



## Sample Strengths Letter from Assistant Director to Graduate Residence Coordinator (names have been changed):

Dear Hannah,

I am writing to share my perspectives of ways in which your strengths have played out on our staff this year. First off, I want to share what a pleasure it has been to have you on staff and I have really enjoyed your perspectives and deep sense of reflection. You bring a calm energy to this staff, paired with a great sense of enthusiasm, which is a perfect balance.

### **Communication**

I have seen your communication strength play a role in your work numerous times. Early on I think your communication strength helped you talk out some of your struggles here and really find new ways to frame your situation. More specifically, I saw you do an excellent job of helping with the Samantha Gerret and Tierra Jones conflict, where you were able to really allow the girls to be heard and supported. Finally, in the conversations you've had, specifically with Ron & Thelma, where you have found creative ways to help RAs find "their voice" or appropriate language to express themselves in talking about things.

### **Learner**

I truly appreciate how you are constantly learning! You look at every situation and find an educational aspect of it, which is much appreciated. This ability to reframe things in this construct is extremely helpful to the staff. Most recently when you were having some struggles with Tom you were able to really turn it into a learning situation for both of you, and I appreciate that aspect of the work that you do.

### **Harmony**

You definitely bring a strong sense of harmony to the staff. I saw this first with the Gerret/Jones conflict and how you worked hard in a kind of individual format, specifically with Tierra, to diffuse some of the tension. You have continued to do that with your RAs to heed off any potential co-RA conflicts. Finally I appreciate how you regularly run things by me that could be potential red flags. I think you often do this to avoid it becoming a larger issue and creating more conflict, and I value that greatly, as it helps me do my job well also.

### **Connectedness**

I am a little baffled as to how this is not your #1 strength, because I feel it is the one that epitomizes you the most. I am grateful for the ways in which you bring your belief system and faith into your work. You see the inherent connections in life that others often segment (personal/professional/spiritual, etc) and are able to seamlessly connect those. This has helped you mediate conflicts well and help staff members see others' perspectives well.

### **Significance**

I see significance playing out in this role in the way in which you approach each situation. It is clear your goal is truly to make a difference in the lives of students you work with. You see this as much more than a job, and that I really value. It also helps you connect well with the entire staff, which you have done with ease.

Thank you for all you bring to this staff. Your energy, enthusiasm and strengths are a true asset. I look forward to working with you throughout the year to help make Loyola Hall a safe and supportive place for students.



## Sample Letter from a Graduate Residence Coordinator to Resident Assistant (names have been changed):

Dear Luke,

I am writing to share my perspectives on ways in which your individual strengths have played out on our staff so far this year. First off, I want to share that it has been great working with you this year. I have appreciated your sense of humor, honesty, and your overall sense of concern for the wellbeing of your residents. Below I have outlined the ways in which I see your strengths played out in your role and how they benefit your hall and our staff:

**Input** – I see this strength played out in your drive to know your residents and know fellow staff members. You are driven to understand others through collecting information (or gathering “input”) about who they are, what makes them tick, and what it is they need to be happy and successful here at Loyola and in their various roles.

**Analytical** – This is shown in your program planning. You are the type of person who will think things through and challenge others to be sure that the best, most productive actions are taken. This is definitely a benefit, since, as a staff, we may tend to go with the first idea given, without questioning other possibilities.

**Harmony** – Your drive to resolve conflicts, bring your hall together, and build a strong relationship with your Co-RA are just a few of the many ways in which I see this strength played out in your everyday activities. You have the unique ability to bridge gaps and build bridges when others become angry or frustrated, which comes across in your calm, laid-back demeanor.

**Individualization** – I believe this strength allows for your other strengths to shine. You seem to find a uniqueness in everyone you interact with that drives you to learn about them (input) and help them find a balance (harmony) that fits their needs.

