

Career Center

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How to Describe RA Experience on a Resume

On your resume, describe your Resident Advisor experience in the same way you would describe other campus involvement and work/internship experiences. During your time as an RA, you have developed numerous transferable skills and abilities that are going to be relevant to many professions. What do you do as an RA? Your official RA job description, often provided by the Campus Living staff during the hiring process, may be able to help. Do not just copy job description onto your resume, as it rarely highlights skills and accomplishments effectively. Think about what makes you unique as an RA – Did you receive any awards? Did you undertake new initiatives? Did you work with other staff members or departments?

Focus on describing what you did, how you did it, and any results associated with your actions.

You can list your RA experience under *Campus Involvement*, *Activities*, *Relevant Experience*, or *Leadership Experience* on your resume. Below are a few examples:

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Lewis & Clark College, Portland, OR

Resident Advisor

2016 – 2017

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

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Lewis & Clark College Resident Advisor

August 2016 – Present

- Develop a positive living environment for residents, often resolving conflicts
- Implement and enforce all College and Campus Living policies, promoting academic excellence, addressing student needs, and encouraging involvement
- Promote the interaction and construction of social networks between community and residents
- Create, market, and lead student centered hall programs to promote social, education, diversity, health, emotional, understanding and growth
- Assist in the selection, evaluation and training of incoming RAs
- Communicate, correspond and collaborate with on and off-campus offices such as counseling, student activities, campus security, Planned Parenthood, maintenance, etc.
- Collaborate with orientation staff on first year and transfer student opening week activities
- Budget and allocate money used for residence hall and floor events

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Resident Advisor, Lewis & Clark College Campus Living

2015 – 2017

- Served as a mentor and advisor for 18 first year students, while enforcing Campus Living policies
- Worked with other resident assistants to develop a successful hall community
- Utilized organizational and public speaking skills to create and present hall programs to educate residents about critical issues
- Developed mediation and conflict resolution skills

Transferable Skills

Your RA position is full of valued skills. The key is to recognize the skills you possess and adapt them to the position/program to which you are applying, while describing them in professional terms. Select the experiences and skills that are most relevant to your career interests and demonstrate the qualifications required for the position, organization, or program. You will find that these skills are quite valuable, which means that if marketed correctly, you will be a very attractive candidate.

Below are a variety of transferable skills that can be demonstrated through your Resident Advisor experience:

- Communicating
- Working on a team
- Facilitating group discussion
- Providing appropriate feedback
- Negotiating
- Persuading
- Reporting information
- Interviewing
- Organization
- Time Management
- Leadership
- Asserting
- Counseling
- Managing groups
- Decision making
- Managing conflict
- Initiating new ideas
- Handling details
- Coordinating tasks
- Delegating responsibility
- Promoting change
- Programming
- Setting goals
- Listening
- Developing rapport
- Identifying problems and resources
- Imagining alternatives
- Solving problems
- Defining needs
- Forecasting, predicting
- Creating ideas
- Assessment
- Motivating
- Cooperating
- Providing support for others
- Representing others
- Collaborating

Below is an exercise that will help you to extract transferable skills from your job description. Your official RA job description – often provided by the Campus Living Staff during the hiring process – can help. The advantages of utilizing your official job description to develop your resume include ease in identifying your exact responsibilities and (in some instances) ready-made resume job descriptor phrases. If an official job description is unavailable to you, you can compose your own.

Prior to delving in, edit out the most irrelevant phrases from your job description. If you have any ambivalence about whether to leave a phrase on your list, LEAVE IT. You want to avoid the misstep of throwing away valuable "marketing" material. To create a list of transferable skills based on your job description, create two columns on a blank sheet of paper. Place each of your job descriptor phrases in the left-hand column, which is to be labeled "RA Job Description". Label the right-hand column "Transferable Skills". Carefully read each job descriptor phrase and generate a list of transferable skills for each one. Here is a sample:

RA Job Description	Transferable Skills
Manage a college residence hall floor of ethnically diverse undergraduate students	Management, Communication, Interpersonal, Leadership
Maintain all bulletin boards and fliers with accurate, up to date, and useful information	Research, Information Skills, Communication, Creativity
Counsel students on various personal and academic issues	Empathy, Listening, Analytical