



How to Develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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The Key to Successful Engagement with Stakeholders

The Engagement Plan should only take place after the Scoping Process (stakeholder analysis etc.) is complete and the results of this first phase should feed directly into or serve to inform the Engagement Plan

Key elements to ensure

- institutional support
- dedicate staff/team
- the plan should include:
 - Introduction (include your scoping work here),
 - time schedule,
 - resource allocation,
 - communication strategy (including follow-up),
 - delivery logistics
 - selection of methods/techniques to be used in the engagement
 - review



Step 1 - The Team

Set a planning team – key to:

- **Formal planning group with time built into individual's work schedules**
- **Ideally to be either the same group that delivers the process or at least closely linked**
- **If human resource is limited, outside contractors may be appropriate**
- **Often outside facilitators can be a valuable asset – engage early in project**

Some factors to consider in choosing a facilitator are:

- *Subject knowledge* – while facilitators do not need to be experts in the subject area they need to know enough to facilitate the debate and take the process forward.
- *Reputation and experience* especially in similar circumstances
- *Training and methods used*
- *Appropriate style*



Step 2 – The Introduction / background

This should include:

1. background of the project – include key outcomes & outputs
2. how you have carried out your initial stakeholder identification process (include quadrant here)

Step 3 – Timescales

1. Be realistic about how long things take and always allow more rather than less time for planning and for people to get involved.
2. Remember that time is needed between events for work to be completed and to be taken to the next stage.
3. Key dates and actions - include when final decisions need to be taken, and by whom and how this link to the process



Step 4 - Resources

Adequate resource is essential to successful engagement:

Human resources (including capacity building)

Financial Resources

Step 5 - Communication

Communication is important throughout the engagement process. It is needed at the outset to get people interested, during the process so they are kept abreast of what is happening, at the end and by way of follow-up, to ensure that people are aware of what difference the process has made.

Using the information you have gathered in previous steps write a communication plan:

- Information requirements
- Frequency of communication
- Channel used for communication



Sample Communications Plan

Stakeholder	Role	Information Requirements	Information Provider	Frequency of Communication	Channel



Step 6 Logistics

Participatory processes require a lot of practical arrangements, especially in terms of user-friendly briefing materials and suitable venues. In addition to logistical practicalities, consideration should be given to the choice of venue with respect to the positive and negative potential effects that this may have on the process and its consequent outcomes.

Step 7 - Your Engagement Methods

There are many different participatory/engagement techniques which can be adopted, and indeed a range of methods are useful at different stages of the consultation process.



Step 8 - Evaluation

Why

Enables you judge whether or not the process has been a success. Need to review the following aspects:

▪ The Process

- . Did you get all the views/information that you required
- . Was the response rate what you wanted
- . Where the methods you used correct, what worked best and why
- . Was the timetable realistic

▪ Costs

- . Was it value for money

▪ Outcomes

- . Did it make a difference
- . Did anything change as a result

