

Analysing forces that influence change

Force field analysis is used to:

- investigate the balance of power in an issue
- identify the most important players, stakeholders and target groups for a campaign
- identify how to influence each target group to make change happen.



Templates to help analyse forces that influence change
[Managing influences](#)

How to do it

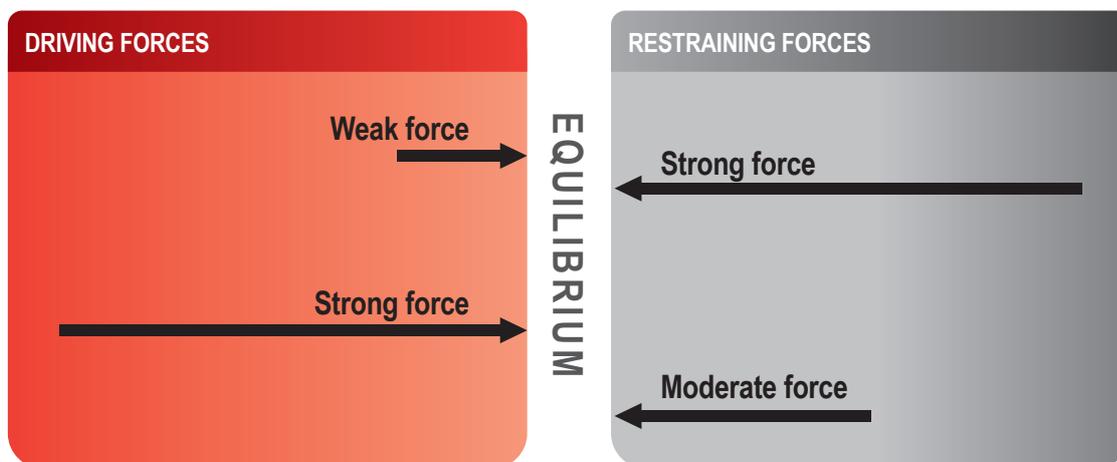
Develop a Force Field Diagram

The Force Field Diagram¹ is a model built on the idea that particular forces – people, habits, customs and attitudes – both drive and restrain change. You can use the model at any level (personal, project, organisational or network) to visualise and assess forces that may affect change initiatives. The idea is to understand the various forces acting on a given issue to provide a sense of what needs to be addressed as a priority.

The forces work against one another to produce a state of equilibrium, or balance. When the drivers for change are marshalled they have the capacity to outweigh the forces of resistance, and therefore create an opportunity for change. Naturally the opposite is also true, so managing change on a complex scale requires that you manage the forces of resistance.

In a force field model, an example of which is provided here, the forces are illustrated as arrows moving toward a state of equilibrium: the longer the arrow, the greater the force.

The types of forces you should consider include the influence of strategic priorities, budget priorities, electoral cycles, business cycles, and approval processes. These forces converge on particular groups or individuals and consideration should be given to how those forces impact behaviours.



¹ The framework was created Kurt Lewin, an American social psychologist.



Conduct a force field analysis

To conduct a force field analysis you will need a white board or a large sheet of paper. Use the managing influences template to record the outcomes of your analysis. As with all stakeholder analysis, you should conduct this process with a group. If possible you should include the project sponsor, project manager, change manager and members of the project team.

Typically, the following steps are taken:

- draw a diagram similar to the one shown in this instruction sheet
- discuss the current situation
- discuss the desired situation
- compile a list of all the forces and stakeholders driving change and those resisting change
- analyse the list and ask if the forces can be influenced
- allocate a score to each of the forces using a numerical scale, e.g. 1 = extremely weak and 10 = extremely strong
- chart the forces on the diagram you have created with the driving forces approaching from the left and restraining forces from the right
- determine whether change is still viable in light of the analysis and identify where the current situation will go if no action is taken
- discuss what strategies can be enacted to decrease the strength of the restraining forces and increase the strength of driving forces (keep in mind that changing the forces may increase or decrease other forces or even create new ones).

