



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

Listening Often: The Value of **Ongoing** Engagement

- Create the conditions for distributed leadership
- Gain critical intel for midcourse corrections
- Practice positive redundancy & refine messages
- Exercise discipline, commit to strategy

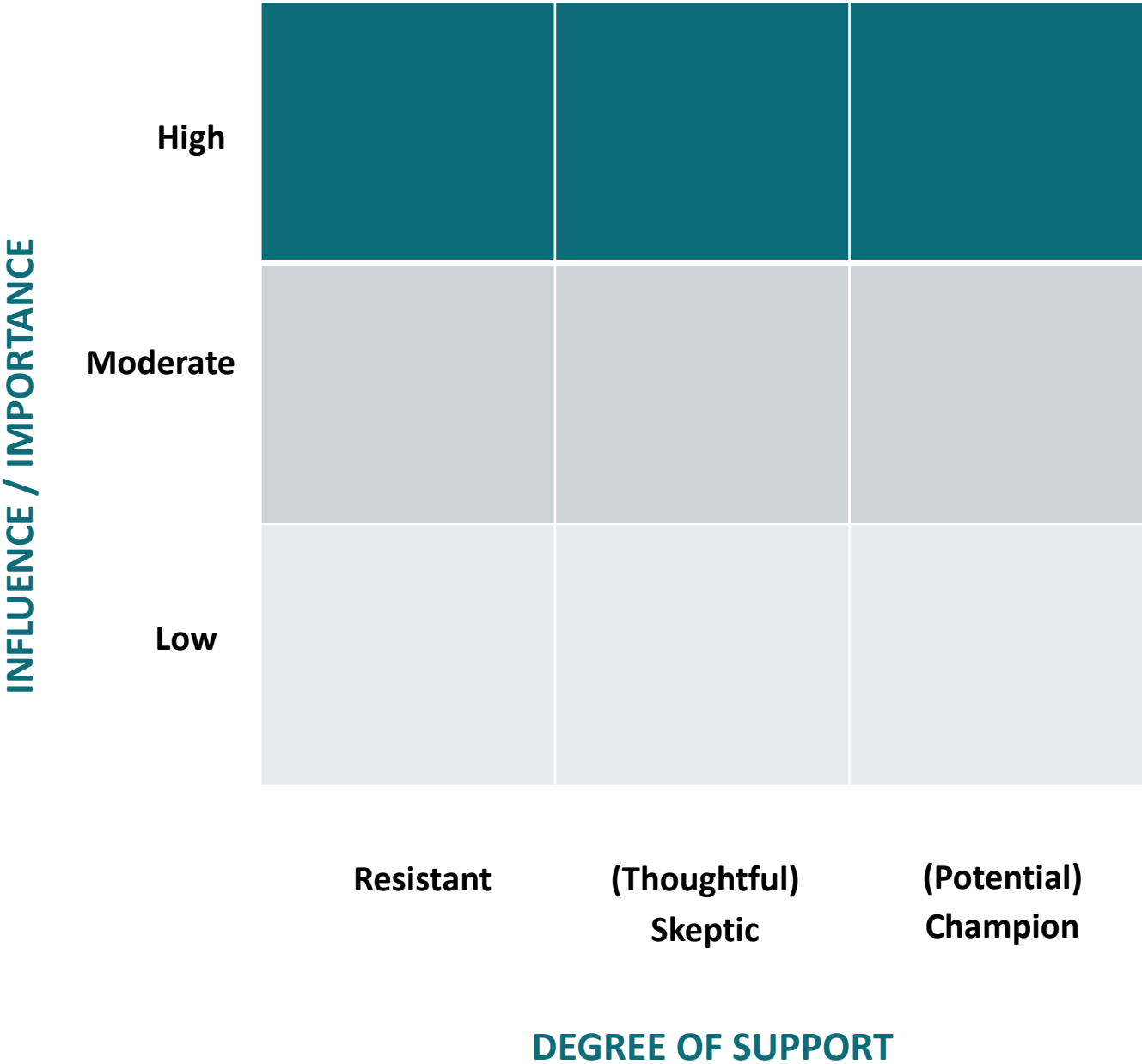
Faculty & Staff Engagement 101

Barriers	Strategies
Leadership Buy-in	Assess & Close Gaps Here First
Lack of Authenticity	Practice Meaningful Engagement
Initiative Overload	Take Stock, Connect Dots, Pathways = Organizing Frame
Resistance to Mandates	Collaborative Design, Clarify Limits
Heavy Workloads	Respect, Recognition, Succession
Fear of Change, Self-Interest	Honesty, Clarity, Evidence & Vision
Poorly Structured Meetings	Attend to Details, Goal & Role Clarity, Skillful Facilitation
Insufficient Communication	Repetitive, Redundant, Continuous

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

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!

