THE NONPROFIT CENTERS | NETWORK

**Massachusetts Nonprofit Network**
**October 29, 2014**
**Idea Lab: Building Together: Sharing Space & Staffing for Impact**

***Activity: Determining Your Own Readiness***

| **Question** | **Considerations** | **Your Organization's Response** |
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| Why are we looking at a collaboration now? | Think about what has motivated the conversation about strategic collaborations within your organization | |
| What do we want to achieve from the collaboration? | Additional funding? Make funders happy? Find creative new solutions? Enhance your ability to meet your mission? Help meet strategic goals? | |
| Is a collaboration the best way for us to achieve our goals? | Consider if there would be other ways to achieve the goals identified above. | |
| What makes a collaboration the best approach for you? | What is the way our organization typically creates strategic collaborations? Does your organization initiate or do you wait for others to approach you? Is it strategic or responsive? | |
| What resources are we willing to commit to collaboration? | Think about financial resources, staff time, in-kind donations, and other organizational resources. | |

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| Does your organization have the capacity to engage in a collaboration? | Collaborations take time to establish and implement. Is your staff already stretched thin or does your organization have the capacity to devote to these activities? | |
| How much control would we be willing to give up to partner? | Consider the level of control that your organization would need to have. If the organization likes complete control of its own activities and direction, is a collaboration the best fit? | |
| How much information would we be willing to share? | Are you prepared to share detailed information about your strategic plan, goals, fundraising efforts, organizational needs and challenges? | |
| Does your organization have any collaborations in mind? | If so, do those potential collaborations fit well with the answers provided above? | |

*Thank you to the Community Resource Center and Colorado Nonprofit Association for use of this modified tool.

### *Activity: Stakeholder Analysis and Influence Mapping*

**Step 1 – Identify Your Stakeholders**

Think of all the people/organizations/institutions that are affected by your project, who have influence or power over it, or have an interest in its successful or unsuccessful conclusion. Be as specific as possible (i.e. don't list "churches" but identify which church, synagogue, etc.). Use the space below to start brainstorming.

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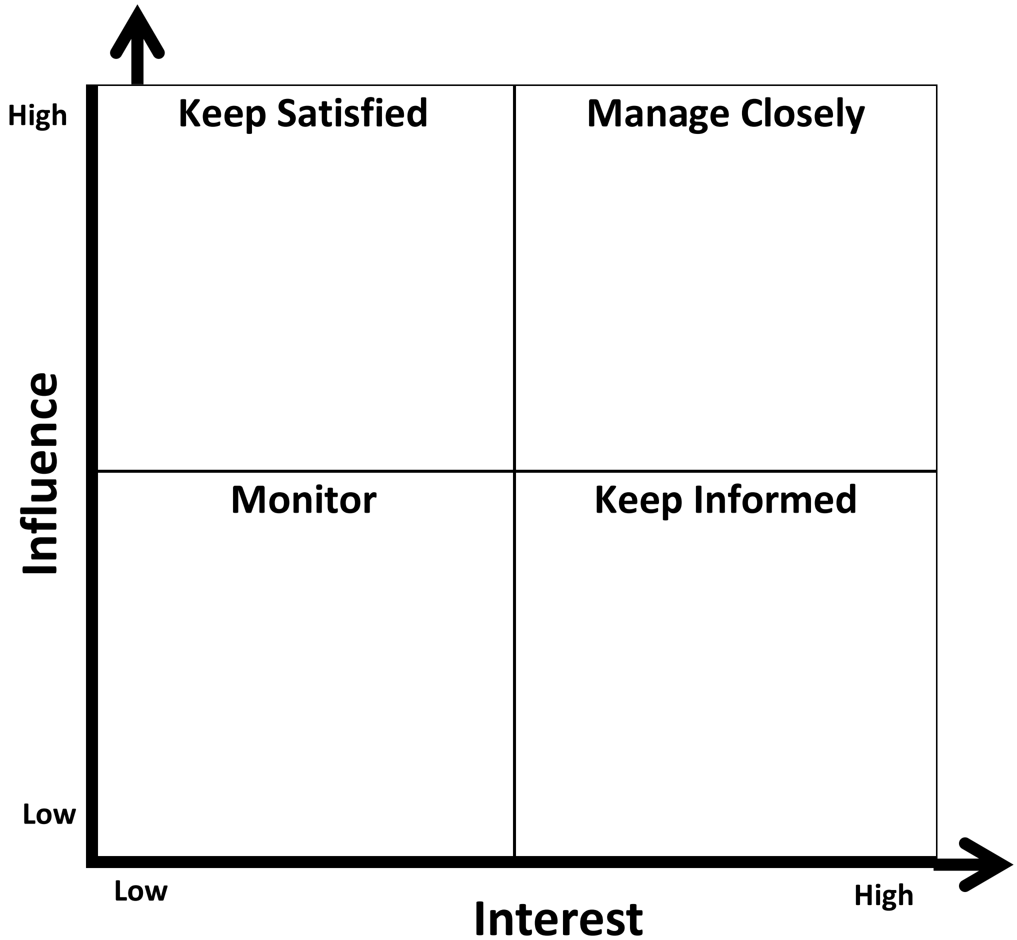
**Step 2 – Prioritize Your Stakeholders**

You may now have a long list of people and organizations that are affected by your project. Some of these may have the power either to block or advance. Some may be interested in what you are doing, others may not care. Use the tool below to start prioritizing these entities and considering how best to interface with them.



**Step 3 – Understand Your Key Stakeholders: Develop Your Community's Influence Map**

Use the following process to work through how your identified stakeholders relate to each other, and to provide a visual guide for the next steps of your planning process.

1. **Locate your goal.** Start your map by identifying a specific goal. Write it in the center of your page.

2. **Map your identified stakeholders** (organizations, groups, institutions, businesses). Write these names on the page around the goal statement.

3. **Map individuals associated with the stakeholders.** Put the names of the 2-3 key individuals who are associated with each stakeholder near their affiliation. These can be people you know or placeholders for decision-makers you don't yet know. If these are people known to you or your group, use color coding to indicate their interest in your work – i.e. showing advocates and supporters in green, blockers and critics in red, and others who are neutral in orange.

4. **Map all other associations with these individuals.** Think about people you know that are connected to these key individuals. The purpose of this is to help identify easier ways to access the individuals or institutions that could help move forward toward your goal, by tapping into existing relationships between people. Note any relationships that current members on your team/collaborative have with the people listed and any relevant information about those relationships. Consider both positive relationships as well as relationships that are tense/strained.

5. **Determine relational power lines.** The next step is to step back and conceptually review the networks that the group has mapped out. You can do this by drawing lines connecting people and institutions that have relations to each other. Some people will have many connections while others may not have any.

6. **Target priority relationships.** Analyze some of the relationships and connections elaborated and make some decisions. One way to do this is to circle the few people that have the most relational power lines drawn to them. Another thing to consider may be a person or institution in the map that doesn't necessarily have many different relational lines running to him/her/it but nonetheless has a few critical ones and seems to hold a lot of influence. Also, use your findings from the Stakeholder Analysis also to inform which people make the most sense to focus on, as well was what approach you might need to use with them. [i]

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[i] Thanks to Idealist on Campus Civic Engagement Curriculum; http://coe.stanford.edu/pre-med/documents/powermap.pdf and Caroline Smith and the Mind Tools Team for this modified tool.