participants. It also allowed for the presence of deep emotions, critical thinking, and sharing of experiences between the staff members. This in-person reflections program yielded positive results for the camp staff's intention to return to the camp the following summer and their intention to recommend being a camp counselor at that specific camp to a friend.

For the current study, the researcher could not attend the Texas 4-H camp due to the pandemic. Instead, we developed a simulated camp experience. To do so, we created several videos depicting a day in the life of a camp counselor for participants to view before they completed a questionnaire about their "camp experience." Put simply, participants were provided a simulated camp experience with simulated reflections programs and simulated resume building programs. Actual programs of reflection and resume building might produce the intentions anticipated.

Another limitation of this study is that the participants did not receive the full effect of the two reflections programs being implemented because it was simulated virtually. Distributions of responses to the manipulation check items suggested that participants had difficulty imagining achieving autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the psychological needs-based reflections program, as well as difficulty imagining peak and end moments and the feelings that encompass these moments in the Peak-End-based reflections program. Difficulty in imagining these

circumstances led to a substantial reduction in the sample size for the second analysis. For example, only 25% of participants in the psychological needs-based reflections program could imagine all three circumstances in each of the three psychological needs were met.

Another limitation is that not all participants watched the videos all the way through, and that watched them did not seem to focus their attention on the content. Over 260 participants completed the questionnaire, but only 142 responses were valid. Of those, 107 were close to our target age range and passed the manipulation checks. If the study had been conducted in a laboratory setting, requiring each participant to watch the full videos and implement the reflections program in person, rather than through the online application, more reliable and valid data might have been generated.

The sample size is also a limitation. Cell sizes were less than  $n=30$  in both analyses, and the total sample sizes were only  $n=142$  in the first analysis and  $n=107$  in the second analysis. The sample means were consistent with the hypothesis that both resume building and reflections increase intentions. Yet, the effect of the reflections program was nonsignificant in the analysis of the larger data set, and the effect of resume building was nonsignificant in the analysis of the restricted data set. The pattern of means, in conjunction with observations about the limitations of the data, positive results of the previous onsite study (Ellis et al., 2020), and likely motives of participants, suggest that sample size was insufficient to detect all of the anticipated treatment effects using these simulation methods.

Yet, statistically significant effects were found in each of the two analyses. The resume building program effect was significant when the full data set was analyzed, and the reflections program effect was significant when more stringent restrictions were placed on the data analyzed. Small sample sizes reduce statistical power, resulting in a decreased probability of

rejecting null hypotheses. A question, then, arises: why were different significant effects found in the two analyses? What factors might account for the discrepant results?

Compelling answers to these questions are elusive. One might speculate that the older participants in the full sample have deeper regard for career development due to their personal history of successes and failures in seeking employment. If so, perhaps they would value resume building more strongly than the younger sample. Yet, resume building had no significant effect on intention to recommend in the older sample. Similarly, the reasons for the significant effect of the reflections program on intention to recommend among the restricted sample are not clear. The reflections program engages psychological needs, and self-determination theory proposes that needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness are universal across ages and cultures (Deci & Ryan, 2014). Even if psychological need satisfaction was mediated by age, the nonsignificant effect of the reflections program on intention to return within the restricted sample remains unexplained. Perhaps the most compelling conclusion is that the small sample size resulted in statistical tests with insufficient power to detect significant differences in all four tests. The fact that two of the tests were significant despite the small sample size provides evidence supporting this speculation.

A final limitation of the study is that individuals in the sample were likely motivated by many factors to participate, including a desire to help out a fellow student and friend, class credit, and encouragement from their peers. Thus, it is likely that many participants did not take the experiment seriously, hence our high rates of manipulation check failures and those completing the questionnaire in under 10 minutes or over 30 minutes. Although both treatments did have an effect on the dependent variables, we are curious to know, had more individuals taken this study seriously, would the effect have been stronger?



## **Integration with Previous Research**

### *Peak-End Rule*

Previous studies on the Peak-End rule (Fredrickson & Kahneman, 1993; Kahneman, Fredrickson, Schreiber, & Redelmeier, 1993; Redelmeier, & Kahneman, 1993; Fredrickson, 2000) have found that it is a psychological hedonic in which individuals participate in an experience and make retrospective evaluations based on how they felt at the peak of the experience and the end of the experience. Studies conducted included participants receiving colonoscopies or putting their hands in freezing water. Kahneman and others determined that the duration of the experiences did not affect individuals' retrospective evaluations; only the most intense moment and the last moment of the experience endured. The results of these studies were popularized by Heath and Heath (2017) for their significance in determining the salience of experiences and whether individuals make decisions to repeat the experiences based on their evaluation of the peak moment and the end moment.

