

# Leveling Up and Incentives: Guide

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1. **HEALTH INSURANCE / HEALTH STIPEND:** Everyone starts out with a monthly health stipend that will increase as you move up levels. This is added to your paycheck as long as you show proof of your own health coverage. If you wish to enroll in the High Trails Health Insurance Plan, your benefits are a bit greater than the health stipend (for tax and incentive reasons...we want you to sign up for our plan). We initially pay 50% of your Health Insurance Cost (actual value depends on age and conditions).
2. **PEER EVALUATIONS:** As a great teacher, you've got to constantly push yourself to learn more games, tricks, techniques, and strategies. Otherwise you get stagnant, find yourself doing the same thing week after week, and you start to get tired and bored easily. Peer Evaluations make you get out and watch other people, allowing you the opportunity to learn from someone else.
  - A. Ask permission. It's always nice if you ask someone if they are comfortable with you coming out and watching them.
  - B. Valid Classes: Adventure Course, Water Wonders, Little World, Furry Friends, Plant Detectives, Feathered Friends, Earth Works, Team Discovery Hike, Environmental Awareness, Outdoor Survival Skills, Darkness Discovery, Nocturnal Nation and Astronomy each count for ½ of an evaluation due to the short length.
  - C. You can only watch each class once, and you can only watch each instructor twice. After everything you can start over.
  - D. You must watch the entire class. Start at the beginning and leave at the end. Otherwise it does not count.
  - E. You must discuss the evaluation with the instructor you observed, and have them sign the form.
  - F. Peer Evaluations are valid for 12 calendar months.
3. **TEACHING EVALUATION:** Email the Program Coordinator when you would like to request a Teaching Evaluation. The caveat: you must have already received one full evaluation with cumulative above average scores. Additionally, plan on a minimum of six weeks in between consecutive full/teaching evaluations; you have to take the time to learn and grow and we have a lot of staff to watch. The Program Coordinator will watch and video your class, looking especially at the way you follow the lesson plan, manage your students, and get your material across in a fun manner. Don't underestimate the standards to for passing a Teaching Evaluation; you've got to be an excellent representative of what our program can offer to students, a fantastic example for other staff members and score above a "4" on your evaluation.
4. **REVISE LESSON PLAN:** Once you pass your Teaching Evaluation, you can write your own lesson plans. As you jump up more levels, you should be reworking all of your classes to make certain they fit you and your teaching style. Refer to Writing and Teaching Lesson Plans for what you can and cannot change. Stick to the format of the lesson plans. Check the staff library for books with new activities. Have fun and be creative. You must change at least one (1) activity. Then write up all of your lesson plans and turn them into the Program Coordinator. Keep in mind that we have to reserve the right to deny your new lesson plans if it does not meet current High Trails standards. You don't need to revise adventure classes like dig, orienteering, climbing and archery because the material and delivery for these classes is relatively static.
5. **PROJECT:** This starts with looking at both the site and the program and brainstorming. Come up with something tangible and measurable that will benefit everyone. With your Project, don't bite off too little or too much; if the project is small try to find something else to add on and make it worthwhile. If the project seems big you can talk with other instructors and work together. Projects should take around 8 hours to accomplish. The two biggest rules of Projects: Follow Through and Longevity. Fill out a Project Proposal and turn it in to the Site Director. As you plan out your Inservice, realize that you need to be organized and make the most of your time with the staff. Your inservice needs to last 30-45 minutes. Fill out an Inservice Proposal and hand it in to a Site Director. *Note: once your project/inservice is approved, you have one (1) month to complete it. After this, if you're not finished, your project and work becomes fair game and someone else can take it over. This keeps good projects going and encourages you to quickly finish what you start.*
6. **BOOK CLUB:** The Book Club is a program meant to enhance your knowledge through reading and discussions of topics with your peers. Books located in the library are pre-approved (other than story books), and choices outside of the library must be approved by the PC. Once you have chosen which book you will focus on, select one to three other instructors who can participate in your Book Club. After the members of your Club have read a section of the book, you must all produce two questions and two pieces of interesting material to be discussed in a meeting which must last at least 30 minutes. Through your conversation with fellow instructors, determine how the information can be used in your classes or other program aspects. After each meeting, the "Book Club Leader" must send a short email to the PC outlining what was discussed, including the names of the members. To complete this program, all group members must invest 6-8 hours, which includes time used to read, and a total of 4 meetings. *Note: If only one or two copies of the book are available, feel free to plan out time before meetings where the book(s) can be passed around to the members of the group.*
7. **TRAIL MAINTENANCE:** Trail maintenance is designed to both maintain and improve our trail system. Keeping well maintained trails is important for the safety of our staff, teachers, and students. Trail maintenance is also important to limit the impact and effects of erosion on the environment. Check in with your site director for a section of trail that needs some help. This work is to be done on your off time and should take around 8 hours to complete. Talk to your peers and determine if anyone else is in need of Trail Maintenance time; you can have "Maintenance Parties" where you work with a group of people. This must be approved by a Site Director. After each maintenance session, a member of admin must come out and check your work. If an administrator is not available, then those involved must send a brief email to your Site Director detailing how much time went into the maintenance session and what was accomplished. **Note 1:** *once your Trail Maintenance project is approved, you have one (1) month to complete it. After this, if you're not finished, your project and work becomes fair game and someone else can take it over. This keeps good trail maintenance going and encourages you to quickly finish what you start.* **Note 2:** *we can do what we want with trails on camp property. On forest land system and non-system trails, we are restricted to maintaining the existing usability and ensuring reasonable safe access.*

