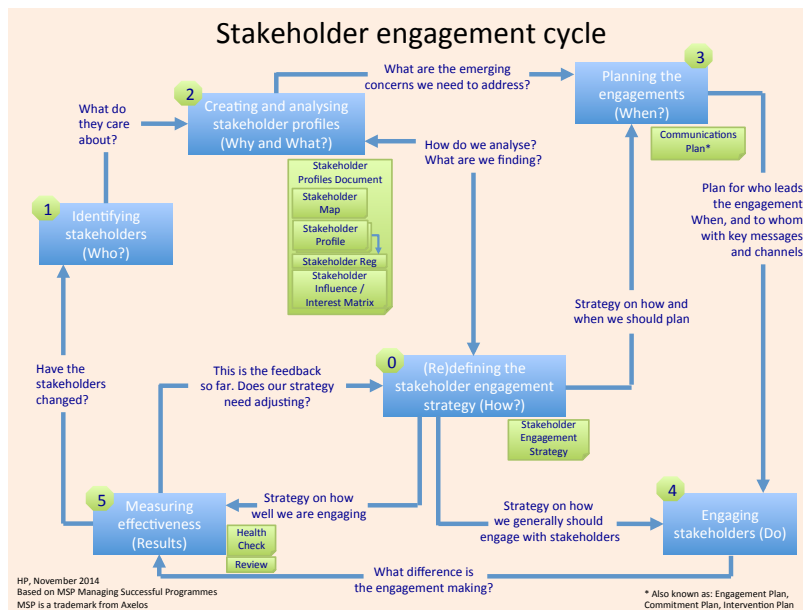


## MSP Stakeholder management, a refresh

For this refresh I will use the stakeholder engagement cycle from the MSP book. I added in this cycle the most important stakeholder management related documents. See the attached figure.



In the middle of the picture you see the **Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (0)**. This strategy, prepared by the Programme Manager during Defining the Programme, describes the framework that will enable effective stakeholder engagement and communication. In other words, the strategy, like all other strategies within PRINCE2 or MSP describes the HOW.

In the stakeholder management strategy you will find answers on the following topics:

- Criteria on how stakeholders would be grouped and tracked by the programme
- How the importance, influence and interest of a stakeholder will be assessed
- How the programme will engage with all stakeholders
- How stakeholder engagement in projects and change teams will interface
- How stakeholder analysis information will be processed and stored
- Review cycle stakeholder management information
- Responsibilities for stakeholder engagement within the programme
- Any policies on terminology and language used within the programme
- Process of changing the programme communication plan
- Measures to determine the success of the stakeholder engagement

The five other boxes follow, in line with the Deming cycle –plan-do-check-act-, the following sequential steps in the stakeholder engagement: Identify-Analyse-Plan-Engage-Measure.

Stakeholder management will start with the **identification (1)** of all stakeholders within the programme. WHO are involved or affected by the programme and its outcome. Think about users/beneficiaries, governance (management boards, steering

You can organise workshops with your executive or your preliminary programme team, you can have interviews with your key stakeholders, you can organize information sessions with employees, people involved to ask for their interest, commitment.

- Stakeholder Map
- Stakeholder Profiles
- Stakeholder Register (optional, to summarize key information from the stakeholder profiles or used as a substitute for your stakeholder profiles)
- Stakeholder influence/interest matrix

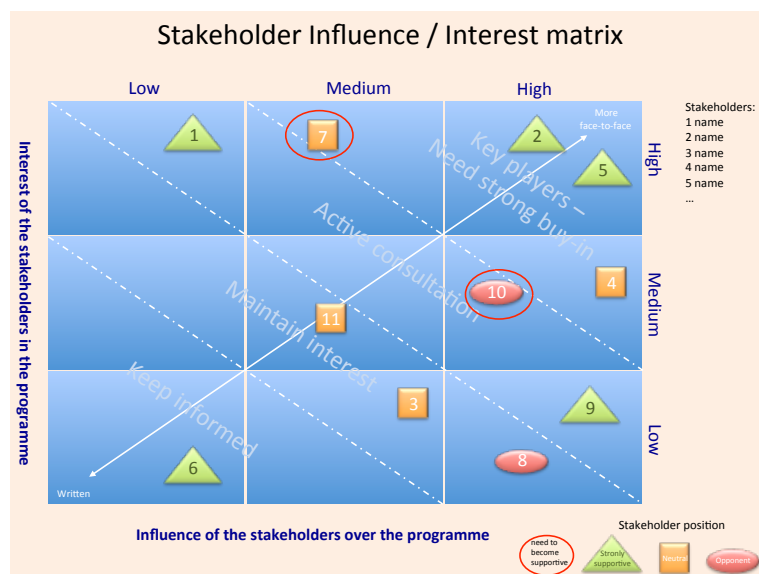
The Stakeholder Map will show all stakeholders (or stakeholder groups) and all potential areas of interest to indicate which stakeholder has which interests.