In contrast to the studies above, the effects of the Peak-End-based reflections program in our study were nonsignificant. In both analyses, the Peak-End-based reflections program had lower means than the Psychological Needs-based reflections. This is notable because it cast doubts on the Peak-End Theory as a representation of a meaningful effect. Based on these sample means, we have little reason to believe that Peak-End experiences are key factors in determining the salience of an experience. Therefore, we can conclude that our results are not consistent with those of Kahneman, Fredrickson, Schreiber, Redelmeier, or Heath and Heath.

### *Self-Determination Theory*

The Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) suggests that people are intrinsically motivated to grow and become self-determined when their needs for autonomy,

competence, and relatedness are met. As Reeve (2018) points out, when psychological needs are activated, interest occurs, and when needs are met pleasure results. Thus, recall of instances of psychological needs being met are rewarding, and those rewards may elevate intentions.

In 2019, the Texas 4-H camp implemented a guided reflection program intended to increase the probability of retention of summer staff. At the end of each day, researchers facilitated discussions among camp staff focused on their moments of achieving autonomy, competence, and relatedness throughout the day. Counselors reflected on their own accomplishments and the accomplishments of their peers. Based on their own anecdotal observations and on time series data the camp staff collected (Ellis, Jiang, Locke, Woosley, Co, & Snider, 2020), it was indicated that the guided reflections program elevated counselors' intention to return to camp. Thus, camp managers considered the program to be successful.

In comparison to the study above and previous research conducted by Deci and Ryan, the effects of implementing a Psychological Needs-based reflections program in our study were significant in our first analysis. In both analyses, the Psychological Needs-based reflections program had higher means than the Peak-End-based reflections program and no reflections program implemented. Based on these high sample means, we have much reason to believe that implementing a Psychological Needs-based reflections program may be a key factor in promoting intention to return among camp staff. Therefore, the current study results are consistent with those of Deci and Ryan, Reeve, and Ellis, Jiang, Locke, Woosley, Co, and Snider.

### *Resume Building*

Previous research completed by Dan Richmond and Jim Sibthorp (2019) found that employers find job advancement and promotions at summer camp very important. As a result, summer camp managers may want to help their camp staff position themselves for future

employment by providing increased responsibility and leadership opportunities each subsequent summer they work. Similarly, they may need to be more creative in helping their staff ‘job craft’ their position to align with employees’ career aspirations, such as allowing them to participate in marketing, finance, and management opportunities at the camp. These findings are comparable with the results from our current studies in that providing opportunities for resume building may result in retaining higher numbers of camp staff across subsequent seasons.

The results of our first analysis indicated that the resume building program had a significant effect on intention to return but not on intention to recommend. In both analyses, the resume building program provided had higher means than the no resume building program being provided. Based on these sample means, we believe that if provided an opportunity for resume building year after year, camp staff would be more inclined to return to camp subsequent summers.

### **Directions for Future Research**

This study illustrated how providing a resume-building program and reflections program could affect the intentions of camp staff to return to camp for subsequent seasons and recommend being a camp counselor to friends. Going off this study, I believe it would be more beneficial to have one or both programs implemented in an in-person laboratory setting where human connection and intimacy are present factors. In the 2019 study, providing sodas and junk food that are not typically offered in camp settings resulted in positive feelings from the counselors participating in the reflections program. Perhaps if future researchers provided similar snacks and beverages, participants would also have increased moods, built trust and participation in the discussion, as they did in the 2019 reflections program.

Another direction that researchers could go in implementing the reflections program could be going to intact classes and talking to participants in person on their own time. Breaking up their day-to-day class schedule and providing an opportunity for new experiences and interests could help with the effectiveness of the programs.

A final direction for future research may include providing a reward or incentive once participants have finished. This will likely motivate participants to pay attention, participate, and fully complete the study and/or questionnaire.

### **Implications for Camp Managers**

Although results were not definitive, this study tells managers that providing a resume building program to camp staff, where each summer they choose to return, gain a higher title, are given an expansion of responsibilities and authority and are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, may promote their intention to return to camp for subsequent seasons. Retention of staff is important for building a community within the camp. If numerous counselors continue to return summer to summer, stronger relationships will be developed, and camp operations will run stronger and smoother. Retention of campers may also increase because they know that the counselors they built relationships with will be at camp again next year, thus incentivizing them to return. Camper retention may also increase their loyalty to the camp, and eventually, they may choose to serve the camp as counselors in the future.

