

Identify Stakeholders

Question

Who may be affected by or have an effect on the work our organization does?

Space Setup

- Pick a space for the “parking lot”. Label it with a sticky note and leave some pens and sticky notes nearby.
- Consider writing the main question on a white board or on a piece of paper and tape it to the wall: *Who may be affected by or have an effect on the work our organization does?*
- Distribute sticky notes, pens, and handouts around the table.

Instructions

| Time Estimate | Instruction <i>Italics & indentation indicate the instruction should be read out loud.</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Icebreaker 5 - 10 minutes | [Optional] Start with an icebreaker. Ice breakers use up valuable time, but help people transition to the activity. Go with the one outlined below, or one you’re comfortable with. <i>Extreme Rock, Paper, and Scissors</i> <i>You play this energizer in the normal “rock, paper, scissors” fashion with a fun twist. Have the group pair off. Once the winner and loser are established, the loser must follow the winner around for the rest of the activity chanting the winner’s name. This continues until you are left with two people fighting with a crowd of supporters watching.</i> |
| Overview 10 minutes | Explain the goal and overview of the activity. <i>The Food Rescue Alliance is building new software to replace their existing, out-dated software to help in the daily logistics of food delivery. They are engaging in a participatory process to build it. To gain all the advantages a participatory process brings, collectively, we</i> |

have to figure out who the stakeholders are, which of them need to be involved at what level, and what issues they may bring with them. This exercise will brainstorm all the stakeholders of our organization, a subset of which will be recruited to participate in later activities.

This process isn't just about creating software, it will aid in the development of a shared understanding within the Food Rescue Alliance of one another's organizations, hopefully leading to more successful collaborations. We hope to align our mental maps of how each organization's stakeholders overlap and how organizations prioritize the folks impacted by and that impact their work.

Keep in mind this is a starting point. The results of today's brainstorm are not meant to provide the complete detail of who our organizational stakeholders are.

Some things might come up for you while you're engaging in the activity. We have a parking lot over here where you can add a sticky note for any critiques, questions, ideas, or feedback. I encourage you to use the parking lot throughout the exercise if something comes up for you.

10
minutes

Individually brainstorm stakeholders.

Make sure you have a pen, sticky notes, and a stakeholder handout within reach for reference. We'll start by thinking individually about stakeholders. When we start, you'll write down as many as you can think of, one per sticky note. Pay no attention to your neighbor.

If you get stuck, try reviewing the handout, or raise your hand and I'll do my best to help.

Part of the point of brainstorming is to write down anything that comes to mind, even if it seems silly. On reflection, the silly ideas can turn out to be among the best, so be as far-ranging as you can.

Think about the question "Who may be affected by or have an effect on the work our organization does?". Go!

Pairs

5
minutes

Consolidation of stakeholders in groups of 2 - 3 (depending on your group size).

Now we'll work with someone else. Turn to your neighbor, find a space on the wall, and attach your stakeholders. Read them all. Together, determine which are duplicates and combine them. If a stakeholder is a subset of another, discuss what level of stakeholder you think is appropriate and correct if needed. For example, if one person has "staff" and another has "executive director", discuss what level of stakeholder you want to examine.

If you get stuck, remember the handout or raise your hand for help. Go!

All

5
minutes

Consolidation of stakeholders into larger groups of 4 - 6 (depending on group size)

Now we'll work in larger groups and repeat the process we just did. Combine with your neighbors. Read all the stakeholders. Together, determine which are duplicates and the level of stakeholder you think is appropriate.

Raise your hand for help. Go!

If after this step, the whole group hasn't merged yet, repeat one more time with everyone. Take photos or notes of all the merged shareholders.

Dot Voting

Dot voting.

This is a great list of stakeholders, but we want to move forward with a subset of what we have up here. I want you to think about which stakeholders we should prioritize considering. You'll use a marker to put a dot on that stakeholder's sticky note. You get five votes. We all have different value systems, so there's no right answer. Go!

