



Developing Shared Understanding

FORCE FIELD MAPPING

WHAT A simple but effective method for quickly identifying the forces for or against a change, and prioritizing actions that will have the greatest impact.

WHEN This method is especially helpful when the success of your initiative depends on certain people (e.g. doctors or people with diabetes) changing their behaviors. However, it's also effective at quickly capturing general forces that need to be addressed (such as limited availability of information on diabetes).

WHO This method is useful when the participants are familiar with the interests and concerns of those people who are influencing ultimate success of the work. In a diabetes example, this might include case workers, doctors, nurses, and patients who want to help other patients.

HOW To do this, write the group's challenge at the top of a flip chart page. Then, create two columns below that, and label the columns Forces For and Forces Against.

Instructions to participants:

1. We're going to quickly generate as many items as we can under each of these two columns:
Under Forces For, we'll list all the factors that are contributing to make this change happen or that attract people to adopt a new behavior.
Under Forces Against, we'll list all the factors that are preventing the change from happening or people from adopting a new behavior.
2. [After they've populated each column]. Now let's identify the 3 strongest forces in the *Forces For* column (those that seem to exert the most influence) and then do the same in the *Forces Against* column.
3. Now let's look at each of the six strongest forces and, starting with the first force, we'll generate 3 specific strategies for strengthen or weaken the forces to change the force field. [Make sure that each strategy is as specific as possible.

WHY Benefits of Force Field Analysis:

- It's a fast way to get a full view of why things seem stuck or why a person isn't changing his or her behavior.
- Provides a starting analysis for developing and prioritizing actions that are likely to move thing forward.
- The results are specific and can be refined and tested with other stakeholders as you move forward.

WHAT'S NEXT We often use the results of a force field analysis to prototype some solutions or interventions. By testing those prototypes and seeing how they work (or don't work), we learn more about whether our force field analysis might be missing something important or is inaccurate in some other way, so we can refine it over time through testing.

The force field concept was first described by psychologist Kurt Lewin in a 1943 article titled "The Field at a Given Time."

MATERIALS

Markers

(for the facilitator)

Post-its, if desired

Blank wall or Flipchart

