Lightning Workshop: Stakeholder Mapping & Engagement

Facilitation Script

`2 hours`

`5 min` **Introduction**

Clearly define what initiative, project, or decision you're mapping stakeholders for. Be specific about scope.

OPENING

"Today we're mapping the stakeholder landscape for *[specific initiative]*. By the end, we'll know who the key players are, what they care about, and exactly how each of us will engage with the five most critical stakeholders."

SCOPE

"We're focusing on stakeholders for *[initiative]* specifically, not every stakeholder relationship we have. Let's keep that boundary clear."

`15 min` **Stakeholder Brainstorm**

Have participants brainstorm all stakeholders: people, teams, or groups who are affected by the work, can influence the work, have resources you need, or will be asked to change.

PROMPT

"Think about everyone who has a stake in *[initiative]*. Who will be affected by it? Who can influence whether it succeeds? Who has resources or approvals we need? Who will be asked to change their behavior? Write each name or group on a sticky note."

EXPAND

"Don't forget: customers, end users, executives, peers, support teams, external partners, regulators. Cast a wide net first; we'll prioritize later."

`25 min` **Power/Interest Grid**

Draw a 2×2 with Power (low to high) on the Y-axis and Interest (low to high) on the X-axis. Place each stakeholder on the grid through group discussion.

SETUP

"Power means their ability to help or block our initiative. Do they control resources, decisions, or access we need? Interest means how much they care about this initiative, whether positively or negatively."

QUADRANT MEANING

"High power, high interest: these are our key players, engage closely. High power, low interest: keep satisfied. Low power, high interest: keep informed. Low power, low interest: monitor."

PLACEMENT

"Let's place *[stakeholder]*. How much power do they have over this initiative? How interested are they in what happens?"

`15 min` **Critical 5 Selection**

From the high-power stakeholders, select the 5 who are most critical to engage. Consider both supporters and potential blockers.

SELECTION

"Looking at our high-power stakeholders, which 5 relationships are most critical to the success of *[initiative]*? Don't just pick supporters. We need to include anyone who could derail us if we don't engage them well."

BALANCE

"I want us to include at least one potential skeptic or blocker. Who's that person who, if we don't bring them along, could cause real problems?"

20 min Empathy Snapshots

For each critical stakeholder, fill out an empathy snapshot: What do they care about? What do they fear? What would success look like to them? What's their current stance?

PROCESS

"Let's spend 4 minutes on each of our critical 5. For *[stakeholder]*: What do they care about most, not just for this project, but in their role overall? What do they fear or want to avoid? What would success look like from their perspective? What's their current stance: supportive, neutral, skeptical?"

PROBE

"What's the worst thing that could happen to them if this initiative goes wrong? That's often what they're really worried about."

15 min Engagement Tactics

For each critical stakeholder, identify one specific engagement action: a conversation, meeting, deliverable, or gesture that would advance the relationship.

PROMPT

"Given what *[stakeholder]* cares about and fears, what's one specific action we could take in the next two weeks to engage them effectively? Be specific: not 'communicate more' but 'schedule a 30-minute call to share early results and get their input.'"

5 min Owner Assignment

Assign an owner for each stakeholder relationship. This person is responsible for the engagement action and ongoing relationship management.

ASSIGNMENT

"Who's the best person to own the relationship with *[stakeholder]*? This is about who has the best existing relationship or positional fit, not about equal distribution."

10 min Wrap-up

Photograph all outputs. Confirm next steps and how the group will track stakeholder engagement progress.

CLOSE

"I'll send photos of our map and engagement plan by tomorrow. *[Owners]*, you've got your assignments. Let's check in on progress at *[next meeting]*. What questions do you have before we close?"

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