

**Designing
Public
Engagement
Experiences**

Handbook

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Outline

This workshop aims to take participants through the early phases of planning a public engagement process. Through hands-on activities, participants will learn about the realities of the public and key stakeholders. This will help them to conduct public engagement processes that recognize the deeper social context in which policies are developed.

At the end of the session, participants will be better able to design for their people, context, and goals. They will have a greater understanding of the relationships between policy, communications and public engagement. This is an opportunity to collaborate and provide feedback on an evolving approach to designing engagement plans for the federal government.

The workshop contains four activities:

Activity 1 – People

Activity 2 – Context

Activity 3 – Goals

Activity 4 – Methods

Each activity includes a purpose statement, a set of instructions, guiding questions, and an example. You can work from the Fictional Scenario provided or use your own consultation example.

Make copies for different projects or for different members of your team. Print the activity pages as posters and work together!

You are an employee of the Fictitious Engagement Department (FED). In the last five years, health studies have revealed potential damaging effects of sugary drinks on human development. This has led lobbying groups to put pressure on the federal government to place a ban on sugary drinks. Based on your minister's mandate, your team has been asked to propose government intervention on sugary soft drinks to address these health concerns. This may include legislative options.

Public Opinion Research suggests that Canadians hold strong opinions on both the benefits and disadvantages of continuing to sell sugary soft drinks. Media analysis reveals strong interest in Central Ontario, Quebec, and Alberta, with 14 related editorials written this year.

Recommendations for any new legislation must be tabled within eighteen months.

Fictional Scenario

Activity One People

Purpose

Activity 1 helps to identify the People who have a stake in the issue at hand. Consider who has influence and who is affected by the issue.

Another term for this activity is stakeholder mapping, although we encourage you to think beyond stakeholders to potential partners, influencers and people who may not have been consulted in the past.