8. **GROWTH PLAN:** It's easy to dream. Making them happen takes a good amount of motivation, initiative, discipline, hard work and follow through. Want some help? Everyone can use a little support from their friendly neighborhood Personal Trainer. The Growth Plan and Personal Trainer have their own separate document. Please see this for more details...
9. **VIDEO EVALUATION:** When you get to this point, you **MUST** request the video camera, in writing submitted to the Program Coordinator, **ONE WEEK** in advance. You are responsible for finding someone to video your entire class (think of someone who needs to do peer evals). The same peer evaluation class validity rules apply, so you cannot have someone video you teaching snakes. Once your class is recorded, you've got to sit down, watch your class, and fill out a Full Evaluation Form on yourself.
10. **BLOGS:** First, check out what we already have for blogs and their general length, format, and style. Next, pick an outdoor education related topic and do some hard research. Now start writing, taking the time at the end to proof and back up your ideas and findings. Pass it off to admin for proofing, and when it's finally been approved for digital distribution, talk about your blog at a staff meeting.
11. **STEWARDSHIP / OBSERVE A CLASSROOM:** Both of these things force you to get out into the community a bit. To qualify for Stewardship, you must contact a local agency that aligns with the High Trails values of kids or nature. To Observe a Classroom, you've got to find a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom in the area (we have some connections...) and go see what actually happens when you have four walls surrounding you. When you have a plan, submit it in writing to the Program Director. Once approved, you've got to show up, volunteer your time, and get a signature from the supervisor verifying that you did what you said. Finally, write a single page detailing your experiences and turn it into admin (single space, font size 11, margins of .5 all around).
12. **GIFT CERTIFICATES:** Gift Certificates are not redeemable for cash. Two choices are available; REI.com or Amazon.com.
13. **TIME OFF:** Classes and Days off must be approved one week in advance.
14. **NO LEVEL REQUESTS WITHIN THE LAST FOUR WEEKS OF YOUR JOB HERE:** this system is designed to motivate you as your tenure with us progresses; if you're interested in levels, please don't procrastinate.
15. **DAYS:** Days come from Work Days + Environmental Days + Experience Days. Work Days worked are what you put on your timecard every week; if you work a double shift on a 4 day program, you will have worked eight days. Anytime you would like an update on your Work Days, please email the director. Environmental Days include what has been added through the Environmental Programs. You can get credit for days worked at a previous job (Experience Days); submit to your Site Director a full page explanation (single space, font size 11, margins of .5 all around), of how your previous experience (kids, teaching, certifications, intangibles) allows you to step into our program needing less training and having more to offer both students and staff. You are in charge of keeping track of all of your Environmental and Experience Days.
16. **EXPERIENCE DAYS:** Instructors earn days towards moving up levels by showcasing relevant prior experience in an essay. Use the following guidelines to award the appropriate amount of days to each staff member. Experience days combine with work days and environmental days to determine the "total days" an instructor has towards moving up levels.
  - A. Instructors write an essay and forward it to the Program Coordinator. Make sure to follow High Trails Document Standards, and focus on five topics:
    - I. Outdoor Education Experience: time spent working in the field of outdoor education.
    - II. Education Experience: advanced degrees earned, time spent teaching in the classroom and whether classroom time was science-oriented.
    - III. Kid Experience: time spent coaching, working at camp, or working with kids out of the classroom.
    - IV. Relevant Certifications: advanced first aid certificates, other camp/outdoor science-related certificates.
      - I. Intangibles: not otherwise-specified skills and experience that prepares individuals to work at High Trails.
  - B. What happens once the program coordinator awards experience days?
    - I. The Program Coordinator emails a completed rubric with awarded days to the instructor and relevant site director.
    - II. The Program Coordinator documents awarded days on appropriate spreadsheet.
  - C. How are days calculated?
    - I. The rubric is weighted to award more days for more relevant experience. For example, teaching at another outdoor science school is more relevant to the instructor position at High Trails than having a life guarding credential.
    - II. The rubric is designed to require investment in the High Trails experience before instructors "top out" and qualify for the highest level
17. **GENERAL INCENTIVES:**
  - A. **Ace The Eval:** score 3.5-4 on your full evaluation and get a \$25 gift certificate. Score above 4 and get a \$50 gift certificate. All aces get recognition on website. Site Directors purchase gift cards over the phone. Staff drive to the location to claim gift certificates with Photo ID. As of 3/19/2012, gift certificates are available to:
    - I. **North Shore Trading Company in Fawnskin:** (909) 866-3414
    - II. **Mountain Fitness in Bear City:** ask for Lauren (909) 866-7020 They actually increase our \$25 to \$30 and our \$50 to \$60 so that staff can have a full month of two of membership.
    - III. **Chains Required Bike/Board Shop:** ask for Jack (909) 878-3268
    - IV. **Riffenburg Lumber:** ask for Carol (909) 866-4675
    - V. **D&G Automotive,** ask for Greg or Dan: (909) 585-6320
    - VI. **Elevations Day Spa,** ask for Stella: (909) 866-7405
  - B. **Peer Eval Hero:** acknowledgement given to an instructor that goes above and beyond in completing a Peer Eval on another instructor. Heroes will be chosen by administrators as often as necessary. Receive a Friday off after kids leave for you and a friend of your choice. The friend does not have to be the person you peer evaluated.

