

Activity 5.2 Developing an Awareness of Stakeholders

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Description

This activity is designed to help participants think deeply and methodically about who has a stake in the conversation and should be included at the table. It expands thinking and encourages greater inclusivity.

Learning Goal

- Distinguish and identify various types of stakeholders in civic issues.

Instructions (50 minutes)

<p>Set Up</p>	<p>Prepare for the Activity</p> <p>Select a topic that is important to your discussion group, something they are passionate about or where they see the need for change. As preparation for this activity, consider doing Activity 5.1 Identifying Your Civic Passion in a prior session.</p> <p>Share the Identifying Stakeholders Worksheet with participants as handouts or create copies of this file for each group.</p> <p>Organize participants into small groups (3-4 ppl).</p> <p>Begin by introducing the learning goals of this activity.</p>	
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¹ **Citation for this activity:** Lori Britt (2023). Developing an Awareness of Stakeholders. In Hartman and Byrd (Eds), The Interactivity Foundation Collaborative Discussion Toolkit. Retrieved from <https://www.collaborativediscussionproject.com/activities/module-5>

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<p>Step One</p>	<p>Introduce the Four Types of Stakeholders</p> <p>Share the following introduction to stakeholders with participants:</p> <p>When collaborating with others on civic or public issues, it is important to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives on the issue are considered. As we think about complex issues, we need to think about who the issue “touches” and then find out ways to gain their perspectives. One place to start is by thinking about stakeholders. A stakeholder is someone with an interest in the issue. This might be hard to conceptualize at first, so it may help to think about four categories of stakeholders in public issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Affected: Those directly impacted by the issue, whose lives are directly touched by the issue. 2) Helpers: Those who try to help those impacted, this could be family, friends, support groups, non-profits, institutions, etc. 3) Influencers: Those who try to influence how the issue is defined and/or advocate for changes. 4) Decision-Makers: Those who have the power to make change through policy. (Policy being defined as a change in the status quo which might include, but is not limited to legislation.) <p>Facilitator Tip: Work through a sample issue with the group to show examples of the various types of stakeholders.</p>	<p>15 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p>Introduce the Issue</p> <p>If this group has done Activity 5.1 Identifying Your Civic Passion, assign small groups to one of the “winning” issues. You might choose to have groups all focus on the same issue to be able to compare and add depth, or you may wish to have groups working on several of the final four issues.</p> <p>If the group has not done Activity 5.1, briefly introduce the chosen issue prepared for this discussion.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>Create Stakeholder Charts</p> <p>In small groups, have participants identify stakeholders for the issue in each of the four categories using the Identifying Stakeholders Worksheet.</p> <p>Encourage them to keep thinking for several rounds to encourage consideration of those beyond the “usual suspects” or people who are normally associated with the issue. At the same time, remind them to make sure these are people with a stake or connected to the issue in some way.</p> <p>Use the following prompts to help participants think deeply about who these stakeholders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who is directly impacted by the issue? 	<p>20 min</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there others affected indirectly? • Who are the people or organizations who help those impacted? • Who has the authority to make decisions about this issue? • Who might inform those decisions? • Who is shaping public perception of this issue? • Who has critical information about this issue? • Who is involved in addressing the issue? 	
Step Four	<p>Debrief as a Full Group</p> <p>Invite each group to share their chart of stakeholders. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any “surprise” stakeholders on these lists? • What are some strategies you can use to recognize the less obvious or marginalized stakeholders? • Why is it important to consider as many stakeholders as possible? What is gained by this? When might this hinder progress or development? 	10 min

Reflection Journal

- If everybody in your community thinks the same way, how do you seek out divergent or different perspectives? What strategies could you use to help you think beyond your comfort zone?
- Are there ever disadvantages to seeking out too many diverse perspectives on an issue? When might you want to filter or limit perspectives on an issue?

Practice Journal

This week, think of a particular topic. (It could be your civic passion topic from Activity 5.1.) Make a list of the stakeholders. What sort of stakeholders are hard to identify? How might you better identify stakeholders on this topic? What can you gain by understanding the levels of stakeholders on this topic?

Dive Deeper: Additional Resources

- [Identifying Stakeholders and Their Interests](https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main): Rabinowitz, Phil. "Chapter 7, Section 8. Identifying and Analyzing Stakeholders and Their Interests." *The Community Tool Box*, Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main. Accessed 9 Sep. 2023.

Activity Cluster

[5.1 Identifying Your Civic Passion](#)

[3.5 Seeking Divergent Thinking \(Surround the Topic\)](#)

[3.8 Mapping Complexity \(Fishbone Diagram\)](#)

[5.2 Developing an Awareness of Stakeholders](#)