

NAME

Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Pyramid

SOURCE

Public Domain

INTRODUCTION

The diagram below illustrates the relationship between stakeholder influence and stakeholder engagement approaches. Each approach is a valid method of stakeholder engagement, but more suited to particular stakeholder types. Pull communications are one-way and depend on stakeholders deciding to access the information. At the other end of the pyramid a partnership engagement approach enables shared accountability, decision making, joint learning and actions. For more information about the stakeholder engagement strategy, have a look at the “Identify” stage in the Shape resource.



NOTES

Whether you intend to engage to meet a specific goal or start a long-term conversation all communication methods engage stakeholders in some way. Push communications are appropriate for low interest/low influence stakeholders. Attempts at partnership would be a waste of resources and time. Collaboration and partnership is only appropriate for key players, stakeholders with high influence and high interest who can bring considerable benefits to the organisation or project, but conversely - if not managed - bring considerable risk.

Stakeholder Engagement approaches:

Partnership

Shared accountability and responsibility. Two-way engagement joint learning, decision making and actions.

Participation

Part of the team, engaged in delivering tasks or with responsibility for a particular area/activity. Two-way engagement within limits of responsibility.

Consultation

Involved, but not responsible and not necessarily able to influence outside of consultation boundaries. Limited two-way engagement: organisation asks questions, stakeholders answer.

Push communications

One-way engagement. Organisation may broadcast information to all stakeholders or target particular stakeholder groups using various channels e.g. email, letter, webcasts, podcasts, videos, leaflets.

Pull communications

One-way engagement. Information is made available stakeholder choose whether to engage with it.

Use the Stakeholder Engagement model pictured above to review your communication plan and stakeholder analysis. Make sure that your engagement approaches are appropriate to each stakeholder group. Check that your communication plan isn't over reliant on push or pull communications and that you aren't planning to spend too much time in face to face consultations with the less influential stakeholders. Consider whether more costly push communication methods like printed materials can be replaced with cheaper options like email, online surveys or online newsletters.

Once you have reviewed your plans you need to form your stakeholder engagement strategy:

Purpose of the document

Explain that for projects to be successful a clear understanding of the stakeholders and an engagement strategy for managing them is essential.

Project background

A high level overview of your project or programme. Mention the project's business objectives, key deliverables, budget and timescales.

Introduction

Briefly explain how you carried out your stakeholder analysis and give an overview of the contents of your stakeholder engagement plan.

Stakeholder analysis and engagement plan

Insert your completed stakeholder analysis here.

Stakeholder communication plan

Insert your completed communication plan in this section.

The stakeholder list

Include the full list of stakeholders that you identified. This section is probably best as an appendix.

Make sure that you get your strategy signed-off by your project sponsor or project board. Sign-off must include approval from your client and should be at a senior level. Ensure that anyone who is involved in delivering the plan has read and approved it and understands the actions that they need to take.

Final words

So you know who your stakeholders are, you have identified the key players and you have a plan for engaging with them. By taking these steps you are already way ahead and your project has a much greater chance of success. However, you do actually need to implement your plan and this is where some project managers fall down. Review your strengths and weaknesses.

USEFUL LINKS

- <http://www.stakeholdermap.com/stakeholder-engagement.html>