

Alignment, Alignment, Alignment:

Why to, When to and How to

Vantage Partners

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Partner





Alignment, Alignment, Alignment: *When to, Why to, How To*

Danny Ertel, Partner

vantage partners

Vantage's sourcing and supply chain management practice

NEGOTIATION

COLLABORATION

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TRANSFORMATION

We partner with clients to help them achieve world-class procurement and supply chain management performance through strategic advice, organizational transformation, hands-on advisory support, and design and delivery of training and coaching programs.

- Spin-off of the Harvard Negotiation Project
- Faculty at Harvard University, the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, and the US Military Academy at West Point
- Leaders in international conflict resolution through CMG (now part of Mercy Corps)





Workshop objectives

- Understand how sometimes getting a “mandate” can backfire
- Understand how to map (and navigate) a complex stakeholder landscape
- Recognize why some of your stakeholders are right to resist, and what to do about it
- Know when to ask for feedback, and when to call the question

Quick Poll



Among buyers, how many of you have a “difficult” category or department, when it comes to access, early engagement, and eventually spend under a real category strategy?

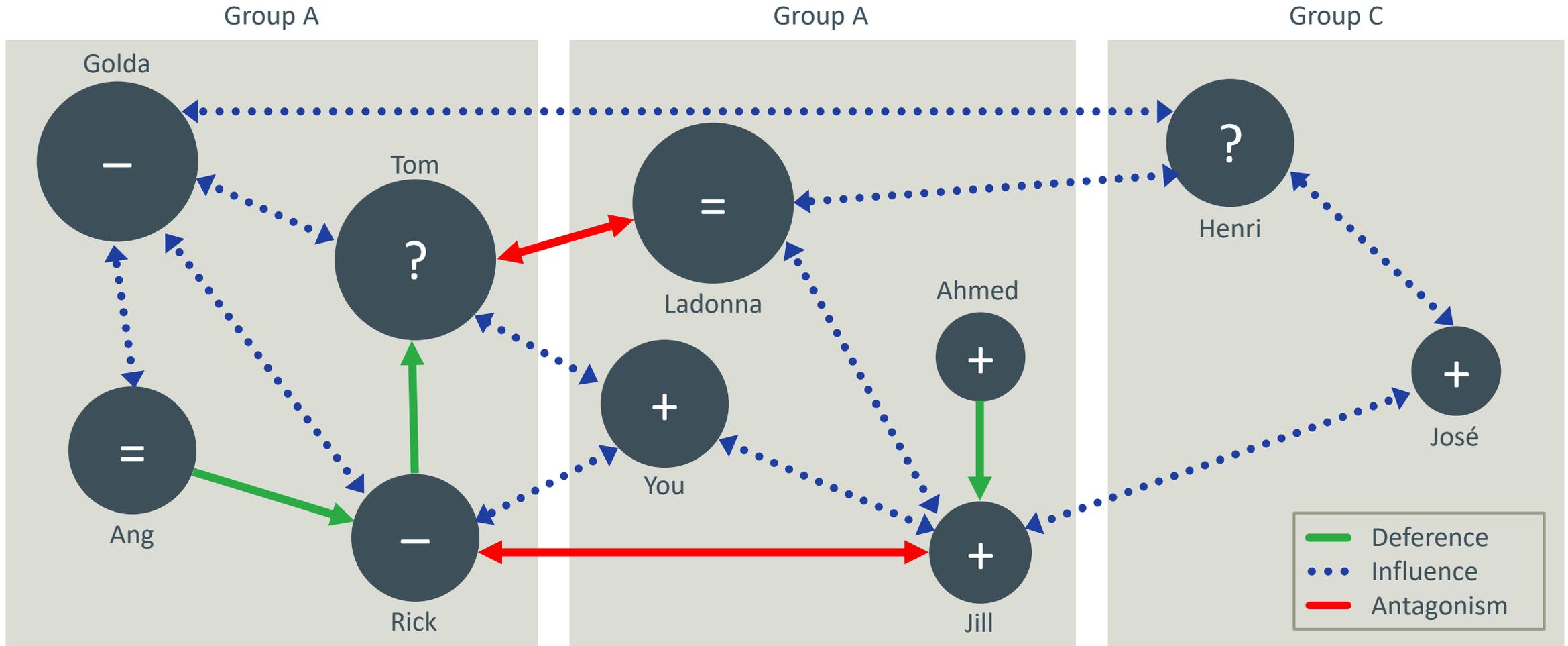


How many of you have thought “if we only had a mandate...”

