

Who can help me make this change?

Penny Walker explains a simple tool which can help you plan your engagement



The choice of company car can impact on an organisation's transport emissions

At the IEMA Change Management workshops which I run, we often get to hear in a bit of detail about people's individual change challenges. It's fascinating to listen to someone describing the sustainability improvements they're trying to achieve, and the context in which they are working. There always seem to be some familiar patterns which mean that everyone can learn something from the stories, and often provide practical or moral support. And there's always something unique about the examples, which stretch us beyond our own experience.

Transport - who decides?

Lately, there seem to have been a lot of people who are trying to reduce carbon emissions from transport in their organisation. So this article uses transport as the example – but the method set out here can be used for anything.

Transport emissions result from a myriad of small choices, as well as some key decision-makers. Depending on what kinds of transport the organisational boundary includes, these are:

- the many little choices drivers make

- throughout their journey which result in more or less fuel-efficient driving;
- which car each member of staff chooses from the company car list;
- which cars make it on to the company car list;
- which commercial vehicles the company chooses to buy or lease;
- choices about how to move goods around within the organisation and along its supply chain;
- staff and customers choosing whether to travel by car or some other means;
- allocation of parking spaces; and
- facilities managers deciding whether to install video conferencing, and staff choosing to use them, and so on.

You can see already that there are some decisions which can be taken by one or two individuals in the organisation which open up or constrain the choices of others (for example offering interest free loans for season tickets). There are other aspects which are down to the one-off or recurring choices of staff and customers.

That's an awful lot of people to engage. In fact the complexity and sheer number of different stakeholders in this shared

endeavour can feel overwhelming. Unspoken, but lurking in the mind of the eco-champion, may be the anxious unhelpful idea that "I can't possibly effectively engage them all, so I'll just write the plan anyway and hope they go along with it".

False economy

Regular readers will know that I consider this a dangerous false economy!

There is a way out of this disempowered mind set, and that is to look systematically at the stakeholders and identify those who it's worth spending the most time and effort with – especially those who can help.

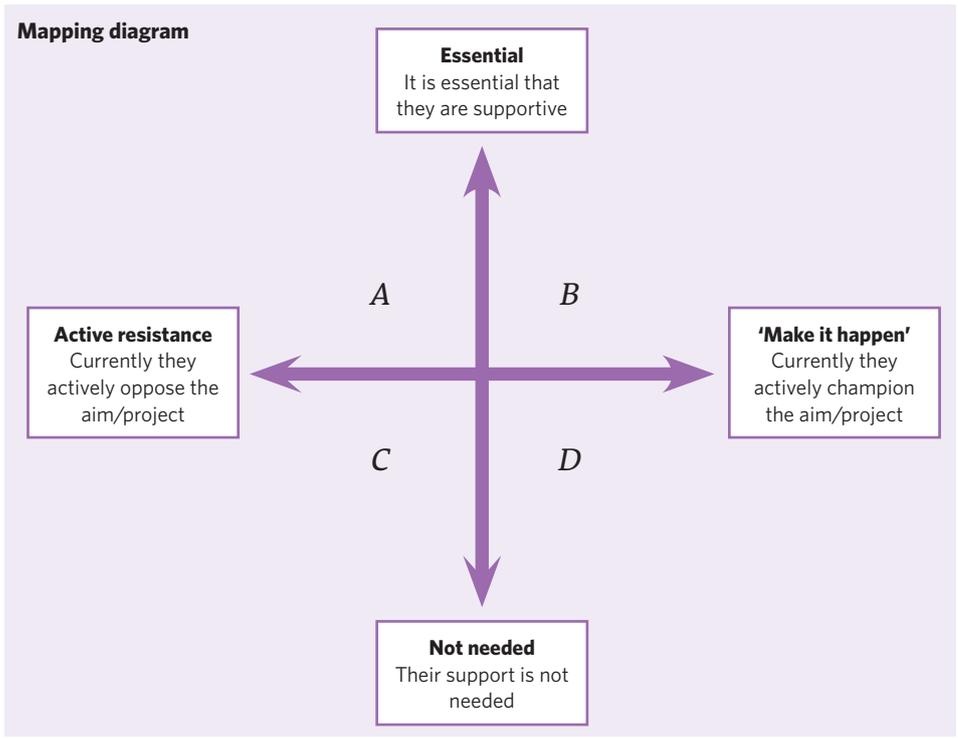
In change management training workshops and as part of live projects, this technique has helped people see the way forward. In fact, it's been so helpful that I'm going to set out how it's done in this article.

