

# Comparison of VISTA Leader and Supervisor Roles

Because of their inherent skills and abilities, VISTA Leaders often take on more responsibility or receive more authority than is reasonable or appropriate. Keeping focused and within the limits of the Leader's roles are crucial to the Leader's success. To this end, regular communication between the Supervisor and the Leader is highly effective. It is imperative that VISTAs understand the distinctions between a Supervisor and Leader, and know to whom to turn for what they need. Co-facilitating a discussion with the VISTAs, and perhaps providing a reference sheet about procedures and points of contact are effective methods for Supervisors and Leaders to keep VISTAs informed.

**Table 1. Examples of Appropriate Leader and Supervisor Roles**

<b>Conducting an On-Site Orientation and Training (OSOT)</b>	
<p><b>Leader Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate orientation materials</li> <li>• Draft agenda</li> <li>• Help to secure guests, speakers and facilitators</li> <li>• Participate in implementation of OSOT</li> <li>• Utilize facilitator / educator skills to achieve OSOT activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supervisor Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop OSOT plan</li> <li>• Finalize agenda</li> <li>• Ensure the OSOT plan is submitted to the CSO</li> <li>• Help to secure guests, speakers and facilitators</li> <li>• Coordinate with leader re: OSOT</li> <li>• Implement OSOT</li> </ul>
<b>Recruiting and selecting new VISTAs</b>	
<p><b>Leader Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote position announcement through local venues</li> <li>• Assist in screening applications</li> <li>• Assist in setting up and participate in interviews of top applicants</li> <li>• Provide feedback to supervisor</li> <li>• Utilize VAD in interview process</li> <li>• Utilize recruiting and interview skills to achieve recruiting tasks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supervisor Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview top candidates</li> <li>• Nominate candidates for selection and approval by the CSO</li> <li>• Notify candidates of their selection and approval</li> <li>• Ensure paperwork is completed</li> <li>• Accept/select candidates in eGrants/Portal</li> <li>• Utilize VAD in interview / selection process</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitating a successful year of service for VISTAs</b>	
<p><b>Leader Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make self available to VISTAs as a resource</li> <li>• Listen when VISTAs approach with problems and barriers</li> <li>• Assist VISTAs in identifying their options and creating their own solutions</li> <li>• Assist VISTAs in outlining their options for mediation, including informing supervisor</li> <li>• Involve the supervisor if the VISTAs cannot resolve the issue themselves</li> <li>• Utilize skills as resource generator, mentor, ambassador and liaison, as appropriate, to ensure a successful year for VISTAs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supervisor Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ongoing and scheduled supervision to VISTAs</li> <li>• Utilize problem-solving and coaching techniques to help VISTAs resolve problems and barriers</li> <li>• Assist VISTAs in identifying options and solutions</li> <li>• Develop protocol for addressing conflict within group (including the Leader's role)</li> <li>• Schedule appropriate conference time with leader for updates and feedback</li> </ul>

# Comparison of VISTA Leader and Supervisor Roles (cont.)

<b>A VISTA is habitually late</b>	
<p><b>Leader Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the VISTAs know and understand the policy and procedures for punctuality and project schedule(s)</li> <li>• If pattern persists and the supervisor is unaware, communicate problem to supervisor and inform VISTAs of same</li> <li>• Let supervisor know if tardiness of the VISTAs is a potential or real divisive issue for the team.</li> <li>• Utilize educator and liaison skills for achieving this task</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supervisor Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with the VISTA the reasons for the recent tardiness and explore how to improve punctuality</li> <li>• Set /re-set timeliness expectations</li> <li>• Determine any organizational measures to be taken to address the situation</li> <li>• Notify the CSO, if the situation merits</li> <li>• Follow-up with VISTA regarding effectiveness of corrective action</li> <li>• Coordinate with leader as needed regarding VISTA</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting on project performance to CSO</b>	
<p><b>Leader Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate collection of data from VISTAs</li> <li>• Clarify points in reports with VISTAs if required</li> <li>• Collate or categorize information</li> <li>• Assist in interpretation of data</li> <li>• Coordinate feedback with Supervisor</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supervisor Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain data from leader</li> <li>• Interpret data</li> <li>• Write report in eGrants</li> <li>• Ensure timeliness of reporting to CSO</li> <li>• Follow-up with leader and/ or VISTAs as necessary</li> </ul>
<b>Developing or refining Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD)</b>	
<p><b>Leader Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review VADs for clarity and accuracy</li> <li>• Suggest improvements or changes to supervisor</li> <li>• Clarify action steps for VISTAs when required</li> <li>• Offer feedback to VISTAs and supervisor to determine if tasks appropriately help achieve objectives</li> <li>• Utilize facilitator, educator, mentor skills on an ongoing basis to ensure successful implementation of VAD</li> </ul>	<p><b>Supervisor Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish tasks to achieve goal(s)</li> <li>• Write VAD</li> <li>• Review VAD with VISTA on a consistent basis</li> <li>• Monitor achievement of objectives by setting appropriate expectations for progress and completion</li> <li>• Refine VAD as necessary on an ongoing basis</li> <li>• Identify needed feedback from leader related to VAD progress</li> </ul>