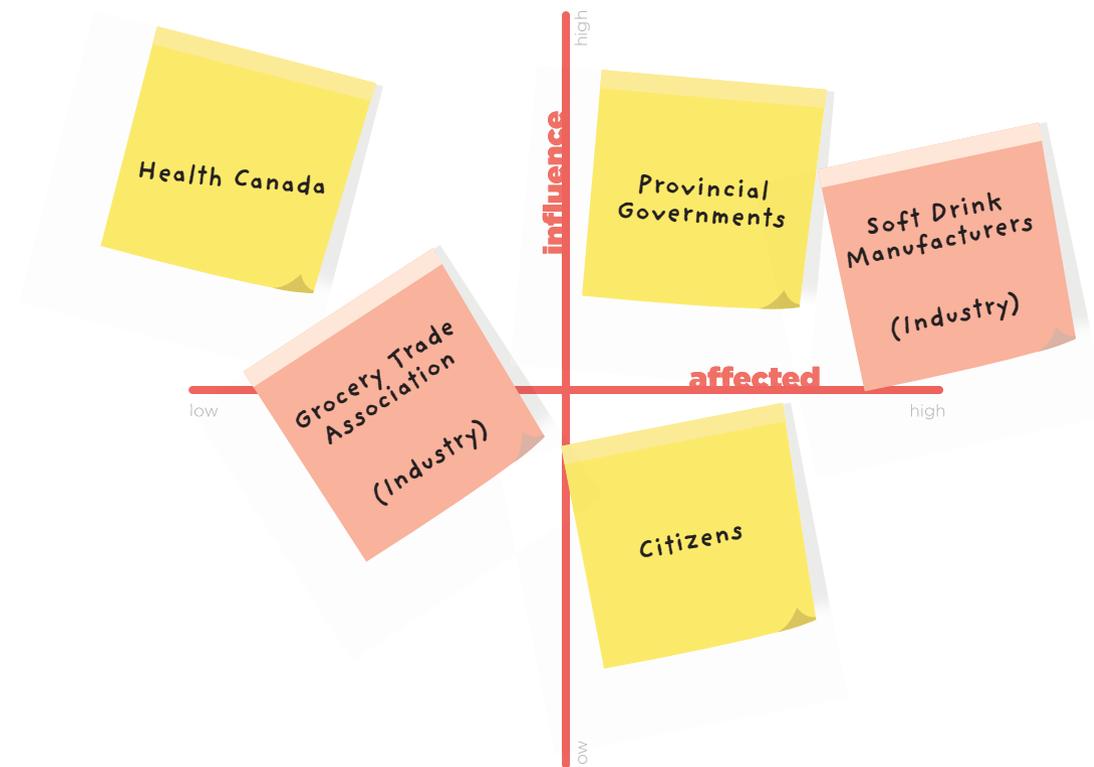
Instructions

First, make a list of all the people (partners, influencers, affected) who are involved in the issue about which you are engaging.

Next, use the activity sheet on the next page to map each one on two axes: influence and affectedness.

Questions to consider:

- Who will you have to engage on this issue (e.g. high influencers such as lobbying groups)?
- Who could you empower? (e.g. those who may be highly affected but of low influence)
- With whom might you partner to expand your network?



Activity Two Context

Purpose

Activity 2 helps you define the Context in which your engagement will take place. For each of the People defined in Activity 1, consider:

- the person or group's awareness of the issue
- their relationship with government
- their confidence in the government to address their issue

Instructions

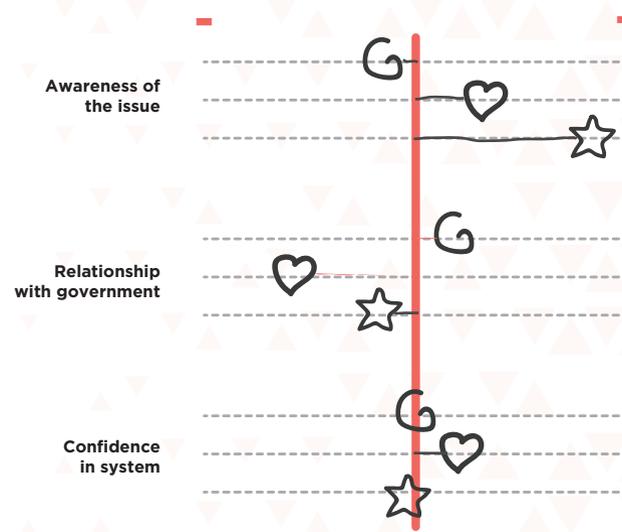
Assign each person or group identified in Activity 1 a symbol (e.g. star, spiral, square) and place it next to their name on the space provided. You can, if you wish, ask members of your team to role play representing the persons or groups chosen.

Use the prompts on the next page to discuss where each chosen person or group falls on the continuum of left (low, negative, poor) to right (high, positive, good) and then mark each with their chosen symbol.

Use past engagements or research such as surveys, interviews or published position papers to inform your ratings. If you cannot answer these questions for all People involved, you may wish to do research before moving forward.

People

Affected	Citizens	G
Influencer	Soft Drink Manufacturer	Heart
Partner	Provincial Government	Star



Activity Three Goals

Purpose

Activity 3 helps you identify and prioritize your Goals with consideration for the People and the Context you have just mapped out.

Identifying clear engagement Goals helps to ensure that those involved (the engagement team, decision-makers, and participants) have shared expectations. Clear Goals also allow you to define and measure your intended impact.

Instructions

Examine the Context considerations discussed in the previous activity (Awareness, Relationship, Confidence) and take note of which areas show the most negative (leftward positions) or polarized (combinations of leftward and rightward positions) ratings.

Let the outcome of Activity 2 drive which engagement Goals you choose. Start with one or two Goals for each person or group. Use the designated symbols to identify which engagement Goals you have chosen for all People involved. Don't choose too many!

Questions to consider:

- Which negative or polarized Context consideration will most impede your planned engagement strategy?
- Which Goal might help address challenges and barriers identified in this group's Context?