**Adaptability** – This is one of the strengths I appreciate most and probably the one that frustrates your Co-RA the most. I love that you are able to just go along with whatever crazy idea I have at the moment and run with it. This is truly an asset in the hectic life of an RA considering the amount of random things that pop up and interfere with your list of things to do. If you did not have this strength, then I’m sure you would have quit in the first five minutes with all of the interruptions from your residents.

Thank you for all that you bring to our staff. I look forward to working with you throughout the year to help make Loyola Hall a safe and supportive place for our students.

Sincerely,

Anthony Smith  
Loyola Hall GRC



## Sample Letter from a Graduate Residence Coordinator to Resident Assistant (names have been changed):

Dear Brian,

I am writing to share with you the ways in which I have seen your strengths at work on our staff this year. I would like to start by saying that I am very proud of the development that I have seen in you since training began in August. You have become much stronger and braver since starting as an RA, and I am happy to see that you are settling into the position and creating a great role model for your residents. Below I have outlined your strengths and my perspectives on how they guide your work:

### *Woo*

*Woo* looks different in different people. I think that people are drawn to you in a group setting. At the beginning of the year I was shocked at how fast you became close with so many of your co-workers! You have charm, but it is not the same phony charm that some others have. Maybe it is in your honesty. I think that *woo* is a little evasive and difficult to pin down. It is hard to say exactly what you do that draws people to you, but it is consistent and visible. *Woo* is great in an RA because it means that residents will feel comfortable in talking to you. This is evident with Hailey and Meredith, and especially evident in the situation you were dealing with earlier in the semester in which you were able to draw the problem out and create a safe environment for your resident to talk about it. I think it is a good balance with Sara as well, because she is very outspoken. People communicate in different ways and it is reassuring to know that whatever your residents need, they will get from you.

### *Positivity*

Having *positivity* as a strength means that you make a great leader. You are able to bring out the best in others, and I see this in your work as an RA. Part of having this strength is having a good attitude and an easy smile. People respond to others when they are happy, and are uplifted. I think that you have great potential to cultivate this skill. Sometimes I see you hold it back because conditions are uncertain, but I know you have it in you, because you have *woo*! Having a positive attitude is a great thing that makes life a lot easier and much more enjoyable. I hope to help you develop your *positivity* strength throughout the year so that people continue to come to you with their questions and concerns.

### *Communication*

This strength is very useful in your job. Being able to express yourself is one very important thing, but being able to help others express themselves is rare and I think your top three strengths work together to help you there. You are able to pull your thoughts together and communicate them eloquently and succinctly, and this makes you a great supervisee as well as a great RA. I have seen you help your residents get out what they want to get across, which might otherwise have gotten very jumbled. One of the most crucial components of communication is listening, which is often

overlooked. This is your real strength. Furthermore, in listening you are able to organize thoughts which makes you great to work with and gather information from.

### *Input*

This is another strength that comes across differently in different people. I see it in you on an everyday basis. You have a way of collecting information, such that when I need something, you always seem to have it! This must be where the listening comes in! You are great at getting all of the facts and being prepared for meetings which is fantastic in a supervisee. Nothing is better than having all of my questions answered before I get a chance to ask them.

### *Developer*

*Developer* works very well with *positivity*. You are great at encouraging others to be their best. I see this in the way that you have helped your residents with school, especially the resident who asked you for help with Spanish and then came back and showed you her good grade. You have also helped Allegra with her Spanish, and I know that she appreciated it very much. You and Sara are great together because of your *developer* and her *maximizer*; you have the potential to help your residents to be their best and drive them to find it in themselves. This is something that everyone needs in college, especially freshman.

I am so pleased to work with you this year. Your strengths work hand-in-hand with each other and make you a great resource for your residents. I look forward to helping you develop these strengths throughout the year, and I hope that I will in turn learn from you as well. You are someone that I enjoy supervising because I know that I can count on you to do what I ask, and someone that I can trust with the safety and comfort of Loyola Hall residents.