

Stakeholder influence mapping

Tool

Purpose:

Stakeholder influence mapping is a simple visual tool to examine and display the relative influence that different individuals and groups have over decision-making, and how influence and cooperation change over time. It can be used as part of discussion or negotiation among stakeholders.

Activities:

1 Define policy focus.

Influence mapping is applicable to almost any decision-making ('policy') scenario, from specific local policies to very broad positions involving government agencies and others such as the private sector.

2 Define one or more key time periods.

Most simply, stakeholder influences at one time (usually the present) can be mapped. To explore policy change, more than one time period can be chosen, based for example on past/present/future, or based around a key event (before/after).

3 Identify policy stakeholders.

The main people and institutions that have an impact on or interest in the policy need to be identified and listed.

4 Prepare materials.

One pyramid, drawn and labelled on a large sheet of paper, is needed for each time period, plus a selection of cardboard or paper circles in different sizes.

Keep in Mind

★ *Stakeholder influence mapping* is especially useful as a starting point for working out what makes policy change and tactics for bringing about positive change.

★ Stakeholder influence maps provide handy summary characterisations of historical periods in policy development.



5 Fine-tune the stakeholder list.

If there is a long list of stakeholders, a relevant sub set can be selected from the full list for each time period under discussion.

6 Estimate stakeholder group size.

Different sized stakeholder groups can be represented by different sized paper circles according to the number of people in the group (smallest=fewest, biggest=most).

7 Map stakeholder influence and relationships.

This is the key step in the process – arranging the circles within the pyramid to display influence and relationships. Influence is shown by the relative closeness of circles to the policy apex, while relationships (degree of cooperation or conflict, and shared or divergent views) are indicated by the relative proximity and overlap of the circles.

8 Identify key moments and mechanisms. Policy events, notable moves made and key external changes that have helped or hindered the process can be noted as they occur during the mapping exercise.

9 Keep record of map for future reference. Sketching or photographing the map provides a useful record, especially if the notes and comments made by participants are also recorded.

Further information

Find full tool and other related tools and resources at:

www.policy-powertools.org

or contact:

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