Guy Healy Counselor Description/Criteria

- **Enjoy working with kids**

  This one is rather obvious. If you do not enjoy being around kids (whether it is Kindergarten to high school, this is probably not the greatest program to apply for. You are constantly around kids and there WILL be many times that the kids frustrate you, so if an applicant does not work well in that environment, then they should not apply. The younger kids are much harder to work with. They deal with homesickness and overall are much more dramatic, so a counselor should be prepared for just about any type of drama with campers. You will normally be in charge of a group of about 4-6 kids. While you are technically responsible for all the campers, you need to keep very close eye on your specific group of kids.

- **Speak fluent English**

  Guy Healy is very strict about this. He wants all counselors to be fluent in English. This is a USA Summer Camp and the campers come to see what life is like in America. If the applicant is not from America, then Guy Healy would prefer for them to not be accepted. Applicants DO NOT need to know Japanese. It is actually preferred that the counselor does not know any Japanese. If the campers figure out that a counselor knows Japanese, then there is little chance they will attempt to speak English with that counselor. If an applicant does speak Japanese though, that is not meant to be negative for the applicant. He/she just has to know when to use it and not to use it. Obviously, for traveling around purposes, it is a great advantage to know Japanese.

  On the other hand, if there are students from Japan or a student who speaks fluent Japanese, they may apply to be a “Japanese” Counselor (JC). JCs are there as a translator if a student is having a problem (Sickness, Injury, etc.) Also, JCs help explain the activity that is about to go on so the campers fully understand what they need to do.

- **Open to experiencing another culture**

  Japan is the POLAR OPPOSITE of America. Their food is completely different, the customs are different, and they even drive on the wrong side of the road!! :) This is what can really mess up a counselors mind and mentality and at times can result in a counselor having to be sent home. The fact that Japan uses a different alphabet creates even more stress. Depending on where you are at, there may be no English on the street signs or menus (Tokyo and Osaka has English everywhere). The diet is hard to adjust to also. If you are not a fish person, it may be a long 2 months. I was not a fish person, but I grew accustomed to it and made it through. There are meats and other good foods, but they are all in extremely small portions. A counselor can almost always fall back on rice as a meal, since that is served with everything.

  That brings up the importance of knowing Japans culture and customs. In Japan, when you put soy sauce on rice, they see that as what you feed a dog, so they are very shocked and grossed out when they see you do that. Also, NEVER leave your chop sticks in the bowl when you are finished. It is seen as extremely bad luck. Eating everything you take is huge there. Even if you
hate what you took, it is seen as very rude if you do not finish it all. A lot of other customs are very important. A thumbs down is the same as the middle finger here and also using the come here hand gesture is seen as a “gang” sign in Japan. As much as an applicant may think the American way is right, they still need to know that respecting the other culture is more important.

- **Be Optimistic**

There will be times when you do not want to do camp. It is important to not bring that attitude to camp. You need to have a positive outlook on everything, even if in the inside you may not. If you bring a negative outlook to camp, you will not have an enjoyable experience and either will your campers.

- **Work well with others**

This is very important for team continuity. You will be with your team 24/7. With normally around 20-25 counselors on a team, there is almost guaranteed that there will be certain people you do not get along with as much as other people. It is important keep possible tension between counselors to the side. There most likely will be cliques created in your team and you will hang out with more people than others, but make sure you leave that to the side because if a counselor brings up the friction, it will create friction for the whole camp.

- **Be aware of other people's feelings**

Going along with working well with others, a counselor needs to be aware of people’s feelings. This goes towards counselor’s feelings or camper’s feelings. Towards the last stretch of the experience counselors begin to get worn out and start thinking about home a lot more. It makes it much easier to get offended by other and get into pointless quarrels. Understand that you are not the only one stressed out on your team and that being kind to each other could make both of your days better. Also, it may be clear that some counselors are better than others. Make sure to not gossip about others about the counseling abilities. Even though this may be hard, and everybody does it, it can really hurt someone if they hear about this and again create a very awkward situation with someone you will be with for 2 months.