Activity Three | Goals

Select one goal for each person or group identified in the previous activity

Goals

Place symbol of appropriate stakeholder beside goals

Goals	Place symbol of appropriate stakeholder beside goals
Awareness of the issue 	Expose tradeoffs & constraints surrounding issue
	Hear diverse perspectives / understand values
	Identify/enhance understanding of public problems
Relationship with government 	Transform a conflict or narrative on specific issue
	Develop relationships for ongoing collaboration
	Develop consensus
Confidence in the system 	Expose tradeoffs & constraints surrounding issue
	Hear diverse perspectives / understand values
	Identify/enhance understanding of public problems
Other:	

Activity Four Methods

Purpose

Activity 4 helps you determine the Methods that will correspond with your identified Goals. This activity is paired with the Methods Cards.

Instructions

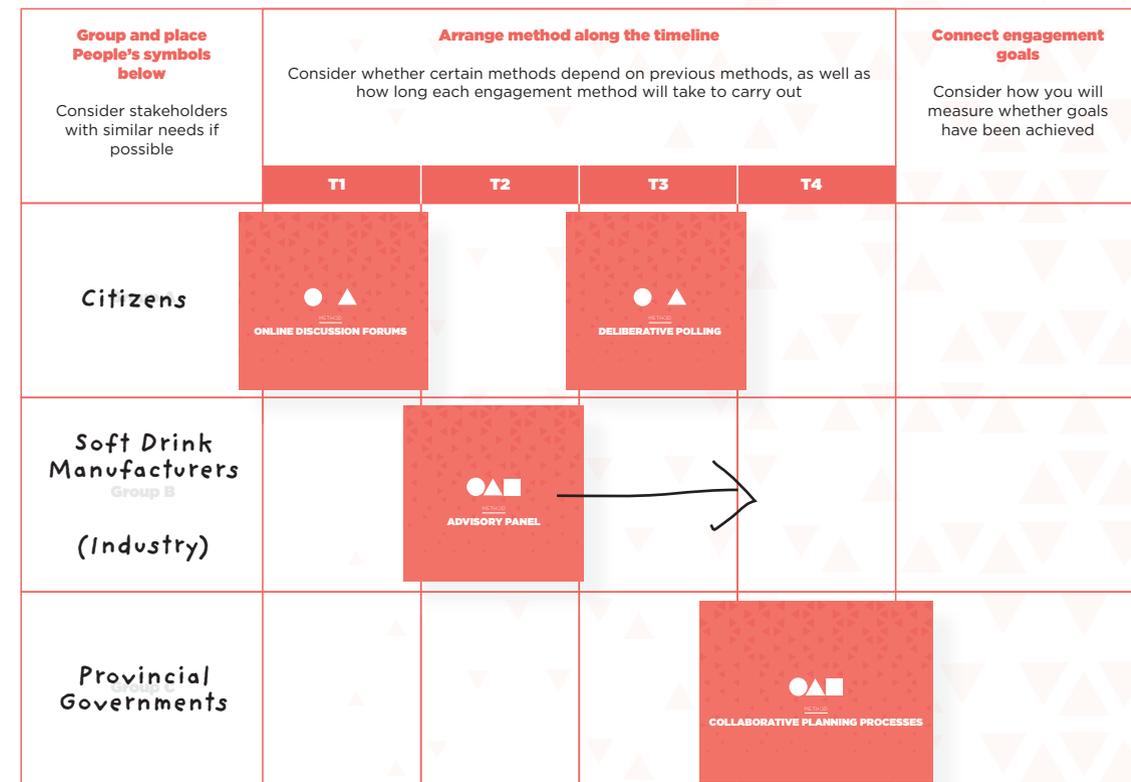
Examine the following list of Methods. Consider matches between your chosen Goals and possible Methods. The Goals and Methods are grouped into themes with corresponding symbols to help with this task (see blue circular icons). Select any number of methods you think can be used to achieve your chosen Goals.

Write your chosen methods on to sticky notes. Decide what People will be engaged through each method. Arrange your methods along the timeline to build your engagement strategy. You can combine People who will benefit from similar engagement Methods into a single group.

Questions to consider:

- Are there conditions that would require certain goals to be met before others?
- Which Methods will help serve Goals at which stages?
- Are certain Methods better suited to certain People?

Activity Four | Methods



Acknowledgements

Canada