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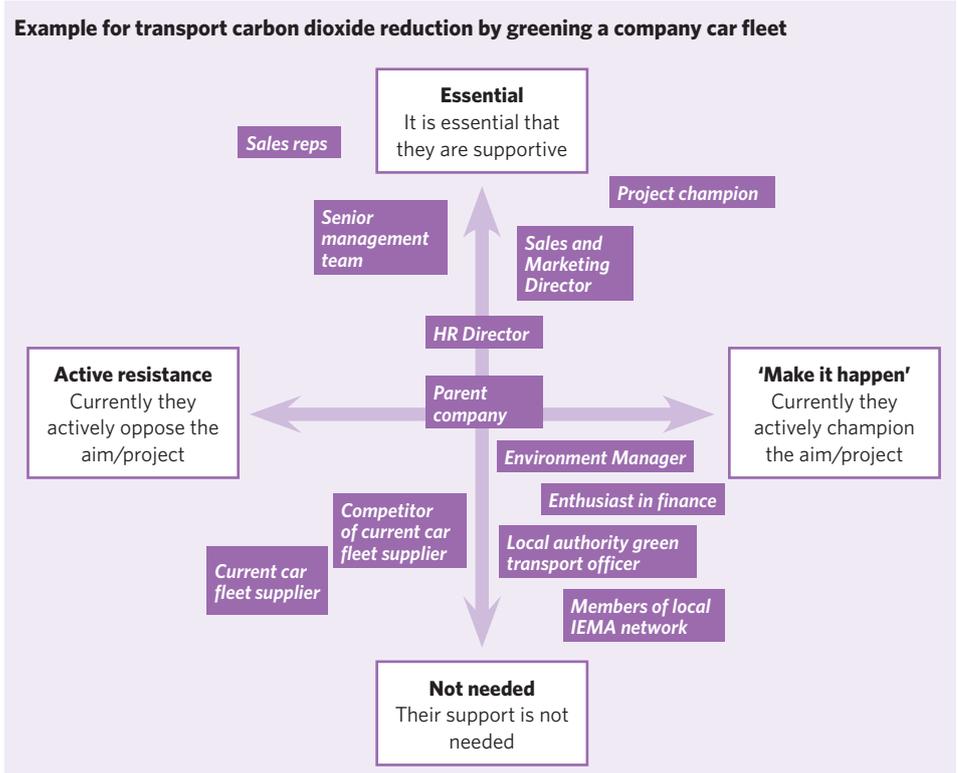
Brainstorm the stakeholders

The first step is to brainstorm the people who can influence whether the aim will be successfully met, and the people who'll be affected by the outcome and the steps taken to get it. These are the stakeholders, and they may be internal or external to your organisation.

Write each one on separate post-it notes or similar repositionable paper. Some of your stakeholders might be teams,



- A** Essential, but actively resistant. The most important people to pay attention to. What motivates them? What concerns them? What would make them happier about supporting the project? What problem of theirs might this project be a solution to?
- B** Essential and actively supportive. How can their support be used to shift people in quadrant A further to the right?
- C** Not essential and not supportive. These people are not a priority, but watch out in case they move into a different quadrant.
- D** Not essential but actively supportive. Get your moral support from these people. Keep an eye on them - some of them might move into B if their jobs change.



there wasn't much evidence about why the sales reps were so against the idea, or whether there were some who were more supportive than others. So an important action would be to find out what they really think, and what their actual needs and concerns are.

Talking individually with key senior managers would also be important.

Another insight was that the position of the parent company was a bit of a mystery. They have been mapped as being right in the middle, but more through ignorance than evidence. Their public pronouncements are very green, and they featured a case study on fuel efficiency in their latest CSR report. So finding out more about who's who within the parent company, and where those teams and individuals should be mapped, would be a useful exercise.

The third thing which became clear in the workshop was that the Finance Director had been missed off altogether. The blind spot was noticed by someone from another organisation, whose recent experience highlighted the importance of this post holder, who had been very supportive in getting her team to analyse current and likely fuel costs. This shows the usefulness of developing the map with other people – even if they don't know your own organisation. For example, getting together to talk the situation through with a couple of people from quadrant D can produce insights which would be missed when doing the mapping as a solo exercise. ■

organisations or types of people. In some cases, you'll know the name of a significant individual, so much the better.

If you're working with a project team, then the brainstorm and the subsequent mapping can be done jointly by the team.

Where are they?

Once the stakeholders have been identified, the next step is to map them onto a simple two-by-two diagram, using your judgement (supported by evidence where you have it) to decide both how important their support is

to meeting the aim, and what their current attitude is towards it.

The mapping above is inspired by some of the stories shared, but is not a real example.

Insights

Having mapped the stakeholders, it's clear that the most important people to concentrate on in this example are the sales reps themselves, and the senior managers (individually and collectively).

At the stage when the mapping was done,

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