- Stakeholder' areas of interest/concern/sensitivity and why
- Level of support for the programme
- Levels of influence on the programme and why
- Any development trends that are relevant for the programme
- Influence/interest matrix showing current and target position for each stakeholder
- Benefits distribution matrix showing (dis-)benefits for each stakeholders
- Who owns communications with the individual stakeholder (include into the map)
- Key influencers within the group

[illegible]

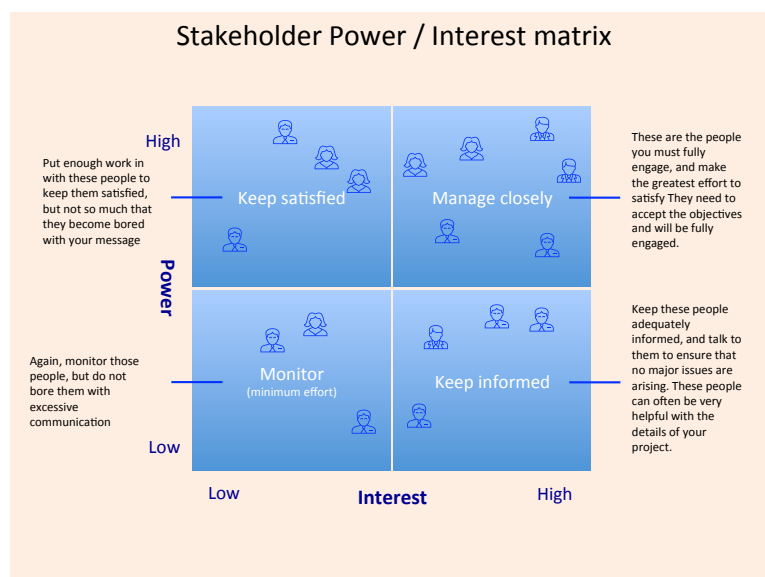
The Stakeholder Influence/Interest matrix shows the interest of the stakeholders (low, medium, high) in the programme and the influence (low, medium, high) of the stakeholders in the programme. This will help you to understand what is the most effective way to communicate (from written for low interest/low influence to more face-

to-face for high interest/high influence). Or as mentioned too in the MSP manual from keep informed, maintain interest, active consultation and key players – need strong buy-in. See: figure Stakeholder Influence/Interest matrix.



In the figure the stakeholder position (strongly supportive, neutral and opponent) is also shown. The circle emphasised those, which need to become supportive for the programme to be successful.

I mostly used a somewhat simplified model. See: figure Stakeholder Power / Interest matrix.



**Planning the engagement (3)** gives the WHEN and uses the Communications Plan<sup>1</sup> to visualise this. It's important to:

- Send the right message to the right audience

<sup>1</sup> Other names are: Commitment Plan, Engagement Plan, Intervention Plan

- Ensure relevance and recognition and engender trust
- Get the right messages to the right stakeholders in a timely and effective way
- Assess the effectiveness of the communications process

The Communications Plan must reflect the needs as mentioned in the Stakeholder Matrix and Stakeholder Profiles. The plan will address the following questions:

- What are the key messages, what information will be communicated
- When will information be disseminated (and timings)
- How much information (to what level of detail)
- Who is responsible
- Agree with
- Preparation work
- Approval by
- Who are the addressees
- How will feedback be encouraged, recorded, reviewed and resolved

**Engaging stakeholders (4)** is the actual DO or execution of the communication Plan. This could ask for a sometimes subtle or informal means of communication. Here we must be able to influence, lobby, cajole, manipulate, co-opt, flatter and apply pressure to your stakeholders in order to keep your programme on track.

The last step in the cycle is **measuring effectiveness (5)** and provides a feedback loop to adjust, if needed, your stakeholder engagement strategy. An independent review of your stakeholders' perception could be a good starting point. Also health checks or reviews on the effectiveness of your stakeholder documents are a way to measure the effectiveness. Events like the end of a tranche or the start or closure of a project within your programme are good moments to look at the effectiveness of your stakeholder engagement and to see if stakeholder positions needs to be changed and new interventions needs to be developed.



**Henny Portman** is PMO consultant and thought leader of the PMO domain of NN Group, and author of several PM books and works one day a week as a partner at Hedeman Consulting.