

Mapping Stakeholders of Change

What is it?

For any proposed change, this method allows you to identify the key stakeholders of the change and develop a plan for more effectively managing the effort.

This method will help you:

- ◆ Strengthen any existing change or implementation plan;
- ◆ Help you develop indicators to tell you when a change implementation is having problems;
- ◆ Identify those most likely to resist the change;
- ◆ Identify allies to help in your change efforts;
- ◆ More effectively communicate with all the stakeholders of change.



The Mapping Stakeholders method is an adaptation of the approach described in *Polarity Management: Identifying and Managing Unsolvable Problems*, by Barry Johnson, © 1992 by HRD Press, Inc., ISBN #0-87425-176-1.

The assumption of this method is that everything has both good and bad associated with it, i.e., an *upside* and a *downside*. In other words, the current way of doing things has both an upside and a downside. And any proposed change, or new way of doing things, will have both an upside and a downside.

It follows that the objective of any successful change is to:

- ◆ Eliminate as much of the downside associated with the current state as possible in your design and implementation of the desired state.
- ◆ Preserve as much of the upside of the current state as possible in your design and implementation of the desired state.
- ◆ Realize as much of the upside associated with the desired future state as possible when you implement and begin to operate it.
- ◆ Avoid as much of the downside associated with the desired future state as possible when you implement and begin to operate it.

This method is commonly used at the outset of a large, complex or controversial project, or prior to implementation of a new system, process redesign, or solution of any kind.

How do I use it?

❶ Name the change to be managed in a "From _____
To _____" statement.

- ◆ *From* is a description of the *current state*.
- ◆ *To* is a description of the *desired, future state*.

Examples include:

From Manual fax reply To Autofax

From Phone order taking To Web-based order entry

From XYZ financial system To ABC system

From Manager appraisal To Team appraisal

❷ Clarify [meeting roles](#) and allow 45-60 minutes.

❸ Identify the planned change by describing the current (From) and future (To) states in the two poles of the worksheet:

- ◆ The current state in the left pole, and
- ◆ The desired future state in the right pole.

To ensure everyone is thinking in terms of the same "universe", briefly discuss and agree upon the scope of the change being considered.

- ◆ What is included in this change?
- ◆ What is excluded and therefore not part of this change?

❹ Describe different perspectives of the change by completing the four quadrants in the following order.

(L-) Bottom left = **downside of the current state**.
What is wrong with the current situation? What do we not like about it?

(R+) Upper right = **upside of the future state**.
What benefits do we believe the future state will provide? What do we hope will be different about the future state versus the current state?

(R-) Bottom right = **downside of the future state**.
What problems are we likely to experience in the future state? What could go wrong?

(L+) Upper left = **upside of the current state**.
What is good or desirable about the current situation? What elements of the current state would we like to preserve in the future state?



HINT: Some people will "see" one of these quadrants more clearly than others, since each of us has our own perspective about the change. As you move through the four quadrants, don't just brainstorm, try to understand these different perspectives and build a shared perspective as a group.

- 5 To strengthen your change implementation plans, brainstorm and capture ways in which the proposed change can be modified in response to the following prompts:

- ◆ How can we preserve L+?
- ◆ How can we assure achievement of R+?
- ◆ What periodic or routine maintenance activities would help us stay in R+?
- ◆ How can we minimize the extent of L-?
- ◆ How can we prevent falling into R-?
- ◆ What indicators would tell us when we are falling into R-?
- ◆ How can we recover when we do fall into R-?

- 6 Identify and segment the stakeholders of the proposed change.
 - ◆ On a separate chart, brainstorm a complete list of those involved in or affected by the change.
 - ◆ Make sure you include everyone and then divide them into four groups, i.e., those who are primarily...
 - **Dissatisfied** (in lower left) – those motivated to change by the problems or difficulties they perceive in the current state,
 - **Visionaries** (in upper right) -- those motivated to change by a clear and compelling Vision of the future state,
 - **Preservationists** (in upper left) – those reluctant to change due to concerns about preserving what is "good" in the current state, or
 - **Cautionaries** (in lower right) – those reluctant to change due to concerns about the downsides likely to result from adoption of the future state.

In the square at the center of the four quadrants, write the names of different stakeholders onto the map.

- ◆ Locate each individual or group on the two axes.
- ◆ Be as precise as possible in your placement of key individuals or groups along the two axes.
- ◆ The location of each individual or group indicates the extent of their focus on each quadrant.

⑦ Focus your stakeholder management efforts. There are typically too many stakeholders of any change to effectively address the concerns of all of them. You should follow the 80/20 rule and:

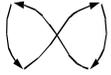
- ◆ Avoid spending time and effort on those Preservationists and Cautionaries at the extreme (outside the circle) of L+ or R-.
- ◆ Enlist the support of those Dissatisfied and Visionaries at the extreme (outside the circle) of L- and R+. They are likely to be willing allies.
- ◆ Focus your efforts on those "neutral" parties within the center circle. These are the stakeholders who are "on the fence" and most easily influenced.

⑧ Plan your communication to accommodate the perspectives of different stakeholder groups.

To communicate most effectively with any groups or individuals, tailor your approach to their perspective by sequencing your message as follows.

Stakeholder Type and Location on the Map	Best Sequence of Message
Visionaries in R+	R+ L- L+ R-
Dissatisfied in L-	L- R+ R- L+
Cautionaries in R-	R- L+ L- R+
Preservationists in L+	L+ R- R+ L-

On the next page is a blank Stakeholder Mapping worksheet.



MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS of CHANGE

Roles

Change: *FROM* _____ *TO* _____

Scribe: _____

Facilitator: _____

Date: _____ Participants: _____

Timekeeper: _____