Engaging Stakeholders

Stakeholder Mapping Tool

Stakeholder Mapping



Stakeholder Mapping

1

Identify stakeholders

(Who knows about the problem? Who cares about it? Who can do something about it?)

2

Analyze the level of power and authority of each party with respect to their ability to approve and/or implement your proposal or request

3

Analyze each party's likely level of support or opposition

4

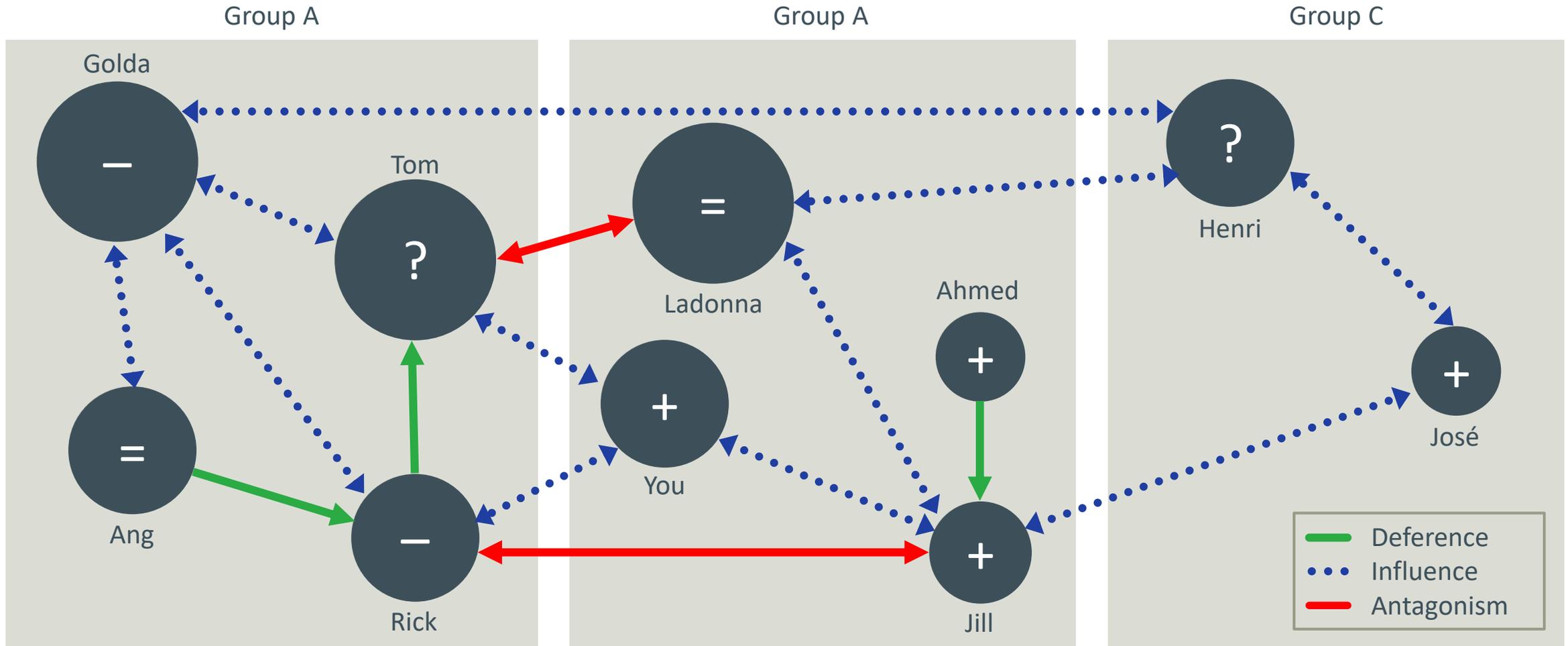
Analyze relationships of deference, influence, and antagonism among stakeholders

