

Establishing a Good Relationship with VISTAs**

Key to a successful year for you and your VISTAs is developing a good work relationship. Here are a few tips to ensure that the relationship with your VISTA has a good foundation. Such a rapport will be a tremendous benefit to the project and its development.

1. Attend a VISTA Supervisor's Training before you bring VISTAs to your organization. This training, which is a requirement for all VISTA supervisors, will help you better understand your supervisory role, as well as the role of the VISTA.
2. Encourage VISTAs to understand the VISTA Project Plan thoroughly. The only item more important to VISTAs than the VISTA Handbook (which they should read and follow) is their assignment description and project plan. Every VISTA should have a copy of his or her VAD and project plan and know exactly what it means. You and your VISTAs should review it meticulously so everyone knows what is expected of one another.
3. Become familiar with the VISTA Handbook and encourage your new VISTAs to read the handbook during the first few weeks at the project site. This task should be part of your project's On-Site Orientation and Training plan. VISTA supervisors are required to submit an orientation plan to the Corporation State Office.
4. Set aside a day and specific time to meet weekly with each VISTA, especially during the first month or two of service. If possible, try meeting in a different place within the community each time. Get coffee or breakfast at a local diner or walk through the community with the VISTA when you meet.
5. If the VISTA works for a partnership of organizations, make sure the VISTA is invited to each organization and given a presentation on the functions and mission of each contributing partner and its role in the partnership.

***Adapted from "A to Z: VISTA Project Development" by Chris Von Zuben, a VISTA Leader who served with the National Alliance to End Homelessness in Washington, D.C.*