This study also tells managers that if camps provide staff with a reflections program based on psychological needs, staff members may be more inclined to recommend being a counselor to their friends. To have an effective program, like that in the 2019 4-H study (Ellis et al., 2020), provide snacks and soda not typically offered during camp. This will increase their moods and allow them to trust the reflections leader and participate in the discussion. In the

current study, participants were not given opportunities to personally reflect on their own experiences, highs and lows, and results indicated they had difficulty coming up with moments where they achieved autonomy, competence, and relatedness. If camp managers can allow for a reflections time frame of 30 minutes per group, participants will have more time to reflect on their accomplishing these moments as well as share their feelings, celebrate their highs, and talk through their lows with others in their group. This reflections program will show camp managers' appreciation for camp staff and how important their mental and physical health is to the operations of the camp to run smoothly. If staff feel that their camp experience has positively impacted their lives and their experiences, they will be highly likely to share these experiences with their friends and recommend them to join in them in being camp staff the following year.

Finally, this study illustrates to camp managers that the implementation of the resume building program and reflections program are strategies that camp managers might use to enhance enjoyment during the day, consequently increasing intention to return and intention to recommend among their camp staff

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APPENDIX A  
NARRATIVES

## **Story 1 – Female Version, Resume-building program present, Psychological-Needs Based Reflections Present**

“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp. Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to wonder what you’re going to wear each day. You slide on a decently clean camp shirt over your bathing suit along with your athletic shorts, chacos, fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair stays in a constant ponytail, and your face stays bare because there’s absolutely no point in attempting makeup when you’re going to look like a wreck at the end of the day anyway.

7:30 AM – You finish all the hair braiding that entails being a female counselor and then take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you walk through and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative ways to make their frames cute! You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunch time FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo.

Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – It's time for the dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on three special times during the day:

- 1) An occasion during that day in which you succeeded at something you are good at

- 2) An occasion during that day in which you used your own initiative to solve a problem or create an opportunity. In other words, a time during the day that you did something “your way.”
- 3) An occasion during that day in which you felt emotionally close to a camper, a group of campers, a staff member, or a group of staff members

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. If you do, you’ll have a higher title and more management responsibilities, which is exciting! It could be cool to have more things to put on your resume in addition to being a camp counselor. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

## **Story 1 – Male Version, Resume-building program present, Psychological-Needs Based Reflections Present**

### **“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”**

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp. Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to care what you’re going to look like each day. You pick out a camp shirt, not sure if it’s from your clean or dirty pile, put it on with some athletic shorts, tennis shoes, a fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair has grown a lot during this summer and looks pretty shaggy, so you throw on a cap too in order to keep from looking too homeless.

7:30 AM – You take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.



You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you walk through and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative and humorous ways to make their frames “cool.” You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can. After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo. Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – – It's time for the Dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on three special times during the day:

- 1) An occasion during that day in which you succeeded at something you are good at
- 2) An occasion during that day in which you used your own initiative to solve a problem or create an opportunity. In other words, a time during the day that you did something "your way."

- 3) An occasion during that day in which you felt emotionally close to a camper, a group of campers, a staff member, or a group of staff members

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. If you do, you'll have a higher title and more management responsibilities, which is exciting! It could be cool to have more things to put on your resume in addition to being a camp counselor. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

## **Story 2 – Female Version, Resume-building program present, Peak-End Moments Based Reflections Present**

“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp. Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to wonder what you’re going to wear each day. You slide on a decently clean camp shirt over your bathing suit along with your athletic shorts, chacos, fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair stays in a constant ponytail, and your face stays bare because there’s absolutely no point in attempting makeup when you’re going to look like a wreck at the end of the day anyway.

7:30 AM – You finish all the hair braiding that entails being a female counselor and then take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you walk through and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative ways to make their frames cute! You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can. After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo. Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – It's time for the Dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on two special times during the day:

- 1) The peak or the best moment of your day as a camp counselor
- 2) The end moment of your day up to this point of the night

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. If you do, you'll have a higher title and more management responsibilities, which is exciting! It could be cool to have more things to put on your resume in addition to being a camp counselor. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

## **Story 2 – Male Version, Resume-building program present, Peak-End Moments Based Reflections Present**

### “A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp. Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to care what you’re going to look like each day. You pick out a camp shirt, not sure if it’s from your clean or dirty pile, put it on with some athletic shorts, tennis shoes, a fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair has grown a lot during this summer and looks pretty shaggy, so you throw on a cap too in order to keep from looking too homeless.

7:30 AM – You take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.



You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative and humorous ways to make their frames “cool.” You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

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While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on two special times during the day:

- 1) The peak or the best moment of your day as a camp counselor
- 2) The end moment of your day up to this point of the night

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

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**Story 3 – Female Version, Resume-building program present, No Reflections Present**  
“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp. Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

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8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative ways to make their frames cute! You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo.

Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – It's time for the Dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

Before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts

and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. If you do, you'll have a higher title and more management responsibilities, which is exciting! It could be cool to have more things to put on your resume in addition to being a camp counselor. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

### Story 3 – Male Version, Resume-building program present, No Reflections Present

#### “A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp. Your camp has a resume-building policy. With this policy, counselors who come back for a subsequent summer gain a higher title. They are invited to learn about and help with management procedures, marketing, and finances. Overall, they have an expansion of responsibilities and authority. The camp also promises exceptionally strong letters of support when the returning counselors pursue career positions. This resume-building policy is present to help counselors progress over the years they work at the camp and to gain knowledge and skills to become valuable employees in their future careers.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to care what you’re going to look like each day. You pick out a camp shirt, not sure if it’s from your clean or dirty pile, put it on with some athletic shorts, tennis shoes, a fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair has grown a lot during this summer and looks pretty shaggy, so you throw on a cap too in order to keep from looking too homeless.

7:30 AM – You take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.



You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

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11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo.

Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

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The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

Before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts

and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. If you do, you'll have a higher title and more management responsibilities, which is exciting! It could be cool to have more things to put on your resume in addition to being a camp counselor. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

## **Story 4 – Female Version, Resume-building program absent, Psychological-Needs Based Reflections Present**

“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to wonder what you’re going to wear each day. You slide on a decently clean camp shirt over your bathing suit along with your athletic shorts, chacos, fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair stays in a constant ponytail, and your face stays bare because there’s absolutely no point in attempting makeup when you’re going to look like a wreck at the end of the day anyway.

7:30 AM – You finish all the hair braiding that entails being a female counselor and then take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative ways to make their frames cute! You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo. Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – It's time for the Dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on three special times during the day:

- 1) An occasion during that day in which you succeeded at something you are good at
- 2) An occasion during that day in which you used your own initiative to solve a problem or create an opportunity. In other words, a time during the day that you did something "your way."
- 3) An occasion during that day in which you felt emotionally close to a camper, a group of campers, a staff member, or a group of staff members

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

#### **Story 4 – Male Version, Resume-building program absent, Psychological-Needs Based Reflections Present**

“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to care what you’re going to look like each day. You pick out a camp shirt, not sure if it’s from your clean or dirty pile, put it on with some athletic shorts, tennis shoes, a fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair has grown a lot during this summer and looks pretty shaggy, so you throw on a cap too in order to keep from looking too homeless.

7:30 AM – You take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

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The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on three special times during the day:

- 1) An occasion during that day in which you succeeded at something you are good at
- 2) An occasion during that day in which you used your own initiative to solve a problem or create an opportunity. In other words, a time during the day that you did something "your way."
- 3) An occasion during that day in which you felt emotionally close to a camper, a group of campers, a staff member, or a group of staff members

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

## **Story 5 – Female Version, Resume-building program absent, Peak-End Based Reflections Present**

### “A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to wonder what you’re going to wear each day. You slide on a decently clean camp shirt over your bathing suit along with your athletic shorts, chacos, fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair stays in a constant ponytail, and your face stays bare because there’s absolutely no point in attempting makeup when you’re going to look like a wreck at the end of the day anyway.

7:30 AM – You finish all the hair braiding that entails being a female counselor and then take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative ways to make their frames cute! You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo. Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

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The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on two special times during the day:

- 1) The peak or the best moment of your day as a camp counselor
- 2) The end moment of your day up to this point of the night

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their

friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

## **Story 5 – Male Version, Resume-building program absent, Peak-End Based Reflections Present**

### “A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you’re about to be forced out of your warm beds. You’re exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You’ve been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you’re somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don’t have to care what you’re going to look like each day. You pick out a camp shirt, not sure if it’s from your clean or dirty pile, put it on with some athletic shorts, tennis shoes, a fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair has grown a lot during this summer and looks pretty shaggy, so you throw on a cap too in order to keep from looking too homeless.

7:30 AM – You take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we’ve had for years, and although early, it’s blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, “Well, don’t complain to me later when you’re starving.” You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you’re having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - “What did the cowboy say to the pencil?” Answer: “Draw, pardner!”), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you’re determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.



9:30 AM – For today’s sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide challenges for the campers. In today’s game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys’ head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative and humorous ways to make their frames “cool.” You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You’re starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she’d miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it’s recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It’s activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo. Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – It's time for the Dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

While the campers are preparing for their bedtime, the chaperons onsite stay in the cabin with them while you go to your daily evening reflections program for this camp session.

In tonight's reflections program, the reflection leader asks you all to reflect on two special times during the day:

- 1) The peak or the best moment of your day as a camp counselor
- 2) The end moment of your day up to this point of the night

You are asked to describe these occasions and share the feelings you had during those experiences. Following the program, you return to your cabin.