Once the dot voting is done, select the top five - six stakeholders with the most dots to move on to the next step. Facilitator's discretion on how to handle ties.

5
minutes

List stakeholder interests. Take the five stakeholders valued by the group and stick them in a horizontal row on the wall with plenty of space in between them.

Next we'll do a quick brainstorm about stakeholder interests. Some of these stakeholders are not in this room and we will be guessing at their interests. We recognize the bias of this approach, and that this is only a starting point. Think about your own experiences or a conversation with someone about their interest in our organization.

Individually, we'll write as many interests as we can think of and stick them under the stakeholder. If you see someone else has already added an interest you were thinking about, put a star next to it instead of adding a duplicate.

Stakeholder interests may vary. Some may be best served by carrying our organization forward, others by stopping or weakening it. Even among stakeholders in the same group, there may be conflicting concerns. So if you find that you added something that's the opposite of what someone else wrote, that's ok.

Consider interests like economics, social change, work, time, environment, physical health, safety and security, and mental health. Refer to the handout for prompts. Go!

Take a photo of the interests or record in your notes.

10
minutes

Stakeholder mapping. This can be challenging in groups of 5 or more. Consider breaking into smaller groups if necessary.

Next we'll map them based on their influence and interest. Stakeholder mapping is a way of determining which stakeholders have the most positive or negative influence, who is likely to be most affected, and how you should work with stakeholders with different levels of interest and influence.

If you're doing this in one group, tape the map up on the wall. If you're doing this in smaller groups, hand out a map to each group.

As you can see, low to high influence over our organization runs along a line from the bottom to the top of the grid, and low to high interest in our organization runs along a

line from left to right. Both influence and interest can be either positive or negative, depending on the perspectives of the stakeholders in question. The lines describing them are continuous, meaning that people can have any degree of interest from none to as high as possible, including any of the points in between.

The purpose of this kind of diagram is to help us understand what kind of influence each stakeholder has on our organization. That knowledge in turn can help us decide how to manage stakeholders – how to marshal the help of those that support us, how to involve those who could be helpful, and how to convert – or at least neutralize – those who may start out feeling negative.

This map is a spectrum, so if folks fall in-between the categories, that is okay, we can put them in-between.

Interest here means one or both of two things: (1) that the individual, organization, or group is interested intellectually or philosophically in the effort; and/or (2) they or it is affected by it. The level of interest, in this second sense, corresponds to how great the effect is.

Influence can be interpreted in several ways. Official power, like a government agency. Unofficial power, like a funder. Community leaders, who might be listened to as a result of their position. People with large networks who can sway many community members.

Discuss each stakeholder with the group and where to put it. Take a photo or add the map to your notes (a spreadsheet might work well here).

5
minutes

Group wrap up.

Thank you for your time. Other food rescues will be doing this same activity. This will help us collectively understand the similarities and differences in our organizations, hopefully leading to stronger communication and collaboration. I'll send out a link when other organization's stakeholders are posted if you're curious to see how we compare.

Any parting thoughts or questions you might have, please add them to the "parking lot".

10
minutes

Facilitator wrap up. If using photos, verify the sticky notes are legible. Through notes or photos, verify you have the following:

- The complete list of brainstormed stakeholders
- The top 5 - 6 stakeholders & their interests
- Stakeholder map
- Parking lot, if there's anything in it.

Facilitation Nudges

Tips for real-time issues that might arise. If you discover some that worked for you, please share via email. They might help another group navigate this activity.

If a group gets too “into the weeds”

Try reminding them this is a high-level activity, meant to cultivate brainstorming about our processes as a whole and there will be other opportunities to refine it.

If a group gets off track

Try asking them to put their thought or comment on a sticky note in the “parking lot”

If a group can't arrive at a consensus

Try reminding them they don't have to agree, ask them to represent all the ideas