

7 Steps to Map Stakeholders

Stakeholders Analysis

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Step 1

Identify Stakeholders

- Stakeholders may be directly or indirectly impacted by the solution.
- Stakeholders may consider the people that will interact with your client's system.
- A stakeholder may also be a software provider vendor (e.g., cloud provider) or the subject matter expert that may act as an independent chancellor.

Step 2

Identify Stakeholder Roles

- A stakeholder may be a provider or the sponsor of the whole project. It is usual for a person (stakeholder) to have multiple roles.
- You need to identify the roles of every stakeholder to evaluate their significance and to group them so you understand who will play a critical part in the project's execution and success.

Step 3

Recognize Stakeholder's Attitudes

Start by asking:

- How will stakeholders experience the whole change? Are they positive or negative?
- How will they approach you as a business analyst? Will they respect the work and the effort?
- Do they think that the change will benefit them, or do they think that it is a necessary evil?

If the attitudes are not the desired ones, a collaborative approach may be required to increase the perception of the value.

Stakeholders with positive attitudes towards the business analysis effort and change scope can be crucial allies in making the vision of the change reality whereas negative attitudes may minimize the chance of a successful change implementation.

Step 4

Recognize Decision-Making Authority

Start by asking:

- Who do you have to approach to request an approval?
- Given the approval needed, who can give it?

Step 5

Recognize Level of Power or Influence

There are many types of authority and triggers of power and influence:

- Expert authority
- Charismatic authority
- Legal authority
- Position authority, etc.

Do not associate power and influence only with the position a person holds in an organization. In most organizations and departments, there's a dominant person who wields informal authority, regardless of title.

Identify “champions” that can articulate the value of the proposed change to everyone else.

Step 6

Analyze Risk(s) in the Stakeholder's Commitment

Analyze risk(s) from different angles.

Negative attitudes or unwillingness to promote a change because of rivalry between departments can be tackled by presenting the big picture and the ideal future that will benefit all the stakeholders' ecosystem.

Step 7

Find Possible Alliances

There will always be some stakeholders that are positive and promote the change.

Figure out who can contribute to your effort and build alliances on the basis of a common vision for the future ideal state.

