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Stakeholder Mapping Template

A practical worksheet for identifying, prioritizing, and engaging the people who influence or are affected by organizational change.

Use this template before beginning a major change initiative, such as AI adoption, commercialization, process redesign, funding-driven growth, operational optimization, or technology implementation. Stakeholder mapping helps leadership identify who must be informed, who must be involved, who may resist the change, and where communication gaps could slow progress.

How to Use This Template

Work through each section with the project lead, executive sponsor, and core implementation team. Focus on practical judgment rather than perfect scoring. The goal is to make stakeholder dynamics visible early enough to improve alignment, communication, and adoption.

Project / Change Initiative Profile

Organization	
Change initiative	
Primary objective	
Executive sponsor	
Prepared by	
Date	

Stakeholder Category Checklist

Internal leadership	□ Founders/executives □ Board/advisors □ Department heads □ Project sponsors
Internal teams	□ Technical team □ Operations □ Sales/business development □ Finance/admin □ End users
External partners	□ University partners □ Consultants □ Vendors □ Strategic partners □ Customers
Funding / market stakeholders	□ Grant funders □ Investors □ Commercialization partners □ Regulators □ Procurement leads
Other affected groups	□ Patients/users □ Community stakeholders □ Data owners □ Compliance/legal □ Training participants

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1. Stakeholder Inventory

Begin by listing the individuals or groups who have influence over the change, will be affected by it, will provide resources, or must understand the transition for the effort to succeed.

Stakeholder / Group	Role in Change	Primary Concern or Interest	Information Needed	Relationship Owner

Prompt Questions

- Who can approve, block, delay, or accelerate the change?
- Who will use the new workflow, system, policy, or operating model?
- Who controls key information, data, funding, customer relationships, or operational resources?
- Who may feel threatened, overloaded, skeptical, or excluded?
- Who can become a champion if engaged early?

2. Influence, Impact, and Priority Mapping

Use this section to decide which stakeholders require the most active engagement. High-influence stakeholders can shape the outcome. High-impact stakeholders will feel the change more directly. High-priority stakeholders usually require earlier and more tailored communication.

Stakeholder / Group	Influence Low / Med / High	Impact of Change Low / Med / High	Likely Position Support / Neutral / Resist	Priority 1-5
	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Support □ Neutral □ Resist	
	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Support □ Neutral □ Resist	
	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Support □ Neutral □ Resist	
	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Low □ Med □ High	□ Support □ Neutral □ Resist	

Influence / Interest Matrix

	LOW INFLUENCE	HIGH INFLUENCE
HIGH INTEREST / IMPACT	Keep informed Provide targeted updates Invite feedback when relevant	Manage closely Engage early Involve in decisions
LOW INTEREST / IMPACT	Monitor Provide basic awareness Avoid overcommunication	Keep satisfied Use concise executive updates Escalate only key issues

Interpretation Tip

Stakeholders in the high influence / high interest group should usually receive the most attention. They may need early involvement, direct communication, decision participation, or a defined role in governance.

3. Communication Planning by Stakeholder Group

A stakeholder map becomes useful when it leads to a communication plan. Use the table below to define what each group needs to know, how messages should be delivered, and who owns the relationship.

Stakeholder	What They Need to Know	Message / Talking Point	Channel & Frequency	Owner
Executive sponsor	Business case, risk, timing	Why this change matters now	Briefing / biweekly	
Implementation team	Scope, responsibilities, dependencies	What will change and what support is available	Working meeting / weekly	
Staff or users	Workflow impact, training, timeline	How the change affects day-to-day work	Email + live session	
Funders / investors	Milestones, risk control, progress	How change supports growth and accountability	Update memo / monthly	
Partners / customers	Continuity, value, timing	How the transition supports service quality	Targeted update / as needed	

Message Quality Checklist

□ Explains why the change matters now

□ Clarifies what will change and what will not change

□ Identifies how the stakeholder will be affected

□ Avoids excessive technical language unless appropriate

□ Includes expected timing, next steps, and where to ask questions

□ Reinforces how the change supports organizational goals

4. Alignment Risks and Engagement Response

Not all resistance is negative. Concerns can reveal legitimate gaps in planning, training, communication, data readiness, funding alignment, or implementation support. Use this worksheet to identify risks early and determine how to respond.

Stakeholder / Group	Potential Concern	Impact if Unaddressed	Engagement Response	Status
		□ Low □ Med □ High		□ Open □ In progress □ Resolved
		□ Low □ Med □ High		□ Open □ In progress □ Resolved
		□ Low □ Med □ High		□ Open □ In progress □ Resolved
		□ Low □ Med □ High		□ Open □ In progress □ Resolved
		□ Low □ Med □ High		□ Open □ In progress □ Resolved

Common Alignment Risks

□ Leadership sends mixed signals □ Staff do not understand the reason for change □ Users fear extra workload or loss of control □ Technical teams are not aligned with business goals □ Funders or investors lack confidence in execution □ Partners receive inconsistent updates □ No clear owner for stakeholder communication

Practical Guidance

When a stakeholder is marked as resistant, identify the reason before deciding on the response. Resistance may reflect confusion, lack of trust, competing incentives, unclear benefits, or real implementation risk.

5. Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan

Translate the stakeholder map into next steps. Focus on the highest-priority groups first and assign clear owners. Actions should be specific enough to complete and measure.

Priority Action	Stakeholder(s)	Owner	Due Date	Success Indicator

Review Questions

- Which stakeholders must be engaged before the next decision point?
- Where is alignment strongest, and where is it weakest?
- What communication should happen immediately?
- What stakeholder concerns may require changes to the implementation plan?
- Who will maintain and update this map as the initiative evolves?

Notes

ScienceDocs Change Management Support

ScienceDocs helps startups, research teams, and innovation-focused organizations align stakeholders around AI adoption, commercialization, operational change, grant-funded growth, and technology implementation. Ready to get started? Contact ScienceDocs to discuss change management consulting for your team.