Engagement Strategies for Pathways Colleges

Alison Kadlec, Public Agenda
"We want to include you in this decision without letting you affect it."
What is “Meaningful” Engagement?

- Early
- Often
- Authentic
  - Listening First, Leading with Questions
  - Honest & Transparent
  - Follow Up & Follow Through
  - Recognition
  - Avoid the “Fundamental Attribution Error”
Listening First: The Value of Early Engagement

- Bolster legitimacy by establishing a visible commitment to co-ownership
- Improve your plans by tapping the creativity & expertise of front-line faculty & staff
- Gain intel on how best to communicate about the work moving forward
- Avoid unnecessary obstacles, mitigate backlash
Create the conditions for distributed leadership

Gain critical intel for midcourse corrections

Practice positive redundancy & refine messages

Exercise discipline, commit to strategy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Buy-in</td>
<td>Assess &amp; Close Gaps Here First</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Authenticity</td>
<td>Practice Meaningful Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiative Overload</td>
<td>Take Stock, Connect Dots, Pathways = Organizing Frame</td>
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<td>Resistance to Mandates</td>
<td>Collaborative Design, Clarify Limits</td>
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<td>Heavy Workloads</td>
<td>Respect, Recognition, Succession</td>
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<td>Fear of Change, Self-Interest</td>
<td>Honesty, Clarity, Evidence &amp; Vision</td>
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<td>Poorly Structured Meetings</td>
<td>Attend to Details, Goal &amp; Role Clarity, Skillful Facilitation</td>
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<td>Insufficient Communication</td>
<td>Repetitive, Redundant, Continuous</td>
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Getting Real

- No easy answers
- No shortcuts
- Not about eliminating resistance, but creating space for success
- Accept that it will be hard (& tedious)
- Commit to transparency, ongoing case-making
- Effective leadership requires relinquishing control
- Attend to sequencing, prioritization of engagement activities, plan carefully
<table>
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<tr>
<th>DEGREE OF SUPPORT</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resistant</td>
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<td>Skeptical</td>
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<td>Potential Champion</td>
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**INFLUENCE / IMPORTANCE**

*Faculty & Staff Engagement for Pathways: Assessing Your Starting Point*
Critical Questions to Accompany Assessment

- Have we accounted for all our key groups/individuals?
- Do we understand and agree about the sources of potential resistance (e.g. self-interest, fear of change, fear of not being successful, principled opposition, weariness)?
- How does our core story resonate with the motivations of different audiences, and what does that mean for framing and focus when making the case to different groups?
- What are our natural opportunities for case-making and engagement of different audiences? Where do we lack existing venues for important/difficult conversations?
- What does our analysis suggest with respect to sequencing and timing of engagement activities? Who should be engaged when, in what ways and with what frequency?
- What does our analysis suggest with respect to appropriate depth of engagement of our key groups/individuals (e.g. inform, consult, engage, empower)?
Resources & Tools Supporting Effective Engagement

1. Engaging Faculty During Student Pathways Implementation
2. Internal Stakeholder Engagement Workshop Toolkit
3. Completion By Design Facilitator’s Handbook
4. Student Focus Group Resource Guide

All resources available at completionbydesign.org
Thank You!