



*The Good,
The Bad, and
Avoiding the Ugly:*

Stakeholder Engagement

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#1: Stakeholder Input is Invaluable

- Worth the effort to engage stakeholders and garner as much support as possible.
- Support is earned when your program or policy truly reflects their ideas and input.



These stakeholders are all here to meet with you today ...

#2: Heads Up!

- Legislative and high-level administrative officials should already be aware of the pending policy or program change, in case they are approached by stakeholders.

Hi Cindi!
Tell me again why it
costs \$9B to operate
a Medicaid program?



#3: Development of a Communications Strategy Early on is Critical.



- Engage stakeholders early and often and through a variety of communication formats and channels.
- Include individuals and families who receive the impacted services.
- Don't forget staff within your own agency and sister agencies— they will have a lot to share.
- Be in constant communication.

#4: Stakeholder Engagement Takes Time and is an Ongoing Process



- From concept development...
- During implementation...
- Throughout operation...
- Including evaluation...

#5: Know Your Audience and What They Value

- Reflect those values when you engage them.
- Be able to clearly say what is in it for them as well as acknowledge the downsides.
- Make sure you understand your stakeholders' concerns.



#6: Build Champions Early On

- They can help spread your message and publically and privately support the effort.
- They can also serve as your ears in the community.



#7: Be Mindful of the Potential Influence of Certain Stakeholders



#8: Spend Time with Stakeholders

- Make sure to reflect the voice of the “small” stakeholder.
- Large meetings with various groups of stakeholders are good, but some individual stakeholder groups will need their own private meeting.



#9: Transparency is Vital



- Demonstrate where stakeholder input has an impact on the program or policy change.

#10 Stakeholder Work is Hard and Emotionally Draining

- Do not take anything personal.
- Find a happy place and stay there – don't feel the need to be defensive.
- View stakeholder meetings as a venue for learning.
- It can take a long time to build trust and give the stakeholders confidence that you will look out for their interests.