After you get back before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their

friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

**Story 6 – Female Version, Resume-building program absent, No Reflections Present**

“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you're about to be forced out of your warm beds. You're exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You've been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you're somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

One of the benefits of this job is that you don't have to wonder what you're going to wear each day. You slide on a decently clean camp shirt over your bathing suit along with your athletic shorts, chacos, fanny pack, and sunglasses. Your hair stays in a constant ponytail, and your face stays bare because there's absolutely no point in attempting makeup when you're going to look like a wreck at the end of the day anyway.

7:30 AM – You finish all the hair braiding that entails being a female counselor and then take a last look to make sure everyone is ready for the morning Flag raise. Your cabin campers and you head to the flag circle along with the rest of the camp. This is a tradition that we've had for years, and although early, it's blazing hot, and you can feel yourself starting to sweat through your shirt. The camp manager, Miss Kiri, raises the American flag, and together, everyone sings the National Anthem.

8 AM – Once the morning flag raise is over, you meet with your campers and then head to the cafeteria for a big breakfast of scrambled eggs, fruit and bacon. At the cafeteria, you encourage your campers to eat all of their breakfast and greet their mouthy remarks with an even smart-mouthier, "Well, don't complain to me later when you're starving." You exchange amused glances with a fellow counselor across the cafeteria, both knowing you're having the same conversations.

8:30 AM – During morning assembly, the campers do some morning stretches and dances to get ready for the day. Miss Kiri gives a speech, tells some jokes (her personal favorite - "What did the cowboy say to the pencil?" Answer: "Draw, pardner!"), and gives prizes (\$5 coupons to the camp gift store) to the groups that had the cleanest rooms the day prior. Yesterday, your cabin won, and now you're determined to go two for two.

You all head back to the cabin and make your beds, tidy your trunks and cubbies, wipe down the bathroom and throw away any trash. Before you head to your first activity of the day, you do a walkthrough and ensure that the cabin is clean and ready for inspection later.

Upon arriving at the first activity of the day, you douse the campers in sunscreen and give your authority to the activity leader.

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## **Story 6 – Male Version, Resume-building program absent, No Reflections Present**

“A Day in the Life of a Camp Counselor”

July 20th

This is an imaginary camp scenario. Imagine this is your first year as a camp counselor at this camp.

7 AM – the bell system blares throughout the campgrounds. Your campers and you groan at the sound, knowing you're about to be forced out of your warm beds. You're exhausted and dreading even getting up to take a shower because you know everything is going to ache. You've been a counselor for nearly two months now, but each day you're somehow more exhausted and sorer than the day before.

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9:30 AM – For today's sports game, your campers are playing another cabin group in a game of kickball. Each activity is an hour long; there are two activities in the morning and three in the afternoon. Some activities like sports or swimming are just for fun, but others such as kayaking, rock-climbing, dancing, rifle shooting, and arts and crafts are meant to build skills and provide

challenges for the campers. In today's game, some of the girls had trouble kicking the ball, so in between innings, you show them ways to kick the ball hard and far. One of the girls kicked it so hard, it went over the boys' head in the infield, and she got a double. Everyone cheered for her, and she was gleaming with pride when she threw you a thumbs up.

After the game, you head to the second activity, arts and crafts. The campers take pictures together and build and decorate their own photo-frames, which will also serve as their camp takeaway to remember the experience they had and the friends they made. Your campers seem to be in good moods and are helping each other with gluing the picture frames and offering each other creative and humorous ways to make their frames "cool." You are so relieved that they are finally getting along.

11:30 AM – Free time! You head to the playground with your group and catch up with your fellow counselors while the campers play. You all share stories of your troublesome campers from the morning, share laughs, and then sit and relax for the first time since yesterday.

12:30 PM – Lunchtime FINALLY! You're starving from all the morning stress, and you are ready for a grilled cheese sandwich, bowl of soup, and a cup of pudding. Your lunch is unfortunately cut short when one of the girl campers at your table starts crying and runs out of the cafeteria. You see that her counselor is still in the lunch-line, so you follow her into the hallway. She tells you that she misses her parents and wants to go home. You remind her that she only has two days left in her session and that she needs to be brave. If her parents came and picked her up now, she'd miss so many opportunities to have more fun and make new friendships. That seemed to make her feel a little better, and together, the two of you walk back into the cafeteria. You then scarf down the remainder of your lunch as fast as you can.

After lunch, you and your group head back to the cabin for rest hour. Although it's recommended to nap, some campers have too much energy, so they choose to read, write letters, draw, and color, or make friendship bracelets with each other instead. You usually try to get a small nap in during this time to recharge for the remainder of the day.

2:00 PM – It's activity time again, and you and your cabin head to the pool for an hour of swimming. You douse more sunscreen on the campers as the lifeguard explains the pool rules. The campers then jump into the pool and spend their activity time playing Marco-polo. Following swimming, you have rock climbing and rifle shooting for the final two activities of the day.

5:00 PM – another free time! During this time, Miss Kiri and non-group leading counselors supervise the campers while you, along with other group counselors, take time to hang out in the staff lounge and eat snacks, while some call their family or friends.

5:50 PM – All the counselors head back to the flag circle to watch Miss Kiri and one lucky camper lower and fold the flag before dinner.

During dinner, you ask all of your campers what the best part of their day was. You've made this a tradition this summer because you want to know what your campers like and dislike about



camp and to know if you're doing a decent job as their counselor. They seem to share a lot of positivity about the kickball game, swimming, and arts and crafts. Even the day quiet campers are finally contributing to conversations and sharing laughs with the others. You're relieved at the interactions happening right now and are hoping that you can make this day end as good as it started.

7 PM – It's time for the Dance party. Each evening consists of an activity to entertain the campers. Tonight's activity is a camp-wide dance party. During this time, both the boy and girl campers are encouraged to go crazy and let any remaining energy they have out before bedtime. The DJ plays old Justin Bieber, Disney movie soundtracks, and for some reason, Old town road. Some campers even dress up for the activity and wear fun props, such as hula skirts, big sunglasses, crazy hats, and any costumes they may have brought to camp. It's the best way to get the campers out of their comfort zones and make new friends.

The counselors join in on the dance party, spinning the campers around or having dance battles with others. It's such a fun way to get campers to interact with either. Halfway through, you decide to grab some water from the fountain and see one of your female campers crying in the hallway. When you ask what's wrong, she says she'd asked a boy to dance, and he told her no. You tell her you're sorry and that sometimes that happens. You then ask if she would dance with all the counselors instead. She reluctantly says yes, but you are able to get her to do some spins and even participate in line dances. Before long, she is smiling and laughing again.

8:30 PM – Cabin time. After the dance party, you lead your campers back to the cabins to get ready for bed. You encourage your campers to shower, brush their teeth, and put on their pajamas.

Before the 9:30 PM bedtime curfew, you get campers to sit on each of their beds so you can talk about the day, the highs, the lows, and other campers at the dance. You like using the time before bed to get to know the campers better and watch them grow in their friendships one last time for the day. Right at 9:30, the curfew bell rings, and the campers get in their beds as you turn out the lights.

You fall into bed, exhausted from another long, hot day. You think about everything good from today. You were able to teach campers new skills, watch them bond over mutual interests in arts and crafts, and you made two campers feel better when they were sad. You hope your campers are enjoying camp and having you as a counselor. You also think about whether or not you want to come back next year. While you think about your decision, you fall asleep, completely drained from the day.

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE

## Welcome to this Texas A&M Study on Camp Counselor Experiences!

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study to help us better understand camp counselor experiences. As a participant, you will watch a Youtube video. The video tells the story of an imaginary day as a camp counselor. After the video ends, you will respond to some questions. We value your thoughtful input, even if you have never been a camp counselor. We need your help to understand better how to manage youth camps. It will take you about 15 minutes to complete the study.

### Study Information Sheet

If you would like to view the human subjects protection information regarding this study, please click on the link below.

[Information sheet](#)

### Do you identify as male or female?

(We want to know this because we have female and male versions of the videos).

- Female
- Male
- I do not want to answer this question; I am deciding not to participate in the study.

### Q50 VIDEO FOR PEAK END GOES HERE

Now, please ***imagine*** that you are ***actually in the reflection program*** described near the end of your video. The reflections leader has asked you to share ***a short story*** about things that happened during your day at camp. Please ***use your imagination*** to create that story. Details follow.

***1. Short Story: Your peak moment.*** Please imagine a short story about your day's ***peak moment***. Your peak moment is the best moment of your day. Be sure to notice ***how you felt*** at that moment (happy, sad, pleased, proud, frustrated, troubled, unhappy, etc.). Your imaginary short story can be about ***anything you want***, as long as it is part of your imaginary day as a camp counselor. Please note that we will not ask you to write about this; it will be in your imagination only.

Think about ***details*** for the peak moment you imagined. Try to answer such questions as the following: What happened? Who was involved? What led up to the situation? What was wanted? By whom? How did the story end?

***2. Your end moment.*** Please reflect on your full day at camp (including the events shown in the video and your imagined peak moment). Think about ***how you would feel*** at the end of that day

(happy, sad, pleased, proud, frustrated, troubled, unhappy, etc.).

Take as much time as you need. Please proceed when you are finished.

