

The webinar will begin soon. While you wait, please Share in the Chat: **What do you hope to learn from this webinar?**

## Managing Up: Navigating the VISTA-Supervisor Relationship

**VISTA**  
 Volunteers In Service To America

Audio by phone: 866-609-4997

**NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE**  
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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### Connecting to Audio

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- Audio resource tools
- Call in via phone (number listed on each slide)
- View Closed Captions in the Live Captioning panel
- Download handouts from Handouts panel

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### Tips for Participating

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- Share comments and ideas in the Chat Panel (send to "Everyone")
- Ask questions in the Q&A Panel
- Some Adobe Connect features are not available on mobile devices
- Links and recording will be available after the session

iPhone Chat Icon: *Click this button if you don't see the Chat panel.*  
 Android Chat Icon:

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# Managing Up: Navigating the VISTA-Supervisor Relationship

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## Today's Speakers

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**Chris Hawkes**  
AmeriCorps VISTA  
Training Specialist

**Barbara Reynolds**  
AmeriCorps VISTA  
Director of Training

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## Today's Agenda

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- Define 'Managing Up'
- Identify methods for building successful, professional relationships
- Develop strategies to communicate your needs in a clear and specific way
- Identify VISTA resources to support your workplace communications

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## Chat Question

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- What comes to mind when hearing the term 'managing up'?



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## What is 'Managing Up?'

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*"This is not political maneuvering or 'kissing up.' Rather, it is a deliberate effort to bring understanding and cooperation to a relationship between individuals who often have different perspectives."*

- Drs. Thomas Zuber & Erika James

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## What is 'Managing Up?'

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## Relationship-Building

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## Managing Up Myth Busters

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## Myth Busters

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Myth #1: Managing up is telling my supervisor how to do her job.

• Reality Check: ✓



- Communicating, asking questions, and clarifying expectations are essential to a productive work relationship
- Creating a shared understanding of projects and vision ensures that you are able to meet your supervisor's expectations
- Two brains are better than one

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## Myth Busters

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Myth #2: It's my supervisor's job to manage so I don't have to.



- **Reality Check:** ✓
  - Supervisors are rarely taught how to lead
  - Personal leadership and self-awareness are very important

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## Myth Busters

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Myth #3: I could never manage my supervisor!



- **Reality Check:** ✓
  - Your supervisor cannot read your mind
  - Managing is easier if people communicate their needs
  - Managers struggle too

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## Addressing Common Challenges

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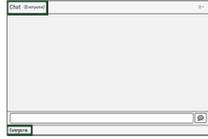
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## Chat Question

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- Are you experiencing any challenges in your relationship with your supervisor?
- If so, what is the challenge?
- Please provide a brief answer in the Chat.



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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor is scary!



- Check your assumptions



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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor is scary!



- Avoid supervisor's hot buttons



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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor is scary!



- Ask for feedback



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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor is super busy and doesn't have time for me.



- Prioritize your needs
- Solicit clear expectations



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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor is super busy and doesn't have time for me.

- Provide solutions not problems
- Avoid surprises
- Match your communication method to your supervisor's preference



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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor uses the “no news is good news” approach.



- Catch your supervisor’s attention during in-between times
- Prioritize and ask for feedback on specific issues
- Ask your supervisor about her/himself

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## Common Challenges

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I have 12 supervisors!



- Communicate, document, and follow up
- Copy all supervisors on email communication
- Take detailed meeting notes, and send them out to all
- Ask your supervisors to talk to each other

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## Common Challenges

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My supervisor has no boundaries!



- Provide feedback in the moment
- Describe the impact that the behavior has on you
- Role model the boundaries you expect

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## C. O. I. N.

- Connection
- Observation
- Impact on You
- Next Steps

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## C. O. I. N. Example

### No Boundaries Supervisor

"I care about your happiness, and I'm glad that you feel that you can trust me. However, when you tell me about your Tinder profile, it makes me uncomfortable, and I feel like it interferes with our professional relationship. I want to get to know you, but that's a little too personal. I would love to hear more about your kids or your hobbies, how about we start there?"

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## C. O. I. N. Example

### Missed Meetings Supervisor

"I care about our work together and making the biggest impact I can during my service. And I'm concerned because you've cancelled our last two check-ins. These meetings are really important to me, and I have a few different things to cover at our next meeting so I can keep moving forward. As you know, we have our big fundraiser next month, and there are a lot of decisions to be made. Is the timing of our weekly check-ins still OK with your schedule? Or should we look at a different day or time so our meetings don't conflict with anything else on your schedule?"

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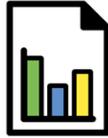
## Poll Question

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• Do you have regular 1:1s with your direct supervisor?

- Yes
- We meet, but not regularly
- I rarely meet with my supervisor
- I never meet with my supervisor
- What's a 1:1 meeting?



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## 1:1 Meeting Best Practices

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- 30 minutes, once a week
- Heads up (agenda) and follow up (notes)
- Regularly scheduled
- Rarely missed



[https://www.manager-tools.com/docs/Manager-tools\\_One\\_on\\_One\\_Word.doc](https://www.manager-tools.com/docs/Manager-tools_One_on_One_Word.doc)

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## 10 – 10 – 10 Approach

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10 min

• For the team member

10 min

• For the supervisor

10 min

• For career/growth/development

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## Relationship-Building Questions

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- What is your preferred mode of communication?
- What are your expectations of this project?
- What can I handle on my own and what needs your approval?
- How often would you like status updates on this project?
- What are your top priorities for this project?

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## Getting Support

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## Support for Challenging Situations

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- Your fellow VISTAs
- Staff colleagues at your site
- Your supervisor's supervisor



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## Support for Challenging Situations

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Supervisors whose managerial style is a bad fit for you may offer the best life lessons.

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## Support for Challenging Situations

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- VISTA Leader
- State Office
- Other VISTAs

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## Next Steps

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- Compose a few relationship-building questions for your supervisor
- Set up a 1:1 meeting
- Check out the 1:1 tool and try to implement the 10-10-10 meeting model
- Practice the COIN Conversation model with a friend
- Research managing up strategies to find what works for you

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## Managing Up & VISTA Resources

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- "The Art of Managing Up"
  - <http://uthscsa.edu/gme/documents/TheArtofManagingUp.pdf>
- "Managing Your Boss"
  - <http://www.aafp.org/fpm/2001/0600/p33.html>
- "Get to Know Your Boss's Boss"
  - <https://hbr.org/2011/11/get-to-know-your-bosss-boss>
- 1:1 Meeting Template and 1:1 Podcasts
  - <https://www.manager-tools.com/>
- AmeriCorps VISTA Campus:
  - <https://www.vistacampus.gov/>

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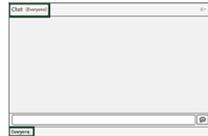
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## Chat Question

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- What's one thing from today's presentation that you want to put into practice?



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## Evaluation

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- How can we improve this session?
- Please take a few moments to complete a brief webinar evaluation form.
- Find the survey link by the Chat panel on your screen.
- Thank you for your feedback!

1) Highlight or select



2) Then click 'Browse To'



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*What questions do you have?*



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*Thank you for your service!*



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