

VISTA EXPERIENCE – FEEDBACK FROM FORMER MEMBERS

Dear Former Members – We are evaluating VISTA training effectiveness in order to help the Corporation determine how best to support members’ success with the VISTA mission. We are hoping you will help us with this endeavor. Everything you say will be confidential, reported only in aggregate tables without names or former programs attached. We are also asking current members, sponsoring organization staff, and other former VISTAs for feedback; but we think you may have a special viewpoint. Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below, and add any comments you wish, to help us inform VISTA management how to improve training and orientation for members to support them in their service, and life thereafter.

A. Please give us your view about your VISTA Experience.

1. How were you recruited for VISTA?

- I was recruited locally, from within the sponsor organization.
- I was recruited locally, from elsewhere in the community.
- I was recruited from a neighboring community.
- I was recruited nationally.
- Other (please specify): _____

2. How many months did you serve in VISTA as a volunteer? _____ months

3. What was the main reason or reasons that you left VISTA before the official end of service? Please check what applies to you:

- Personal or Family health or other issue, unrelated to VISTA
- Economic issue, could not make it on VISTA stipend
- Had an opportunity and took it – e.g. for another better job
- Was dissatisfied with my VISTA experience
- Was dissatisfied with my VISTA sponsoring organization or supervisor
- Other VISTA-related issue – please comment: _____

4. Did your VISTA experience help in either getting to do or doing what you are presently pursuing either for work or for life or both?

- Not at all
- A little
- Somewhat
- A lot

4a. If VISTA has helped you “Somewhat” or more, please tell us in what ways it helped Please check any that apply to you:

VISTA helped me with...

- Getting a job
- Understanding how to work in organizations
- Understanding how to manage volunteers
- Understanding how to build capacity
- Improving the leadership skills that are required either in work or my life in general
- Developing technical or vocational skills I need to get ahead
- Moving toward further education

Other (specify): _____

B. Tell us about the training you received during VISTA.

5. Please tell us if you participated in the following trainings or used the following resources?

		<i>Additional questions shown if respondent marks YES to the previous question:</i>		
	Did you participate in this training?	Was the training important for your success in VISTA?	Was the training personally useful to you?	Were you satisfied with the quality of the training?
Pre-service orientation (PSO)	Yes No Don't remember	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure
Onsite orientation and training (OSOT)	Yes No Don't remember	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure
VISTA Campus	Yes No Don't remember	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure
On-line VISTA forums	Yes No Don't remember	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure

6. Was there anything missing from PSO that would have helped you be more successful in VISTA?

No Yes - Please comment: _____

7. Was there anything missing from onsite training and orientation (OSOT) that would have helped you be more successful in VISTA?

No Yes - Please comment: _____

8. Was there any training content that was particularly valuable for your VISTA service?

No Yes (please describe): _____

Not sure

9. Do you feel that your supervisor knew enough about VISTA to help you with your work?

No Yes - Please comment: _____

10. How much did you use the VISTA Campus after PSO?

- Not at all
- Very little
- Some
- A lot

C. Please tell us about your VISTA assignment.

11. During your time at VISTA, did you meet with any of the following about the work you were doing and how it was going?

	Less than once a month	About once or twice a month	More than twice a month	I don't remember
a. I met with my supervisor <u>alone</u> , in-person or on the phone.				
b. I met with my supervisor <u>along with other</u> VISTA members or staff, in-person or on the phone.				
c. I met with other VISTA members, in-person or on the phone, without my supervisor.				

12. Which of the following tasks were significant parts of your assignment during your term of service? Please check the tasks that best describes your activities:

During your term of service, were you responsible (either by yourself or as a significant part of a team) for:	YES This was a significant part of my assignment.
a) Planning, coordinating, managing events	
b) Facilitating meetings	
c1) Presenting to other staff or groups <u>inside</u> my Sponsoring organization	
c2) Presenting to organizations or community groups outside my Sponsoring organization	
d) Writing manuals or guides	
e) Creating or updating web pages	
f) Developing electronic spreadsheets or databases	
g) Creating print materials (e.g., flyers, brochures)	
h) Developing training or education curricula	
i) Planning, coordinating, managing events	
j) Recruiting and/or managing community volunteers	
k) Raising funds through grant writing	
l) Soliciting funds or in-kind resources from the community	
m) Building and maintaining community partnerships	
n) Developing new programs/services, or enhancing existing programs/services	
o) Increasing community awareness about the organization and its activities	
p) Assessing the needs of the community or evaluating project activities	
q) Other (please specify)	

D. Please tell us about the skills you needed for VISTA.

For the questions below, check the skills that were VERY IMPORTANT for your VISTA assignment. Think about your VAD and the organization in which you served, and how important these skills were to conduct VISTA activities, build capacity, and make positive changes in the community.