**Which were you able to imagine?**

- Both the peak moment story and the end moment
- Only the peak moment story
- Only the end moment
- I was not able to imagine either of these

**VIDEO 2 on autonomy, competence and relatedness goes here**

Now, please imagine that you are actually in the reflection program described near the end of your video. The reflections leader has asked you to share **three short stories** about things that happened during the day. Please note that we will not ask you to write about this; it will be in your imagination only.

Please use your imagination to create each of those short stories. Try to imagine details for each of the stories. What happened? Who was involved? What led up to the situation? What was wanted? By whom? How did the story end?

**Short Story 1: You did something "your way!"** A story about a time during the day you did something the way you wanted to do it instead of how others might do it. Maybe you used your own idea to solve a problem. Maybe you used a creative technique to help a camper feel more confident in an activity, or perhaps you decided to do something special to cheer up a fellow-staff. Maybe you discovered a new way to do something. Or, maybe you chose to NOT do something that you thought should not be done.

**Short Story 2: You succeeded at something by using one or more of your talents, knowledge, or skill.** A story about something that happened during the day in which you succeeded in doing something you are good at. Maybe you were good at helping campers enjoy experiences or at teaching activity skills. Maybe you were good at helping campers learn new skills or develop friendships. Perhaps you knew how to make other people smile!

**Short Story 3: You felt emotionally close to someone.** A story about an occasion during the day in which you felt emotionally close to campers or other staff members. Maybe you made a new friend. Maybe you helped a camper who was feeling homesick. Maybe you spent some time with

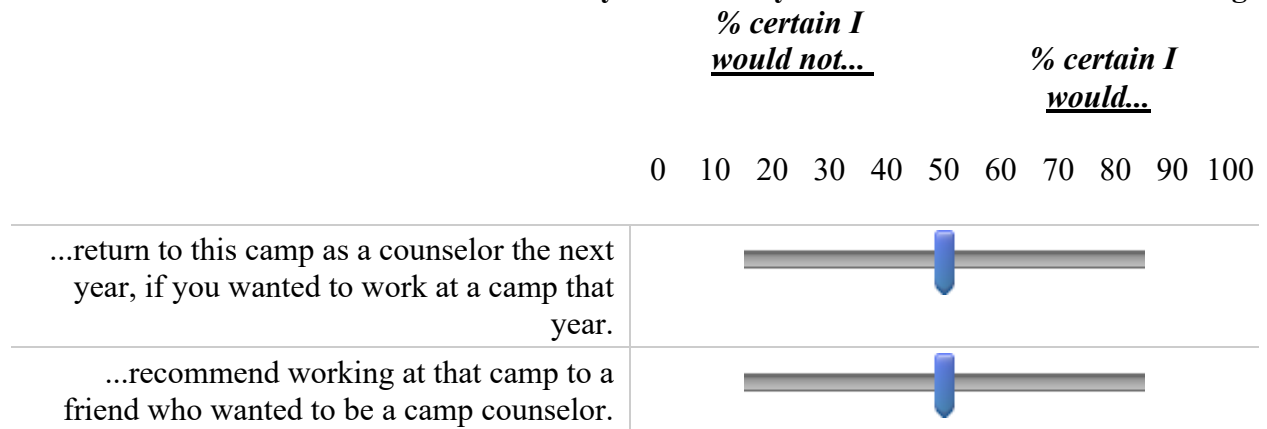
a camper or counselor you particularly like or who needed you to be her or his special friend that day.

Take as much time as you need. Please proceed when you are finished.

**Please check each short story you succeeded in imagining.**

- I was able to imagine all three stories
- I was able to imagine only two of the stories
- I was able to imagine only one of the stories
- I was not able to imagine any of the stories

