



Individual Check-ins



Intentional engagement with your service year corps members through individual check-ins will help you identify ways to support your corps members' personal and professional development and enhance their overall experience while serving. The check-ins are designed to build rapport, identify challenges and barriers, while also establishing intentional facilitated discussions amongst your corps to foster growth and development. Scheduling your check-ins throughout your program year will ensure that you are able to understand and support your corps members during service.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

To prepare for individual check-ins with your service year corps members, your program staff should:

- **Track Your Service Year Corps Members' Progress** - You should keep track of corps member's observations related to skills development and their needs. This way you won't have to jog your memories during development conversations.
- **Observe and Acknowledge** - Draw attention to development throughout the service year. Do not wait for individual check-ins to acknowledge growth. If a corps member demonstrates improvement in an area they have been working on, mention it the moment it is happening. Reinforcement of growth is always helpful.
- **Listen First, Share Feedback Second** - Initially, listen more than you talk. You will be better equipped to support service year corps members if you spend time learning about how they view and assess their needs, challenges, and growth. As time goes on, you can begin to provide more focused and specific feedback.
- **Lead with Transparency & Authenticity** - Do not be afraid to be direct and transparent with your feedback. Foster a safe learning environment to ensure direct feedback is not difficult to share or receive.
- **Engage Others for Support** - Involve your network when needed. If a corps member needs more development than you or your organization are able to give, refer them to someone else who may have a deeper understanding of their necessary support.

Conducting Individual Check-ins

To prepare for individual check-ins with your service year corps members, your program staff should:

- Review each corps member's response to the [A2: Resource: Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool](#), the [S3: Resource: The Employability Skills Inventory](#), and the B0: Formative Self Assessment
- Provide your corps members with their completed Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool and ask your corps members to complete Growth Progress Tracker Chart #1.
- Provide your corps members with their completed Employability Skills Inventory to review.

Facilitation Guidance

To prepare for individual check-ins with your service year corps members, your program staff should:

- Facilitate a discussion that will promote further reflection, clarification and goal-setting using the questions below.

HELPFUL TIP



As you conduct individual check-ins, use the Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool and Employability Skills Inventory as a guide. Be careful not to make assumptions or limit your service year corps members to the information they shared. Remember, your role is to support and provide feedback to service year corps members as they pursue their personal and professional growth – not to provide answers or instructions. Leave space for new growth and discovery!

- Understand the rationale for their responses, clarify any misunderstandings related to their interpretation of their assets and skills and provide guidance on how they might be able to leverage and grow during their service year.

HELPFUL TIP



Some service year corps members (particularly younger corps members) will struggle to identify their skills, strengths, challenges, and goals. Be prepared to ask questions during the meeting that will help them to better understand themselves and clarify their goals.

Recommended Discussion Questions for Individual Check-in #1 (Suggested Implementation Month 3):

Before beginning individual check-ins with service year corps members, you should identify at least 3-5 questions to discuss with your corps members. The questions below would be appropriate for your first check-in meeting.

BELONGING CULTURE

- What do you need to feel seen and supported by your program staff and fellow corps members?
- What can we do to support you in feeling safe with us?
- What do you want for other people to know and remember about you when your name is brought up?
- What policies or practices have gotten in the way of, or prevented you from, feeling safe? Do you have recommendations for how we can create a better experience?
- Find or share an idea, poem, quote, or song that is about the importance of being connected to each other and/or building community. Why did you choose that particular item and how is it applicable to being connected and in community?

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ASSET-BASED FRAMEWORK

- Tell me about the education, experience, and skills you identified in Part One of your Asset-Based Growth Assessment Tool. What types of things did you include under informal education, lived experience, and professional skills? Were you surprised that these things could be assets during your service year?
- How would you like to use your strengths this year?
- What motivated you to participate in this service year experience? Do you have specific interests related to the service you will be providing this year?
- What entities, organizations, or individuals are supporting you currently? How are they supporting you?
- Did you identify any potential challenges that you would like to share?
- What is your plan for managing these challenges? What do you need to be successful?
- What are you hoping to do after you finish your service year? What steps do you need to take during your service year to prepare? (For example, apply to colleges and/or jobs, complete a certification, etc.)
- What are your goals for personal and professional development this year? (Corps members may need help clarifying their goals and making them "SMART.") Why did you choose the goals you did?
- How can I support you as you pursue your goals?

INTENTIONAL SKILLS ATTAINMENT:

- Tell me more about your work experience. What types of work have you done in the past, whether paid or voluntary?
- Was there anything that emerged from the skills inventory that surprised you?
- From the inventory, are there skills where you rated yourself as "proficient" or "advanced"?
- From the inventory, are there skills where you rated yourself as "emerging" or "developing"?
- Are there skills that you were unsure of and didn't know how to rate yourself?
- What skills do you want to learn or enhance? What type of training or professional development would you like to have to strengthen or build your skills?
- Did you identify potential goals for yourself related to skills development? Are there particular tasks you could see yourself working on that might enhance your skills development?

HELPFUL TIP



Your corps members may need your guidance in thinking through potential tasks, projects, or deliverables that will help them practice and learn specific skills.

- Did you identify any potential challenges that you would like to share?
- How can I best support you in the development of specific skills?
- What additional support do you need?

Recommended Discussion Questions for Individual Check-in #2 (Suggested Month 9):

BELONGING CULTURE

- What has your experience in this program taught you about your ability to advocate for others? How has it helped you advocate for yourself?
- What relationships have you developed in this program that make you proud? Has the relationship challenged you to grow in any way?
- Do you feel that we have created safe space for you to share your story or the stories that matter most to you?
- Can you remember a time where you felt as if you really needed love and support from those around you and you felt that the love you desired wasn't given to you. How did that make you feel?

ASSET-BASED FRAMEWORK

- How would you describe your personal and professional growth so far this year?
- How are you using your strengths, skills, and talents?
- Are there strengths that you wish you were able to use more frequently?
- Have you encountered any challenges that have kept you from progressing toward your goals?
- Do you need to make any changes to your goals? If so, what?
- Are there any new action items that would help you move toward your goals?
- How can I support you?

INTENTIONAL SKILLS ATTAINMENT:

- Tell me about your progress? What skills have grown?
- Let's talk about some specific tasks where you have exhibited growth of a certain skill.
- Tell me about any barriers you have encountered towards building or enhancing the skills you identified at our initial check-in.
- Tell me more about your next step plans after you have completed your service year.
- How can I support you?