

Marketing & Comms Toolkit

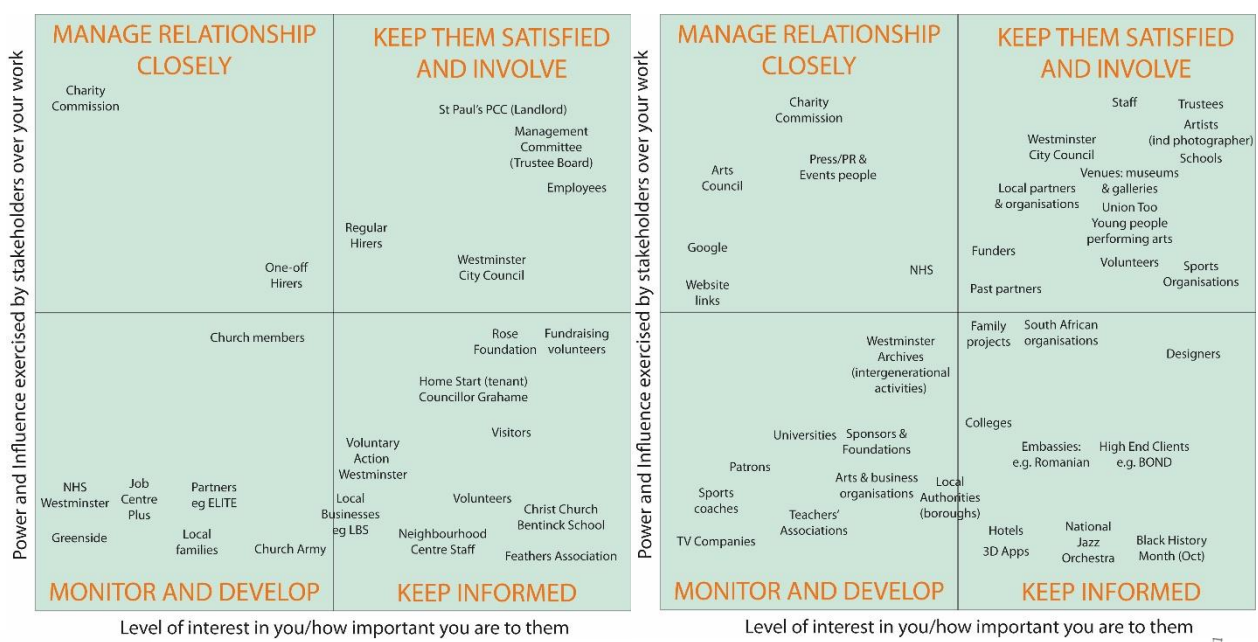
TOOL 2: STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Alongside your communications audit, we recommend that you look at the people who have an interest in what you do, or might develop an interest in future (your new market/target audience). This 'tool' is a stakeholder mapping exercise.

Try and involve as many stakeholders (staff, trustees, clients, volunteers) as possible in this exercise as it enables them to see the purpose of your internal and external communications.

You could do this exercise as a workshop with stakeholders, or just with staff and volunteers to begin the process. Split them into small groups if necessary. Create a chart, or 'map' and ask them to plot the stakeholders on it according to the level of interest in you (horizontal axis) and the amount of power they have to influence/affect your work (vertical axis). Stick-it notes can be helpful to place on your map and can be moved about during your conversation.

Break down your stakeholder groups into individual organisations if you communicate with them differently. You can also think of stakeholders as your different market segments. Discuss, together, how much interest you think they have in your organisation so that you agree where to place them on the horizontal axis. Then, discuss how much power or influence you think they have in your organisation. You will then be able to plot where they are on the vertical axis. Be honest about where they are now and avoid plotting them where you would like them to be. If you do this exercise 6-12 months later, you might be able to see a shift in position due to the communication strategy you put in place.



STRATEGY

Your communication *strategy* is about relationship building and is likely to focus on your plan to shift interested groups, or groups you want to take a greater role in your organisation, into the ‘high influence/power’ box in the top right of your map.

Your communication strategy is about putting steps in place in order to build and develop the relationship. Plan the journey that you want your ‘partner’ to make with you. You will probably want those with a lot of influence and little interest to become more interested in you and shift them to the right. In order to do so, you will need to “manage the relationship closely”.

You may have decided to spend some effort in developing new markets – those with little interest and power to influence at present. Don’t be too pushy, too soon. This will be about sowing seeds, nurturing their growth and being patient. Be sensitive to your audience. Find out about them and their interests so that you know how to relate to them and engage them in a relationship that is mutually beneficial. For instance, is your project relevant to a local philanthropist because they have experienced an issue that you are addressing?

Your strategy might be limited by the human and financial resources available to you, so be realistic. If you think it is in the interest of the organisation to spend a lot of time and money on developing a new target audience, currently appearing in the bottom left quadrant, you will need to balance this against keeping your current supporters informed, involved and satisfied.

MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Regular donors will need regular updates and want to know that you are spending their money wisely. Be careful not to alienate loyal supporters because you have decided to spend your energy and effort on stakeholders with lower interest and influence. Seek their support and involve them, if you can, in opening up these new audiences.

Planning communications with your stakeholders involves:

- identifying your stakeholders (can also be considered as your ‘market segments’)
- identifying what information they need and when
- asking/knowing how they prefer to hear from you
- identifying how you will collect the information for them and when
- deciding who will take responsibility for your different communication methods.

Transfer your stakeholders from the map to the first column of a table. A sample table appears overleaf and starts you off with a few suggestions.



Stakeholders	How do they want you to contact them?	What do they need to know
Trustees		
Staff		
Volunteers		
Funders (e.g. Westminster Small Grants)		
Clients		
Parents		
Children		
General Public		
MP / Councillors		
Individual donors		
Potential donors		
Local businesses		
Local schools		
Local surgeries/clinics (GP, dentist, alternative therapies)		
Charity Commission		
Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS)		
Westminster City Council		
Companies House		
Volunteer Centre Westminster		
Voluntary Action Westminster		

Tool 3 will refer to your stakeholder map as it will help you to create your Communication Plan.