	Which, if any, of the following were <u>very important</u> for your VISTA assignment? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as very important:] How did you do in these areas?
13. Interpersonal Skills		
a. Working well with diverse people and respecting individuals with different backgrounds and interests	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
b. Supervising people	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
c. Helping others work effectively by managing priorities and resolving conflicts	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
d. Participating in or managing (small or large) meetings	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
e. Networking and collaborating	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
f. Actively learning from others	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

	Which, if any, of the following were <u>very important</u> for your VISTA assignment? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as very important:] How did you do in these areas?
14. Managing Personal and Organizational Workload		
a. Setting reasonable objectives by balancing competing priorities in the face of limited resources	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
b. Planning	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
c. Working independently	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

	Which, if any, of the following were <u>very important</u> for your VISTA assignment? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as very important:] How did you do in these areas?
14. Managing Personal and Organizational Workload		
d. Leveraging contacts by acquiring needed information from persons in the organization and the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
e. Adapting by modifying one's personal style and work activities in response to changing situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
f. Assessing progress by accurately evaluating the efforts of oneself and others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

	Which, if any, of the following were <u>very important</u> for your VISTA assignment? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as very important:] How did you do in these areas?
15. Managing Information and Using It to Solve Problems		
a. Figuring out which information you need to work effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
b. Securing the information you need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
c. Evaluating and organizing information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
d. Understanding and using mathematical information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
e. Deploying general or theoretical information to help oneself and others better do their work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
f. Sharing information effectively by summarizing it so that others will listen and understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

	Which, if any, of the following were <u>important</u> to the work you did? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as important:] How did you do in these areas?
16. Leadership, and Communication Skills		
a. Listening actively, accurately and respectfully to a wide range of opinions and suggestions	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
b. Demonstrating integrity by being accountable and by dependably fulfill obligations	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
c. Persuading by convincing others to join in advancing toward his or her objectives	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
d. Negotiating to resolve conflicts between competing objectives and groups	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
e. Expressing oneself by helping audiences understand ideas that he or she wants to convey	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
f. Explaining by conveying ideas and work objectives to a range of individuals, groups, and organizations	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

	Which, if any, of the following were <u>important</u> to the work you did? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as important:] How did you do in these areas?
17. Specific Skills for Working in the VISTA Project		
a. Teamwork	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
b. Mobilizing resources through proposal-writing, advocacy with funders or potential partnering organizations, or through presentations	?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

	Which, if any, of the following were important to the work you did? (check all that apply)	[For skills marked as important:] How did you do in these areas?
17. Specific Skills for Working in the VISTA Project		
c. Navigating the organization by working within a framework of policies, rules and regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
d. Reporting as required by CNCS and your organization in ways that convey what the member has done and what he or she needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
e. Working across the spectrum by understanding the “big picture” and helping to make initiatives, organizations, and services sustainable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

18. How would you describe your ability to do each of the following during your VISTA service?

a. Work independently	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
b. Meet deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
c. Set priorities for multiple tasks	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
d. Communicate with people in my Sponsoring organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
e. Communicate with people in other organizations	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
f. Communicate with people in the community	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
g. Adapt to new situations and respond to unexpected challenges	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
h. Address community issues like poverty in a constructive manner	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor
i. Meet and work with people different from myself	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor

E. Tell us a little about yourself (Answers to questions 19 - 22 are entirely optional and are for statistical purposes only).

19. What is your age (optional)? _____ years old

20. What is your gender (optional)? _____

21. How do you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity/race (optional)? *Please check the one which best applies to you:*

- a. African American
- b. American Indian/Alaskan Native
- c. Asian/Pacific Islander
- d. Caucasian/White
- e. Hispanic/Latino
- f. Multi-racial (specify): _____
- g. Other (specify): _____

22. Please check the HIGHEST level of education you completed? Please check the one which best applies to you:

- a. High School degree (HS Diploma or GED)
- b. Some College
- c. 2-year College degree (AA)
- d. 4-year College degree (BA, BS)
- e. Some Graduate School
- f. Technical or Vocational School degree or certificate
- g. Graduate School degree (MA, MS, Ph.D., etc.)
- h. Other (specify): _____

23. BEFORE you joined VISTA, had you done any of the following for 6 months or more?

Please check the column in each row that best describes your experience:

For at least 6 Months, I...	NO	YES
a) Worked /volunteered in a small non-profit organization (e.g. with 50 people or less)		
b) Worked in a for-profit company		
c) Worked in developing and managing people		
d) Worked in an issue area directly related to my VISTA service		
e) Worked or lived in another community <u>very</u> much like the one(s) I served with VISTA		
f) Served with other CNCS programs, such as AmeriCorps, or another VISTA program		
g) Regularly found resources from the internet for work or school		
h) Worked/volunteered with community leaders to develop strategies to solve or address community issues		
i) Volunteered in my own community or elsewhere in the U.S.		
j) Volunteered outside the U.S.		

24. What are you doing now?

- Working in a not-for profit organization
- Working in a for-profit organization
- Working in government or politics
- Making plans to attend school
- Attending school to complete a degree
- Attending technical or vocational school to complete a degree or certificate
- Volunteering
- Other (specify): _____

F. Concluding

25. In general, how do you feel about your VISTA experience.

How do you feel about:	Very Negative	Slightly Negative	Neutral	Slightly Positive	Very Positive
a. The success you had in fulfilling your VAD (to the point when you left)					
b. How well PSO prepared you for VISTA service					
c. Access to meaningful and useful supervision at the organization where you served					

d. Access to tools, resources and information on the VISTA Campus to help you with your VISTA assignment					
e. Access to <u>other</u> tools, resources and information (not on the VISTA Campus) to help you with your VISTA assignment					
f. How well VISTA service prepared you for life after VISTA					

26. If there is anything you feel strongly about in terms of your experience, we'd love to hear it

Please Comment: _____

Thanks so much!