5

Develop your influence strategy:
Determine whom to approach, for what purpose, and in what sequence

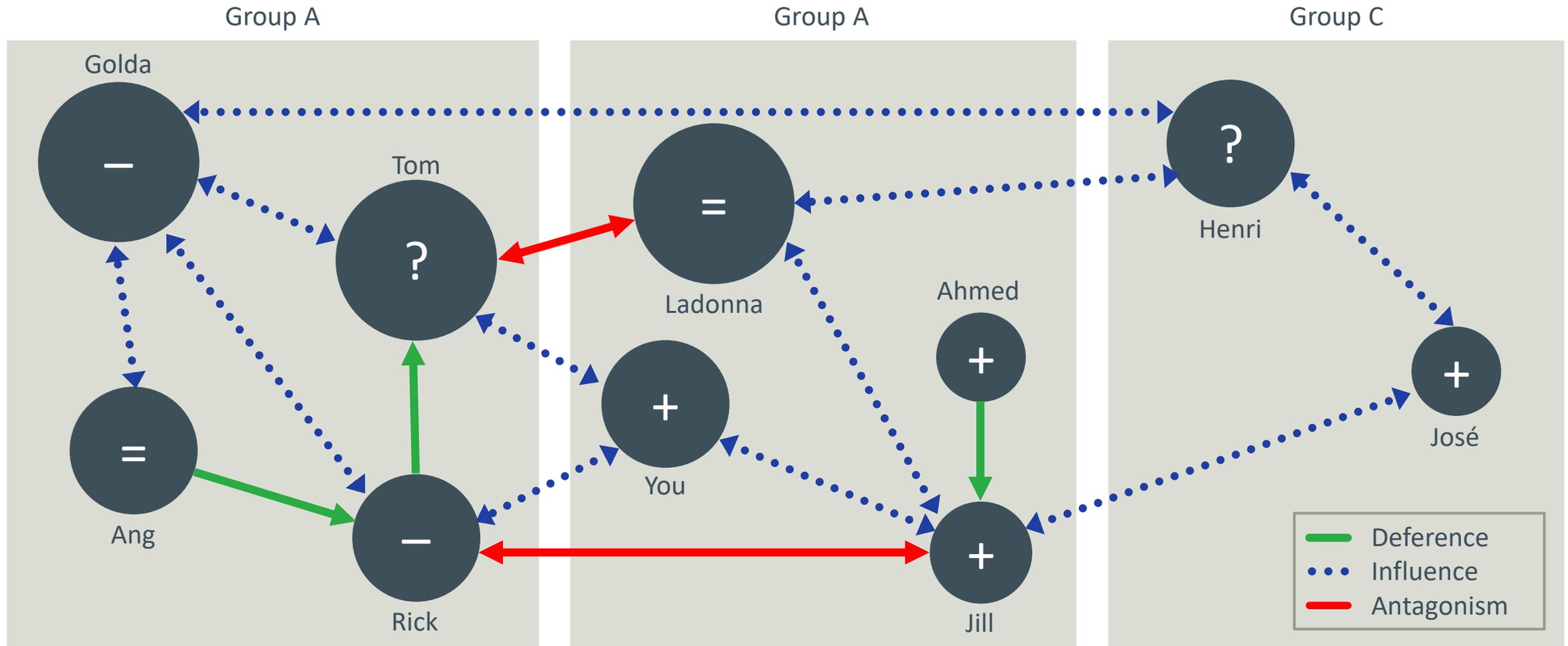
Stakeholder and Influence Mapping Tool

Step Four: Analyze Relationships Among Stakeholders



Golda and Henri are the decision makers. What sequence might you take to get them on board?

