

Relationship Map for Officers

A Relationship map is a graphic representation of the Officers that you need to interact with to achieve the best outcomes for the people you serve. You can also include staff from partner organisations within this relationship map if you wish.

Activity

Draw a box which represents you in the middle of a large sheet of paper.

Label this box with your name.

Around this box:

1. Create post-its to represent each of the officers that you need to work with to achieve your goals.
2. Build the map by placing these post-its around your 'home' box at appropriate distances; the people that can influence your success being the closest.
3. You may wish to indicate the relative importance of each individual relationship by circling them, varying the size of the circle to indicate importance.
4. Add any people that are 'on the horizon' or who may need to be included in the future – these may be on the periphery of your map at present. This enables you to make plans to develop relationships with officers who you might need to work with in future.
5. Move the notes around until you are satisfied with the relative positions of the officers.

Evaluate and Prioritise Relationships

Once you've identified the officers you need to work with:

On a rating scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates a very poor relationship and 7 indicates an excellent relationship:

Identify which relationships are working well.

1. With which officers do I have the best relationships?
2. Why do you have such good relationships with these officers?
3. What do you need to do to maintain our relationships with these officers?

Identify which relationships need to be developed in the future in order to ensure your success.

1. With which officers do you or your party need to improve relationships?
2. How does the political composition affect your working relationships with other officers? What other factors are at play?
3. What will be the benefits of developing these relationships? To us? To them?
4. Who will be involved in developing these relationships?
5. What is your approach to communicating with other officers? Are there spaces for both dialogue and debate with other officers on council business?
6. What actions do you need to take to develop these relationships?

Review and update your map regularly as part of your Development Plan. Maintaining an up-to-date map of your relationships will enable you to pro-actively manage relationships to ensure sustainable success.

If part of a group, you may wish to share your map with members of that group. Ask them to develop relationship maps from their perspectives and then bring them together as a consolidated map.

The more others understand the territory as you see it, the more likely they are to collaborate with you to achieve mutually important goals and to highlight opportunities for innovation.

As part of a wider discussion with group members, you may want to identify which group members already have good relationships with relevant officers that you need to cultivate a relationship with. And also identify how you will ensure that there is a succession plan in place to ensure the continuity of relationship management over time.