

VISTA Leader Webinar: Designing and Conducting Effective Member Site Visits

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Five Essential Elements

1. Purpose
 - a. What are the intended benefits for the VISTA member?
 - b. What are the intended benefits for the project/organization?
 - c. What are the intended benefits for the supervisor(s)?
 - d. What are the intended benefits for you as the leader?
2. Objectives
3. Communication & Coordination
4. Logistics
5. Follow-Up

Purpose

Needs Assessment

VISTA

- Are there specific issues or needs that you would like me to address with your site supervisor?
- Are there any specific issues that you need to meet with me one-on-one for; if so, do you have a space in mind?
- Are there specific individuals that you would like me to meet during my visit?
- Are there other specific project sites that you would like me to also visit?
- Are there specific days that would work best for you/your supervisor/your organization?
- Are you having regular meetings with your supervisor?
- What challenges have you encountered?
- Do you feel properly supported by your supervisor? By VISTA?

VISTA Supervisor

- One-on-one time?
- Any questions related to VISTA regulations?
- Are you satisfied with the VISTA's performance/progress on the project?
- Are there any things you'd like to discuss regarding the VAD and performance measures?
- How is work going with your VISTA?
- Are there any areas where the VISTA could use additional support?
- What are some accomplishments of the VISTA?

- Is the VISTA member adjusting well?
- Is there any training we can provide to help the VISTA in their role?
- Are there any topics you want me to discuss with my supervisor before I visit you?
- How often do you meet with your VISTA?
- Is there any protocol that I should follow during my visit?
- Are there other staff members you want present at the meeting or who will benefit from the meeting?
- Are there individuals that you think would be beneficial for me to meet during the visit?

Your Supervisor

- Would you like to accompany me to the site visit?
- Do I need to complete a compliance check?
- What is the history of this site visit?
- Are there any particular details about this organization that I should know about?
- What are some specific things you need me to speak to this particular site about?
- Can I take the VISTA out to lunch?
- Do you have any specific needs or issues that you would like me to address with the VISTA during the site visit? Needs/issues with the site supervisor?
- Are there any concerns about the organization that the leader should be made aware of?
- Are there other individuals you would like for me to meet during the visit?
- When was the last time a site visit was made at this site?

Objectives

Project Progress

- Do you feel confident that you can meet milestones within timelines; if not, what feedback do you have/adjustments can you make?
- Which project activities are you most excited about?
- Are there any specific challenges that you may have in relation to carrying out your VAD?
- Are your projects ending up the way that you envisioned they would?
- Do you feel that your VAD needs to be edited to more accurately reflect your service goals, objectives, and/or activities? (can fine-tune this document but not re-write)
- What feedback are you getting from your supervisor and your community about the accomplishments and impacts of the project?
- Are there any milestones you have accomplished already?
- What are some of the ways you are tracking your performance?
- Have you been thinking about what you will do after service?

Support & Resource Needs

- Is there anything that I as a VISTA Leader can do to help support you?
- Do you feel like you are getting enough communication from me as a VISTA Leader?

- Do you and your supervisor have a set time in place to discuss progress/challenges/etc.?
- Are there specific training or resource needs that the VISTA might have in order to be able to accomplish the VAD activities?
- How would you describe the level of support & guidance that you receive from your supervisor and other staff?
- Does your host site provide support with your professional development? Are you satisfied with these provisions? Any suggestions for new topics?
- Would you like to schedule check-ins or do you prefer to reach out if you have any needs?

Supervision & Communication

- How is the VISTA fitting in with the workplace?
- Do you have any questions about your role as a VISTA at your site?
- Do you feel like your strengths are utilized well by your supervisor and project?
- Is there any support that you need in relation to achieving your personal and professional goals during your VISTA year?
- Have your physical needs been met at your site (workspace, internet access, comfortable)?
- How do you primarily communicate with your supervisor? Is that method working out for both of you? Is the communication regular and clear?

Service Satisfaction

- Base Camp: “What do you get?”
 - Do you know what is expected of you at work?
 - Do you have the materials and equipment you need to do your work right?
- Camp 1: “What do you give?”
 - At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
 - In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing work?
 - Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
 - Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
- Camp 2: “Do you belong here?”
 - At work, do your opinions seem to count?
 - Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
 - Are your co-workers committed to doing quality work?
 - Do you have a best friend at work?
- Camp 3: “How can you all grow?”
 - In the last six months, has someone talked to you at work about your progress?
 - This last year, have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?
- Here is a link to a summary of the research study mentioned in the webinar:
http://www.hr.com/portals/hrcom/events/ShanklandHandout_Gallup%20Q12%20summary%20-%20what%20is%20engagement.pdf

Communication & Coordination

- Create a chart of tasks related to the site visit with a column dedicated to who you need to be in touch with in order to accomplish such tasks.

Logistics

- Be mindful of all of the factors that go into site visits. How much time will it take? Travel? Parking?

Follow-Up

- Afterwards, send correspondence with a summary of the visit and provide resources to address the challenges mentioned.

Questions asked by participants:

- How frequently should we conduct site visits?
 - The group shared it was mostly dependent upon the locations of your VISTAs and the size of your budget. Leaders with mostly local members conduct them quarterly, while Leaders with geographical challenges conduct them semi-annually or annually.