

ENGAGEMENT

The process of bringing people together to make better decisions.

WHAT WE DO (OUR PROMISE)

Engagement includes everything from informing people that a decision has been made, all the way to empowering stakeholders to make the decisions and work out the details.

These methods and this mindset are useful in communicating and interacting with your team, connecting with clients or students, as well as throughout major initiatives and decision making processes. We know no one likes to provide input and then never hear back, so reporting and evaluation are a big part of this process as well.

WHY WE DO IT (THE BENEFITS)

By engaging in collective problem solving and decision making, all stakeholders (involved or affected parties) have opportunity for input throughout the process.

Making decisions in isolation is risky because important pieces may be missed, and outcomes may not be focused on the full picture or be beneficial to stakeholders. Utilizing engagement principles and techniques ensures that multiple perspectives are included, mutual understanding is developed, and usually results in more effective solutions and initiatives.

Democratization of information and process are important steps in creating inclusive and equitable environments; equally important is ensuring that people are engaged appropriately and in a timely manner. There are such things as over- and under-engaging. This framework (and a good communications plan) will help you strike that balance!

HOW WE DO IT (THE PROCESS)

You can infuse the engagement mindset into your daily life, in any number of ways. The engagement spectrum (found in the *Engagement Framework & Guides*) lends itself as an excellent reference tool in all decision making that involves or affects others.

As a more formalized process (for major decision making processes and initiatives), engagement can be divided into five main steps, each of which involve multiple activities. You'll learn more about these, and find helpful tools, in the *Engagement Framework & Guides*.



THE ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

- EMPOWER** GOAL: To empower stakeholders to fully make the decisions.
PROMISE: We will abide by the decisions you make.
- COLLABORATE** GOAL: To partner with stakeholders to analyze issues, develop alternatives, make recommendation, and determine the best solution for a decision.
PROMISE: We will partner directly with you throughout the project and decision making process. We will create joint solutions or recommendations.
- INVOLVE** GOAL: To work and understand the viewpoints and concerns of the stakeholders through working directly with them.
PROMISE: We will work directly with you to ensure your viewpoints and concerns are reflected in the decisions made.
- CONSULT** GOAL: To get feedback from stakeholders at various points in the project or before decisions are made to ensure that issues and concerns are understood and considered.
PROMISE: We will consult with you to ensure your viewpoint is heard and considered when making decisions. We will communicate how this input and feedback influenced the decisions made.
- INFORM** GOAL: To create a shared understanding of the project and any decisions made through information and communication.
PROMISE: We will keep you informed about the project and decisions that are made.

INCREASING LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT