

Force Field Analysis

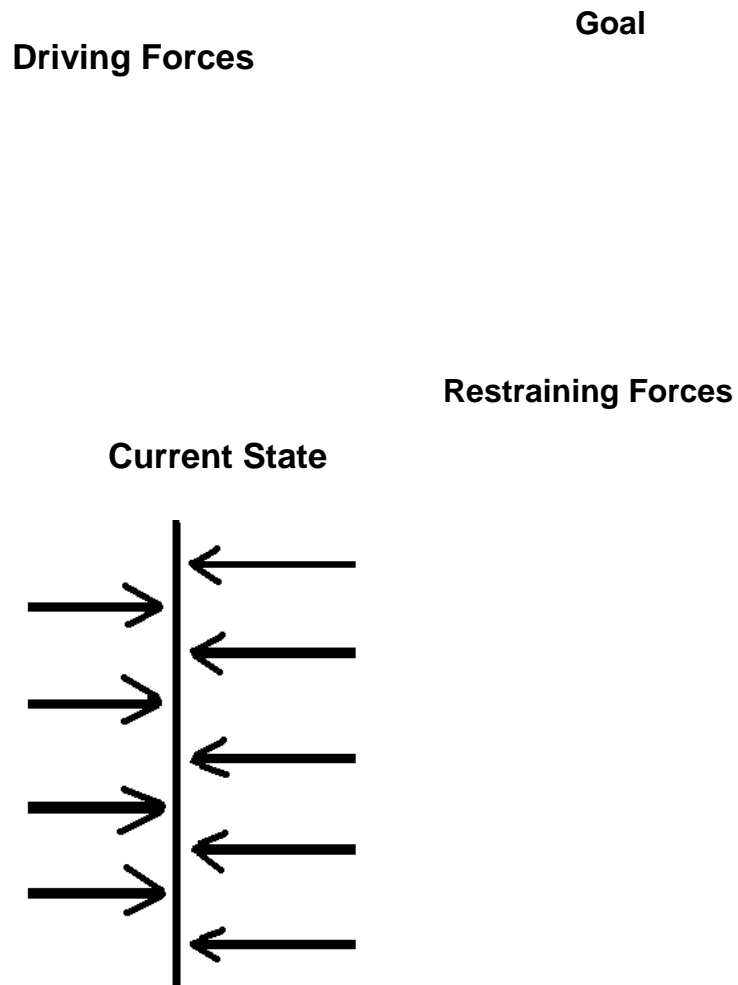
What is Force Field Analysis?

Force field analysis is based on a model for thinking about change as proposed by Kurt Lewin, who saw behavior in an institutional setting not as a static (motionless) habit or pattern but as a dynamic balance of forces working in opposite directions.

According to this way of looking at patterned behavior, change takes place when an imbalance occurs between the sum of the forces against change (Restraining Forces) and the sum of the forces for change (Driving Forces). A force-field analysis assumes that any social situation is a balance between these forces. An imbalance may occur through a change of magnitude or a change in direction in any one of the forces, or through the addition of a new force.

When to Use:

Use this technique for diagnosing a problem. It helps to identify forces operating on both side of an issue for field.



Handout 3.2: Example—Force Field Analysis:

CURRENT STATE: Undocumented students cannot get in-state tuition.

<i>Driving/Helping Forces</i>	<i>Restricting/ Constraining Forces</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Advocacy of National Latino Organizations	Negative conservative trend across the US	2
Only a few members have taking this issue on	Weak leadership on issue	1
	Lack of political will of Congress	3
High tuition rates for students	Fear of INS	4

GOAL: To obtain in-state tuition for undocumented students.

Force field analysis is investigative and analytical, not problem solving. After identifying the forces working for and against change, identify priorities and set goals. Use the problem-solving approach by translating particular forces into goals. Now rank the Restraining Forces by priority

For example, the *weak leadership* force can be translated into a goal such as “to increase leadership on the issue” and the new force field analysis might look like this:

<i>Restraining Forces</i>	<i>Driving Forces</i>
Lack of political will of Congress	Advocacy of National Latino organizations
Fear of INS	High tuition rates for students
Lack of knowledge of the government al process	Only a few members have taken this issue on

The challenge now is to develop strategies to reduce restraining forces by strengthening helping forces