

SUMMER 2026 OASIS RETREAT HOMEWORK

THE MANUAL OF ME

Purpose: Great leadership at Aspire of WNY starts with self-awareness. "The Manual of Me" is a simple but powerful tool to help you articulate your working style, your values, and how you best collaborate with others. By sharing these insights with your team, you remove guesswork, foster psychological safety, and build a culture of open communication.

Instructions: Take 15 to 20 minutes to reflect deeply on the following prompts. Be honest, concise, and focused on your professional self. Once completed, keep this document handy to discuss with your peers and your direct reports.

Then, take your answers and fill them out on the digital submission form on the OASIS portal:

www.aspirewny.org/oasis

1. Optimal Working Conditions

What environments, setups, or times of day allow you to perform at your absolute peak? (e.g., Do you prefer quiet focus time in the mornings? Do you thrive in bustling, highly collaborative settings?)

2. Preferred Communication Channels

What is the best way for people to reach you or get a timely response? (e.g., remote meetings, messages, formal emails, unscheduled phone calls, or saved for a scheduled 1-on-1?)

3. Performance Drivers

When are you at your absolute best? What types of projects, team dynamics, or leadership support bring out your highest performance?

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4. Energy Drains & Triggers

What specific environments, micro-managements, or workflows disrupt your focus or drain your energy? (e.g., Last-minute changing deadlines, meetings without an agenda, lack of clear expectations?)

5. Feedback & Recognition Preferences

How do you prefer to receive constructive critique and praise? (e.g., Direct and immediate, written down first so you can process it privately, or during a structured weekly review?)

6. Common Misunderstandings

What might people accidentally misunderstand about your working style or demeanor? (e.g., "When I am quiet in a meeting, I am just processing information, not disagreeing." or "My direct tone in emails is just me trying to be efficient.")

7. Learning Styles

How do you naturally absorb and process new professional processes, rules, or information? (e.g., Hands-on practice, reading the technical documentation first, shadowing a peer, or trial-and-error?)

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In summary, put together the following phrases based on your reflection work:

1. I am at my best when:

2. I am at my worst when:

3. You can count on me to:

4. What I need from you is: