

Force-Field Analysis



Definition

A tool to assess the likelihood of accomplishing a change. The tool defines driving forces, or any resources, attitudes, experience, and so on, that will support the change, and restraining forces as any resources, attitudes, or experiences that will cause the change to be stopped or delayed. Set up in a two-column format (driving and restraining), with the desired change listed across the top of the page, the tool relies heavily on group input through some form of Brainstorming.

Utility

Force-Field Analysis should be used whenever a change needs to be initiated as part of our process improvement. It is useful in that it not only provides a complete picture of what will be working for you and what will be working against you, but also because the group can move closer to consensus on the change by discussing the challenges and barriers in an open constructive format. Instead of negative conversation going underground, it is now legitimate to talk about it in the meeting.

Construction

1. Define the desired change and list at the top of the page.
2. Brainstorm the driving forces (resources, attitudes, experiences that will support the change.) List on the left-hand column.
3. Brainstorm the restraining forces (resources, attitudes, experiences that will resist the change.) List on the right-hand column.
4. Prioritize forces on both sides to determine what are the strongest drivers and restrainers.
5. Match and use drivers wherever possible to reduce and eliminate restrainers. Allow for conversation about how to approach the change.
6. Write an Action Plan at the bottom of the diagram. You may use consensus assist tools such as NGT or Multivoting to generate the final plan.
7. You may also plot your plan on a Systematic/Tree Diagram or a WWW Chart.

Worksheet #135 *Force-Field Analysis Example*

Activity Sample

School Rules

Desired Change: Following the rules at school

Driving Forces <small>(Items that currently exist and support or drive the desired change)</small>	Restraining Forces <small>(Items that may inhibit the implementation of the desired change)</small>
We know the rules. We can remind each other to follow the rules. We don't like to be in trouble. We have experience following rules at home and last year in school (in kindergarten or at pre-school). Rules are posted in the classroom to help us remember.	We see our friends acting up and we want to be like them. We can't always control our reactions. We get excited and then too silly.
Action Plan: We will help each other to remember the classroom rules and we will look at the rules chart to remind ourselves of what the rules are. We won't tempt our friends to misbehave.	