Step Four: Analyze Relationships Among Stakeholders



Tips for using the Stakeholder Mapping Tool

1

Identify the stakeholders

- Think not only about who can make or approve a decision, but who could veto or derail a decision
- Also think about whose buy-in and support will be essential to effectively implement a decision or plan

2

Assess where power resides

- Think not only about who has formal power (based on title and hierarchy) but also about informal power (based on expertise, experience, reputation, etc.)

3

Analyze support and opposition

- Think about the different positive and negative consequences the decision or plan in question would create for different stakeholders to better understand their (actual or likely) opposition or support
- Be cautious not to assume opposition or support too quickly, without sufficient analysis

4

Analyze relationships among stakeholders

- Consider the context. Relationships of influence, deference and antagonism often vary depending on the decision in question.

5

Develop an influence strategy

- Using the Stakeholder and Influence Mapping Tool tactically to try to blindside or work around someone who should be consulted, is likely to be perceived (not unreasonably) as manipulative, and is ultimately likely to be counterproductive
- Try to leverage early supporters to build momentum and persuade opposing stakeholders
- Be wary of failing to engage critical opposing stakeholders early enough in the process. Doing so may make them feel isolated or trigger even greater resistance.



Planning for the medium term

- What key links on your map would function differently if the issues changed? (e.g., differences in deference to expertise? Different allegiances?)
- What bridges do you need to build to give you broader, or more direct access?
- What vulnerabilities does your map show? (e.g., single points of failure)

Understanding Their Resistance

Currently Perceived Choice Tool

Quick Poll



How many have encountered
“difficult stakeholders” who
always say “no”?



How well does your mandate
work with them?

A common approach to influence

Tactics

- Tell them all the reasons they should say “yes”
- Handle their objections; explain why their concerns are nothing to worry about
- Employ debating and/or selling skills: prove to them that they are wrong to say “no”

Results

- They may feel disrespected and/ or pressured
- They feel unheard; and respond with more (vehement) objections
- Persuasion becomes a win-lose battle; getting them to say “yes” requires them to admit they were wrong
- They may well say “no”; opportunities to learn and develop more creative solutions are missed; relationship is damaged



Key insights about influence

- You can't change someone's mind unless you know where their mind is
- When faced with a "No," there is nothing more disempowering than assuming the person you are trying to influence is stupid, crazy, or evil
- People do what they believe is their best interests (regardless of whether you think it is a good idea or not)

A more effective approach to influence

Tactics

- First seek to understand their resistance (uncover their interests)
- Actively look for ways to satisfy their interests
- Make persuasion a joint problem-solving activity; create an attractive role for them by enlisting their help

Results

- They feel heard, and are therefore more able to hear you
- You are more likely to propose something to which they can and will say “yes”; they feel valued as a partner
- It is easier for them to say “yes” because doing so does not require them to give in

Currently Perceived Choice

- Who is the decision maker?
- What question does the decision maker hear?
- What consequences does the decision maker expect if he or she:
 - ▶ Says “Yes”
 - ▶ Says “No”

Currently Perceived Choice (CPC) chart

Decision maker: _____

Question: *Shall I today* _____ ?

| If "Yes" | If "No" |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| - | + |
| - | + |
| - | + |
| - | + |
| - | + |
| - | + I can always say "yes" tomorrow |

Why stakeholders resist: Professional services example

What it looks like to some stakeholders when we offer to “help”

| If I agree to let Procurement help | If I continue to resist |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">– They will want me to stop using my current set of trusted advisors– I will have to build new relationships, and it’s just a really bad time– I will have to use someone unproven, who may not be as good (after all, they command a lower rate in the market)– I will have to teach them my business– If the new, cheaper providers make a mess, I’m still accountable — for really big, risky stuff (revenue, strategy, liability)± I may save some money (which may actually not even come from my budget) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">+ I preserve control and autonomy+ I can apply my own professional judgment and expertise to assess providers+ I continue to use providers I know, trust, and who have always come through for me (and whom I can call and say “I need this” and they’ll deliver)+ I can focus my time and attention to really important things+ I can always agree to take another look at this when we’re not really busy/under pressure to perform– I may get more pressure from Procurement |

