Systems Mapping

The goal of systems mapping is to map the key stakeholders and their relationships within the system so that you can engage them to support your efforts to achieve a change goal. We will use the tool to identify those you need in your support system and the role you want them to play. We will also use the tool to assess your personal support system. Then you can contract for support both at the systems and the personal level.

Systems mapping works best when you work with two or more people who ask questions, provide insights, and challenge your thinking as you map the system. This may take anywhere from 45 minutes to 1½ hours or more. Be disciplined about the process. Revisit the map to see if you have left anyone out or to see if there is any interconnectivity that you many have missed. Add to the map as you gain new data. Share it with others to gain perspective.

The following is an exercise to take you through the mapping process.

**Systems Change Support**

Steps:

1. Write a change goal at the top of the page. Write the goal as an outcome statement that can be evaluated or measured. E.g. a) complete a project on time and within budget or b) strengthen trusting relationships within my group.
2. Map the whole system to include all stakeholders - those who will be impacted by or will care about the change goal. Use their names and positions.
3. Map the relationships of the stakeholders. Draw lines to indicate the quality of the relationship between the stakeholders, e.g. solid line for strong relationship, arrows for one or two-way relationships, dotted line for weak or fragmented relationships and broken line for broken relationships or in need of repair.
4. What are some of the roles needed to support your change goal?
   1. **Change Leader** – Influence and lead others through personal advocacy, vision and drive, and accesses resources to build a solid platform for change. The person in charge of the change effort and who stimulates the support of others toward accomplishing the change purpose.
   2. **Champion** – A person who inspires people to join the efforts and keep it going. Sometimes the person tapped to train others, organize events, keep records, etc.
   3. **Sponsor** – A person who has decision-making authority and can remove barriers for you and helps to ensure the change goal moves forward.
   4. **Expert** – A person who has deep knowledge on subjects you need for your change goal.
   5. **Influencer** – People who can leverage relationships to communicate, stimulate decisions, or other who have other capacity to affect the development or behavior of others.
   6. **Guide/Mentor** – Provides advice and wisdom; someone who has experience to draw from.
   7. **Project Leader** – Typically under the direction of a change leader or a sponsor, a project leader is in charge of getting the change tasks work done or a certain set of delegated tasks that support the change goal.
   8. **Implementers** – the people designated to complete the tasks needed for the change goal.
   9. **Customer or client** – the recipients of the results of the program, project, product, service, or effort.
   10. Others \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Update the systems map to include any missing needed support.
6. Identify who would be the most appropriate change leader (it may not be you). Color code or use symbols to identify the names, positions and type of support needed to achieve the goal quickly and easily. You may identify them as individuals or groups of individuals.
7. What do you need in order to contract with these individuals or groups for support?
8. What are your immediate next steps?

**Personal Support System**

Steps:

1. Identify who you need in your personal support system who will help you carry out this process effectively.
2. Consider:
   1. Role model
   2. Common interest
   3. Relaxer
   4. Dependables
   5. Respecters
   6. Referral agents
   7. Challengers
   8. Guides
3. What do you need in order to contract with these individuals for support?
4. What are your immediate next steps?