- **Can handle long days and waking up early**

This one may not seem as important but it is! Most days you are waking up around 6:30 or earlier. While you do end up getting used to waking up early, it can be very draining for someone in the beginning. You have to be smart about when you go to bed. Your days will be very long. You will be with kids ALL DAY. Depending on if you are sleeping in the same building as your campers you may be with your kids literally all day and all night. If you are not sleeping with your campers, then you are normally done around 9 or 11. Your work days will be very exciting and very rewarding but it is a lot of hard work. This is why there is a rule that you cannot do more than 3 camps in a row. Guy Healy does not want you to get burnt out, so you
will be rewarded with at least 1 off day every 2-3 camps. This may include going into the city or just relaxing at your own facility.

On a side note, the weather can be very hot and muggy in Japan during the summer. This weather can easily drain you and make you tired. It is very important to get your rest when you can in order to not get sick while you are there. Lastly, be prepared for a lot of walking. You will be moving from facility to facility and that requires carrying your luggage during this whole time. You are going to be doing this for 2 months so try to pack as light as possible! Don’t worry about how you dress. Comfortable shorts and t-shirts are the best choices for clothing.

**Spontaneous and outgoing**

This is very important. You are there to get the campers involved and if you are shy and not talkative they will not interact with you. The camps find that the more crazy and energetic you are the more excited and outgoing they get. As much as you may feel like a dork or that other people may think you look weird, you cannot think that way. Leave your pride at the door. Everybody will be acting crazy and it just makes the camp even more exciting. There are obvious moments where you will not be as crazy (lunch, certain group learning sessions) but when the campers arrive and during skit and activity time it is pretty much a given that you are supposed to be spontaneous and goofy. If you do not feel as comfortable with this it is okay. When you get in the environment it slowly rubs off on you and by the end of the camps you will be so comfortable with doing anything, no matter how goofy it may seem.

**Not Every kid is going to like English and camp**

While most of the campers will love their experience, there will always be the couple kids that do not want to be there. If a camper is not enjoying camp that does not mean you are a bad counselor! Their parents are paying for them to be there, we are trying to make sure they have fun and get something out of it. While that may seem hard if they do not have the best attitude, you still have to try as hard as you can and not let it get you down.

**Fulfill responsibilities during teaching portions of camp**

Guy Healy USA Summer Camps IS a job. You are more than just a counselor. You watch over these kids and YOU are responsible for them. You are now, in a way, their guardians. You have to make sure you keep a professional composure and not take your “goofiness” and turn it into “immaturity”. The parents of these campers are paying a lot of money to come there and Guy Healy pays a lot of money to run these camps, so they deserve your full effort and cooperation at camp. If you do not fulfill your responsibilities or are inappropriate, Guy Healy has the right to send you back home. This does happen at times so it is a serious matter. The Guy Healy USA Summer Camps is the largest language camp in Japan, so there is a lot of prestige involved and the counselor is what keeps this prestige going.
• **BE ON TIME!**

Japan is very strict on punctuality. When you are told to be somewhere at 7 AM, be there at 6:55 or earlier. Everything is on time in Japan. An example is that when using public transportation like the train, they are guaranteed to always be within 30 seconds before or after the planned arrival time. If you are late for anything, the school that is at your camp will see that as very irresponsible and that can jeopardize the relationship with Guy Healy and the school.

• **Be prepared for last minute changes**

While the camps are very organized, a lot of things can change. The weather is unpredictable and you never know if the campers will show up early or late. Making sure you are ready for anything is very important. You will not be with your whole team for every camp. For certain camps, you may split up and be at different locations. Be ready to change locations at any moment. There are times when you may think you are going somewhere with a certain group and they may switch you at the last second to another group depending on how many campers are at a certain camp.

• **Open to having the best summer of your life!**

The Guy Healy USA Summer Camps are an amazing opportunity. It will change your life and most likely be one of the most amazing experiences of your life if you allow it to be. If a counselor follows all of these criteria, then they will likely have a very enjoyable experience. If a counselor is closed off to a new culture and stuck in their American ways then it will most likely be a horrible time. It is up to the counselor to make it the best summer of their life.