

How to Conduct a Stakeholder Analysis – Part 1

What is Stakeholder Analysis?

Stakeholder - a person who has something to gain or lose through the outcomes of a project. Stakeholders can be organizations, groups, departments, structures, networks or individuals, but the list needs to be pretty exhaustive to ensure nobody is left out.

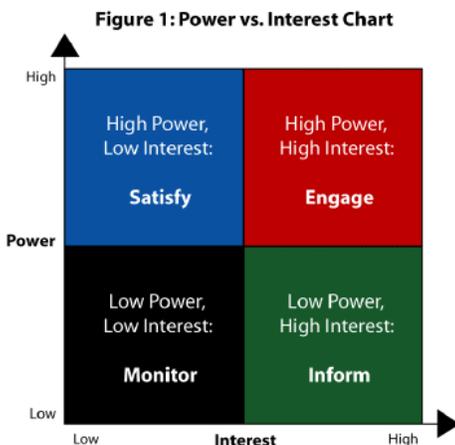
Stakeholder Analysis - the identification of a project's key stakeholders, an assessment of their interests and power, the ways in which these affect project riskiness and viability, and strategies to address these risks.

Interest - measures the degree stakeholders are likely to be affected by the project and what degree of interest or concern they have in or about it

Power - measures the influence stakeholders have over the project and to what degree they can help achieve, or block, the desired change.

Variables to consider for interest and power – formal hierarchy, budget holders, authority of leadership (charismatic, political, familial, networked), control of strategic resources, possession of specialist knowledge, & negotiating position

Strategies – Power vs. Interest Chart



Stakeholders (upper right box) with high power, and interests aligned with the project, are the people it is important to fully engage and bring on board. At the very top of the 'power' list will be the 'decision-makers', usually senior management or sponsors. Beneath these are people whose opinion matters – the 'opinion leaders'. This creates a pyramid sometimes known as an Influence Map.

Stakeholders (lower right box) with high interest but low power need to be kept informed; if organized, they may form the basis of an interest group or coalition which can lobby for change.

Stakeholders (upper left box) with high power but low interest should be kept satisfied and ideally brought around as patrons or supporters for the project.

Stakeholders (lower left box) with low power and low interest should be monitored for any changes.

The final step is to develop a set of strategies how best to engage different stakeholders in a project, how to 'frame' or present the message or information so it is useful to them, and how to maintain a relationship with them. Identify who will make each contact and how, what message they will communicate and how they will follow-up.

When Should a Stakeholder Analysis Be Done?

Stakeholder analysis should always be done at the beginning of a project, even if it is a quick list of stakeholders and their interests. This can be fine-tuned as the project proceeds.