- C. **Ironman:** if you work an entire season (fall, winter, spring) without missing a day, you will be placed in a raffle for a \$100 gift certificate the last week of the season.
- D. **Super Kudos:** is chosen by admin each week for an instructor who goes above and beyond in the course of duty. The person will be awarded a \$5 gift certificate. Get chosen for 3 super kudos in a season (fall, winter, spring) and get a \$50 gift certificate.
- E. **Instructor 42:** every six weeks, an employee that goes above and beyond in their job will receive a \$50 gift certificate, a day off, and a picture placed on the website. Fellow instructors will vote on the winner. Voting will occur throughout the 6 weeks and each instructor receives only one vote. To vote, fill out an Instructor 42 Voting Sheet.
- F. **Carpooling/Recycling Drawings:** carpooling and recycling earn money towards a goal; when the goal is met, four \$25 gift certificates to local businesses are drawn at a staff meeting.

# High Trails Experience Essay Rubric

<b>Category</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Days</b>
OE Experience	30 days per year teaching equivalent curriculum		
Education Experience	20 days per advanced degree earned, Masters and above		
	20 days per year taught in a classroom		
	5 days extra per year in science classroom		
Outdoor Experience	15 days per year spent guiding or in AmeriCorps-like program		
Kid Experience	10 days per summer at residential camp		
	5 days per year spent babysitting, or summer at non-resident camp		
Certifications	10 days per advanced first aid certificate, WAFA or above		
	5 days per additional camp credential (eg: lifeguarding cert.)		
Intangibles	10 day flat rate for additional skills contributing to High Trails		
<b>Total Days Awarded:</b>			

## Instructor 42 Vote

*Vote for an instructor who, you feel, has gone above and beyond in the course of duty over the last 42 days.*

<b>WHO ARE YOU VOTING FOR:</b>	<b>DATE:</b>
<b>WHY ARE YOU VOTING FOR THEM?</b>	<b>YOUR NAME:</b>