



Create cohesive, high-performing teams that foster trust & connection through small group discussions.



## Unite through Activity

- ▶ Deciding what to do for your next Unite event is a tough decision. Gather a list of local favorite activity options from your Community Cohesion Coordinator then send them out in an email. Use voting buttons or request a response from unit members for a democratic approach to team building!

## Related Resources

- ▶ Top 10 Tips to Create and Improve Your Employee Voice; Engage for Success, <https://engageforsuccess.org/employee-voice/to-p-10-tips-to-create-and-improve-your-employee-voice/>
- ▶ Why Voting Is Important, National Geographic, <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/why-voting-important/>
- ▶ \*The 2024 Living Pattern Survey, deadline 31 Mar: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/Community/se/251137457DFA0FA9>



# BRIDGECHAT

DISCUSSION GUIDE

MARCH 2024

## YOUR VOICE MATTERS

"My vote doesn't matter" and "Nothing changes as a result of surveys" are common sentiments, but surveys, voting, and feedback are powerful tools that directly influence policies, performance, governance, and the future of your community. Your input is essential for transforming your beliefs into reality.

Using your chain of command is the best way to bring about change by sharing your suggestions and opinions to make the Air and Space Force better. Another tool is surveys. They can shape the force. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey influences policy changes affecting our civilian force yet Air Combat Command's response rate for 2023 was 22%. Data from the Living Pattern Survey\* is collected every three years to help determine cost of living allowances but the response rate in 2021 was only 6%. Low participation rates are frequently attributed to survey fatigue, time constraints, and skepticism that the results will be used to effect changes.

Providing your opinion in surveys is a way for you to have an impact on decisions that directly affect your life and issues you believe in. Participating in the data collection process is a way to shape your local community, the broader well-being of society and our government. It is a valuable mechanism for inclusive expression of thought. When combined with others, individuals create a "collective voice" and contribute to the overall outcome.

Voting is the cornerstone of our democratic legacy. About two-thirds of military members were registered to vote in 2020. Only 47% of those registered military voters voted in the last Presidential Election. In total, about 66% of the American voting-eligible population voted. Do your civic duty, remain engaged – use your voice and vote.

Constructive meaningful feedback is essential for growth. An open dialogue with active listening and honest reflection can help reinforce positive habits and encourage change of bad habits. It can enable teams to make performance adjustments for a competitive edge. Effective feedback will improve leader development and ultimately improve unit performance and mission success.

We live in a democratic society where every voice matters and can make a difference. Whether through participation in surveys, exercising your right to vote, providing feedback, or reflecting on feedback - you have the opportunity to actively shape both your own future and the world around you. Your voice matters!

## WATCH...



Your Voice Our Future. In 2016, Defense Logistics Center produced a series of videos to showcase improvements they made using results from a 2014 climate culture survey.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/457863/your-voice-is-our-future-open-captioned> (7:00)

Your Greatest Weapon. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) offers military members voting assistance.

[https://youtu.be/j-vQ\\_Y3zu6I?si=m9AhwFRFyBUGj84Y](https://youtu.be/j-vQ_Y3zu6I?si=m9AhwFRFyBUGj84Y) (0:45)

Female Fitment. SWORD ATHENA is another tool for having your voice heard. Since 2021, they have collected, analyzed, and researched barriers to service. COMACC and Air Force are listening.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/845170/female-fitment-feature-story> (3:21)

## DISCUSS...



1. Describe what you can do to improve survey response rates.
2. How can you use survey results to improve your flight, office, installation?
3. This election season has the potential of being controversial with voters taking sides, often vocally and at work. What can you do to contribute to respectful, civil discourse that ensures we remain focused on the operational mission?
4. How can you use the SWORD ATHENA model to surface barriers and develop solutions?

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter.”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.



“We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate.”

– Thomas Jefferson

# Americans can vote. Wherever they are.

Did you know active duty military members, their spouses and overseas citizens can exercise their right to vote from anywhere in the world?

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) works to ensure that Americans living away from their voting residence can cast an absentee ballot in federal elections.

## HERE'S HOW:

GO TO FVAP.GOV AND SELECT THE STATE OF VOTING  
RESIDENCE TO REGISTER AND REQUEST A BALLOT

OR TALK TO SOMEONE AT FVAP:



1-800-438-VOTE



vote@fvap.gov



**FVAP.gov**  
FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Americans can vote. **Wherever they are.**