ENGAGING PEOPLE ACTIVELY

A PLANNING PROCESS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This process helps you think through the steps for the development of a community engagement plan. Each step provides a series of important questions to answer before moving on. Step 6 in the planning process refers to the Community Engagement Model overleaf. For further information please contact your local EPA Community Engagement facilitator or our Community & Stakeholder Engagement Unit.

1. IDENTIFY THE DILEMMA/OPPORTUNITY

What is the dilemma/opportunity? Why do you want to involve the public, community and/or stakeholders?

2. IDENTIFY THE PEOPLE IN THE 'COMMUNITY'

Who do you need to talk to? Who's demanding to be let in? Whose input do you need? Who is legitimately part of this discussion? Whose interests are affected (positively/negatively) by this issue/problem/ project? Who will be outraged later if excluded now? Whose buy-in do you need?

3. ANALYSE THE COMMUNITY'S GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

What do the stakeholders/community want from the process? What possible benefits and costs are posed to them by your activities? What possible benefits and costs are posed to them by participating in your engagement program? How much power do they currently have to influence the outcome/ decision? How much would they like to have? How would they like to be engaged? What type of engagement might the community be expecting? (Some social research can help here.)

4. ANALYSE YOUR GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS

What are you hoping to get from the community in order to achieve your goals? What does success look like? What does failure look like? What are you allowed to do or not do? What is forbidden/compulsory/ non-negotiable? What decisions are predetermined? What is negotiable/flexible/open for debate? What's your mandate/role, budget and timelines? How would you like the community to be engaged? What type of engagement is your organisation expecting?

5. DETERMINE THE 'TENSIONS AND SYNERGIES'

Based on all of the above information, what is worth discussing? What goals might the community have that you can meet? What goals might you have that they can meet? Where is discussion likely to prove fruitful and where isn't it? How aligned are the engagement expectations?

6. DETERMINE YOUR PURPOSE, PROCESS AND TOOLS

Based on all of the above, what is your overall engagement purpose with this project/issue (refer to IAP2 Model overleaf)? How might different people/stakeholders be engaged differently? What tools are appropriate for this project?

7. OUTLINE HOW RISKS WILL BE MANAGED

Based on the above analysis, what are the risks if you don't engage with the community/stakeholders? What are the risks if you do engage with the community/stakeholders? What is the likelihood of these risks occurring? What would be the impact if they did occur? How will these risks be managed?

8. OUTLINE HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED

What is the purpose of the evaluation? Who wants to know what from the evaluation? What evidence will be collected and how? When will this reflection occur and what resources are required to do it?

9. OUTLINE YOUR LEARNING APPROACH

What do you want to learn about community engagement? What skills in community engagement do you want to build? What approach will you use to develop your skills? When and how will this happen? How can you help others learn from your experience?

10. WRITE UP YOUR PLAN AND IMPLEMENT IT

Get buy-in internally and externally when you write up the plan. Evaluate and revise as you go along. Remember it is a living document, not an archive.

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A model for community engagement

This model defines the different types of engagement. Each type (Inform, Consult etc) has an associated goal and promise. You can use this model to help you define which type of engagement is appropriate for your project or for particular stakeholders or segments of the community in a project. Once you have defined your engagement purpose(s) you can decide which tools would best meet your aims.

IAP2 – Public Participation Spectrum

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).
Modified by the Community & Stakeholder Engagement Relations Unit staff at EPA Victoria, March 2010.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL:	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL:**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL:**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL:**	**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL:**
To provide stakeholders and the broader public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain feedback from stakeholders and the broader public on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with stakeholders and the broader public throughout the process to ensure that their issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with stakeholders and the broader public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of stakeholders and the broader public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC:	**PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC:**	**PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC:**	**PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC:**	**PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC:**
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
EXAMPLE TOOLS:	**EXAMPLE TOOLS:**	**EXAMPLE TOOLS:**	**EXAMPLE TOOLS:**	**EXAMPLE TOOLS:**
• Fact sheets • Websites • Open houses	• Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings	• Workshops • Deliberate polling	• Citizen advisory committees • Consensus building • Participatory decision-making	• Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions
EPA EXAMPLES:	**EPA EXAMPLES:**	**EPA EXAMPLES:**	**EPA EXAMPLES:**	**EPA EXAMPLES:**
• Information bulletins • EPA website • Publications	• Planning permits • Works approval process	• Publication development • Schools program • 20B conferences	• Codes of practice • Policy • EIPs • EREPs	• NEIPs • Sustainability covenants

INCREASING LEVEL OF EDUCATION/LEARNING/SOCIAL CAPITAL POTENTIAL

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