

# Life After

Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success.

When you do something, put your whole soul into it.

Stamp it with your own personality.

Be active, be energetic and faithful and you will accomplish your goal.

Ralph Waldo Emerson



# Starts Now!

# Action Planning

Looking ahead to the next 6 months of your VISTA year, what professional development goals do you want to achieve? How are you going to achieve your goals? Use the following Action Plan worksheet to help guide your planning process and execution.

You are half way through your VISTA year and may be thinking about what your next step will be. Are you getting the MOST out of your year of service? Are you taking advantage of the resources and opportunities available to you? Thinking ahead- what can you be doing now to set yourself up and prepare for next year?

Use this booklet as a tool to help you reflect and evaluate the professional development goals you have set for yourself, and also learn effective strategies for getting the most out of your year of service!

**Step 1: Define Your Goal:** Identify one specific goal to work towards. (examples can be the planning and completion of an event; acquiring/ demonstrating a skill.)

SMART Goals: \*Specific \*Measurable \*Attainable \*Realistic \*Timely\*

**Step 2: Define your time line, bench marks and deadlines:**

Are you working with a non negotiable deadline? Can you break down the steps into smaller deadlines, set up bench marks to measure progress?

**Step 3: Action!** What needs to be done? How will things get done– be as specific as possible? What steps are involved? Who needs to be involved? Are there foreseeable obstacles? How can you prepare for those obstacles? How will you stay motivated? How will you know when you are making progress? How will you know when you have achieved your goal?

**Step 4: Evaluate** by using the Dimensions of Success approach!  
Process, Relationships and Results!

Even if you are on the right track,  
You'll get run over if you just sit there!  
Will Rogers

# Recognizing and Creating Opportunities

Finding professional development opportunities in every project.

How can we make sure that we are aware of the valuable (sometimes not obvious) learning opportunities that are around us? The following reflection questions can be used as a guide to help identify these opportunities.

## **When reflecting on Challenges**

What is challenging in this particular situation?

What can I do to work through this challenge?

What skills can I practice or demonstrate during this project/experience?

How will I accomplish this?

Who can help me? In what way?

How will I know when I have made progress?

What skills do I already have that will help me reach my goal?

How will this help?

## **Challenging yourself**

How can I challenge myself in this situation?

What will I gain from this challenge?

Is there a skill I can practice or demonstrate in this situation?

How can I enhance, support or add value to this project or situation?

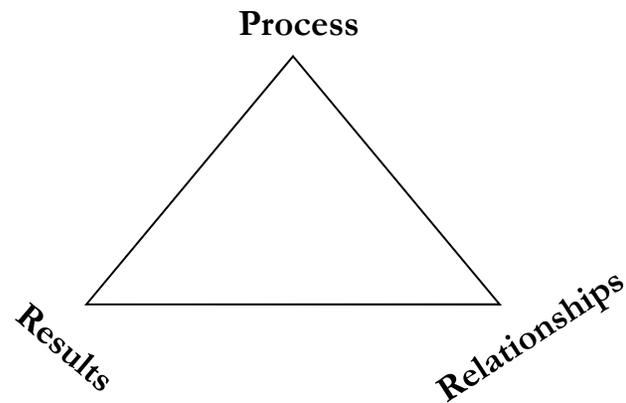
What do I know about myself that I can share or contribute?

It is in the small decisions  
you and I make every day  
that create our destiny.

**Anthony Robbins**

Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can - there will always come a time when you will be grateful you did. - Sarah Caldwell

# Dimensions of Success



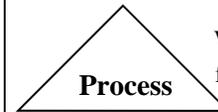
The Dimensions of Success is one of many methods for evaluating and measuring success. This approach encourages you to reflect on three things: the process, the relationships and the results. One of the great messages that this methods offers is that the end results of a project are important but they are not the only thing to consider when evaluating the success of a project.

How does this connect to your year of service as an AmeriCorps \*VISTA member? By this point in the year, we are all coming to realize just how short 12 months can be. And we can all look back over the past few months and find something that we wish we could do again– with the knowledge we have now, right? When you take the time to reflect on projects and experiences using the Dimensions of Success method, you are breaking down the larger picture into specific skills and experiences that can be transferred to other projects in the future!

Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life.  
~ Dr. David M. Burns

# Taking Apart the Triangle

Use the Dimensions of Success model to reflect on projects, events and experiences from your VISTA year.



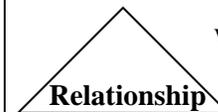
What were the major parts in the planning, execution and follow up process?

What specific parts of the process worked? Why?

What could have been done differently? Why?

What specific skills did you learn, strengthen or demonstrate?

What lessons did you learn from the process?



Who were the major people or groups involved or impacted by the project?

What relationships were cultivated, strengthened or tested? How?

What specific skills did you learn, strengthen or demonstrate? How?

What lessons did you learn from the relationships involved in this project?



What were the major goals of the project?

Were the goals met?

What specific skills did you learn, strengthen or demonstrate? How?

What lessons did you learn from the results of this project?