Common stakeholder motivations

- Avoid losing face
- Financial gain/avoidance of loss
- Appreciation/acknowledgement
- Maximize autonomy
- Gain or maintain control/power
- Validation (being right)
- Fairness
- Internal consistency
- Social acceptance
- Affection/interpersonal connection

Overcoming resistance

1. Change the substance of your request/proposal
 - ▶ Increase benefits to them
 - ▶ Accelerate realization of benefits to them
 - ▶ Increase (their perception of) the likelihood of benefits
 - ▶ Reduce risks and costs to them
 - ▶ Defer costs to them further into the future
 - ▶ Create a fading opportunity
2. Change the context in which your target decision maker perceives your request/proposal
 - ▶ Create new costs/negative consequences if they do not agree or act
 - ▶ Reduce the benefits they realize from the status quo

Overcoming resistance

3. Change the substance of your request/proposal
 - ▶ Spend less time advocating for your point of view and more time exploring their concerns
 - ▶ Enlist them as a partner in problem solving; ask for, and be open to, their advice
 - ▶ Explain your proposal/request in terms that make sense to them, and align with their interests
 - ▶ Avoid threats; leverage warnings instead. That is, educate your target decision maker on the consequences of different choices. Avoid actions that will feel coercive and are likely to trigger resistance.
4. Change the context in which your target decision maker perceives your request/proposal
 - ▶ Target individuals who are more influence-able — by you
 - ▶ Target individuals who may be more able (than the individual you have been trying to influence) to decide or do what you need
 - ▶ Target individuals who can (help) influence your target decision maker better than you can (on your own). Consider how best to approach and influence them as you seek their assistance.



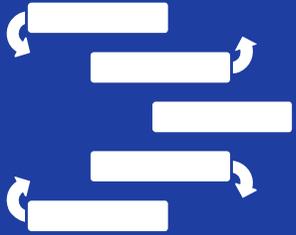
Understanding their perspective: Application

- Coming back to your Influence Plans, pick a challenging stakeholder along your route:
 - ▶ Clarify what you believe they are saying/might say “no” to
 - ▶ Putting yourself in their shoes, create a Currently Perceived Choice Chart showing why, from their perspective, “no” is the right answer
- Review the CPC for your challenging stakeholder:
 - ▶ How can you change the content of your request?
 - ▶ How can you change the balance of pluses and minuses for them?
 - ▶ How can you change your approach?
 - ▶ Do you need a different route altogether, or is there someone who can help you stay on this one?

Getting Buy-In from a Group of Stakeholders

Using the One-Text Process

Tips for using the Stakeholder Mapping Tool



Doing so with multiple stakeholders, each of which may demand different concessions, exceptions, timelines, etc. is much worse

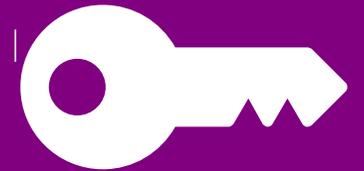


The key is to move from “bargaining” with stakeholders, to consulting them

Bargaining with a single stakeholder is tough, and often leads to “compromise” solutions that don’t really satisfy either side



The root causes of the problem have to do with assumptions people make about decision making



The One-Text:

Build multi-stakeholder alignment by inviting criticism

- Ask for criticism not their preferred solutions.
- Don't argue, ask more questions and about their priorities
- Ask about what they would consider to be "fair"?
- Show them you have heard them
- If don't need a lot of formality, just start using it
- When you are ready, change the question



Thank you!

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A spin-off of the Harvard Negotiation Project, Vantage Partners helps companies achieve breakthrough business results by transforming the way they negotiate with, and manage relationships with, their suppliers, customers, and alliance partners — and enhancing collaboration across internal organizational boundaries.

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- Your feedback **drives SIG Event content**
- By signing and submitting your evaluation, you are **automatically entered into a prize drawing**

How?

From the **App**

1. Select **Sessions**
2. Select **Day**
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Workshop # 8

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Thank you!