**Please slide the bar to indicate how certain you are that you would do each of the following.**

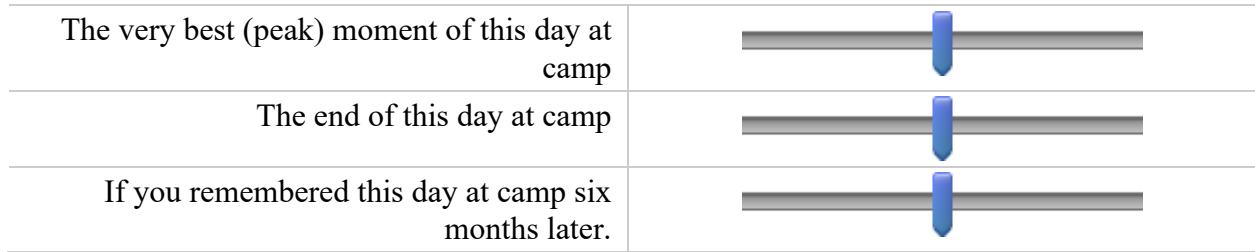


**Please tell us about how much pleasure you would feel from this camp experience on each of the following occasions.**

No pleasure  
at all

As much  
pleasure as  
imaginable

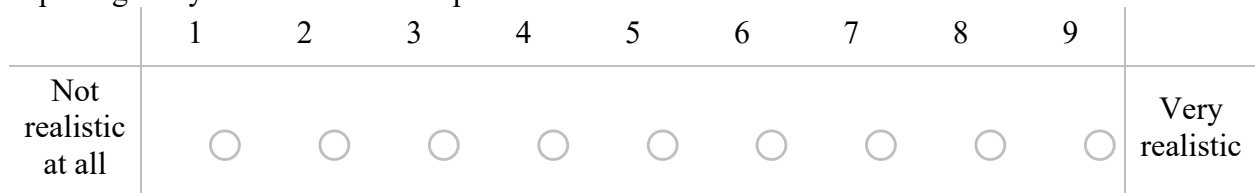
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



Different people watch different versions of the video you saw. We want to know what you remember about the version you saw. **Did the imaginary camp in the video you watched have a program designed to help "build resumes" of counselors?** That program gave returning counselors greater responsibilities and greater access to learning about how to manage a camp.

- Yes, the imaginary camp in the video I watched had a resume-building program
- No, the imaginary camp in the video I watched did not have a resume-building program.
- I don't remember.

Given your experience with camps, how realistic do you believe the video you watched was in depicting a day in the life of a camp counselor?



While you watched the video, to what extent did you feel like a story was being told?



How strongly could you relate to the counselor in the video? Were your thoughts and actions like or unlike what you would actually think and do?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
I could not relate to the counselor at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I could relate very strongly to the counselor

Please tell us about your seasonal experience at camps. Please estimate the **total number of weeks in your life** that you have served as a **full-time, seasonal** worker at camp. Also include the **total number of weeks in your life** you were a camper. Include all types of camps, nature-based,

sport, theatre, art, music, science, others. Also include weeks of preservice training, set-up, orientation, and post-camp experiences.

Residential camp counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Residential camp staff member other than counselor (activity leader, lifeguard, kitchen staff, nurse, administrator, food service, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

Day camp counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Day camp staff member other than counselor

\_\_\_\_\_

Camper in a residential camp \_\_\_\_\_

Camper in a day camp \_\_\_\_\_

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Primary / Elementary school

Secondary / High school certificate/diploma

Technical, vocational or trade school

Baccalaureate Degree (e.g., B.A., B.S., B.F.A.)

Master's Degree (e.g., M.A., M.S., M.F.A., M.Arch., M.B.A., M.S.W.)

Doctoral Degree (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., J.D., Ed.D.)

Q10 What is your age? (in years).

Which of the following best describes you?

I am a Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences major at Texas A&M University

I am a Sport Management major at Texas A&M University

I am an Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications major at Texas A&M University

I am a College of Education and Human Development major at Texas A&M University

I am none of the above



## APPENDIX C

### EMAIL WITH BRIEF STATEMENT INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Dear colleague,

Please consider helping me complete my thesis research study on the experiences of people who are or have been interested in serving youth as seasonal camp staff (counselors, activity specialists, nurses). If you want to help me with my research, please select this link: [https://tamuaug.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cTswSbkQ36gWGS9](https://tamuaug.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTswSbkQ36gWGS9).

You can participate even if you served as a camp staff member many years ago, and the type of camp at which you worked does not matter. People interested in all types of camps are welcome to participate, including nature-based camps, sports camps, theatre camps, space camps, travel camps, STEM camps. The only thing that matters is that you either have been a summer camp staff member in the past, or you might be one in the future.

If you choose to participate, you will choose a hyperlink that will direct your browser to a video. The video will show you an imaginary day in the life of a camp counselor. You will be asked to imagine that you are the character portrayed in that video. After the video ends, a questionnaire will appear. We will ask a few short questions about your experience in that imaginary scenario.

Your participation is, of course, completely voluntary, and you can stop participating at any time by simply redirecting your browser to a different website. I can offer no compensation to you for helping me with my thesis project, but please do understand that you will help us advance our understanding of camp management processes.

I will be happy to share the results of my study with you if you share your email address with me. A question at the end of the questionnaire provides an opportunity for you to share that information.

I would be happy to answer questions you may have about the study. I can be contacted at [WoosleyJ@tamu.edu](mailto:WoosleyJ@tamu.edu). You can also contact my faculty advisor at Texas A&M University, Dr. Gary Ellis, [gellis1@TAMU.edu](mailto:gellis1@TAMU.edu) (979-845-6018). If you have concerns related to the rights of human research participants, please contact the Texas A&M Institutional Review Board at [irb@tamu.edu](mailto:irb@tamu.edu), 979-458-4067, or 1-855-765-8636.

Sincerely,

Jordan Woosley