

Module #3: Public Policy Analysis

Objectives

- Students will identify public policy problems within their community and will use their analytical skills to identify solutions to those problems.
- Students will use policy tools to define solutions to public policy issues.

Context



Public policy refers to the laws, regulations, and other programs developed by governments to solve problems. The key to public policy analysis is problem solving and the various methods for studying proposed solutions to public problems. It also refers to the act of seeking alternative solutions to a public problem.

Handouts & Resources Needed:

Handout 3.1 Analyzing Public Policy Issues

Handout 3.2 Forced Field Analysis

Handout 3.3 Building a Logic Map

Newsprint

Easels

Colored Markers

Activity #1: Analyzing Public Policy Issues (55 min)

Procedure:

- Icebreaker
- Divide students into groups of 5 per group and appoint a recorder.
- Each group should be provided with newsprint.
- Remind students that in the last session they identified issues impacting youth that were of concern to them.
- Have each group select one important issue of interest to them.
- Ideally the issue should be **controversial**.
- Have students develop positions on the issue for and against. (See **Handout # 3.1 Analyzing Public Policy Issues**)
Each group should
 1. Identify the Problem
 2. Develop suggestions(alternatives) to resolve the problem
 3. Analyze the consequences of each solution
 4. Chose the best solution
 5. Evaluate why this is the best alternative
- Have each group present their issue with the larger group with alternatives considered and selected.
- Debriefing

Activity #2: Forced Field Analysis (55 min) (For advanced students)

Context



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.

Procedure:

- Icebreaker
- Divide students into groups of 4 and appoint a recorder
- Each student should be provided with Handout 3.2 Forced Field Analysis.
- Inform students that:
 - *Forced Field Analysis is a tool based on a model for thinking about change that sees behavior in an institutional setting not as a motionless habit or pattern but as a dynamic balance of forces working in opposite directions.*

According to this way of looking at 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).

Force-field analysis assumes that any social situation is a balance between these forces.

- The facilitator should review example given in Handout 3.2 with students and explain that 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 converting particular forces into goals and rank the Restraining Forces by priority.
 - For example, the *weak leadership* force can be converted into a goal such as to *increase leadership on the issue*.
- After review have each group identify a problem and conduct their own analysis on the problem.

- Have each group share with the larger group their responses.
- Debriefing

Activity #3: Building a Logic Map (55 min) (For advanced students)

Procedure:

- Note: We can use a logic model to help us in framing our issues, public policy interventions and our desired outcomes. It can also help us guide our decisions.
- Icebreaker
- Divide students into teams of 6-8 students per group. They can also work as a larger group.
- Provide each student with Handout 3.3 Building a Logic Map.
- Provide students with a review of the process for building a Logic Map, indicating that the map should include a description of the problem and outcomes if the problem continues and strategies to address the problem with anticipated outcomes.
- Provide for a review of the example provided in Handout 3.3
- Now have each group identify a public policy problem, such as students dropping out of school and develop their Logic Map.
- Have each group share their map with the larger group.
- Debriefing

Handout 3.1 Analyzing Public Policy Issues

1. Identify the Problem
2. Develop Alternative Solutions to the Problem
3. Analyze the consequences of the Alternative
4. Chose an alternative
5. Evaluate why this is the best alternative

Handout 3.2

Force Field Analysis

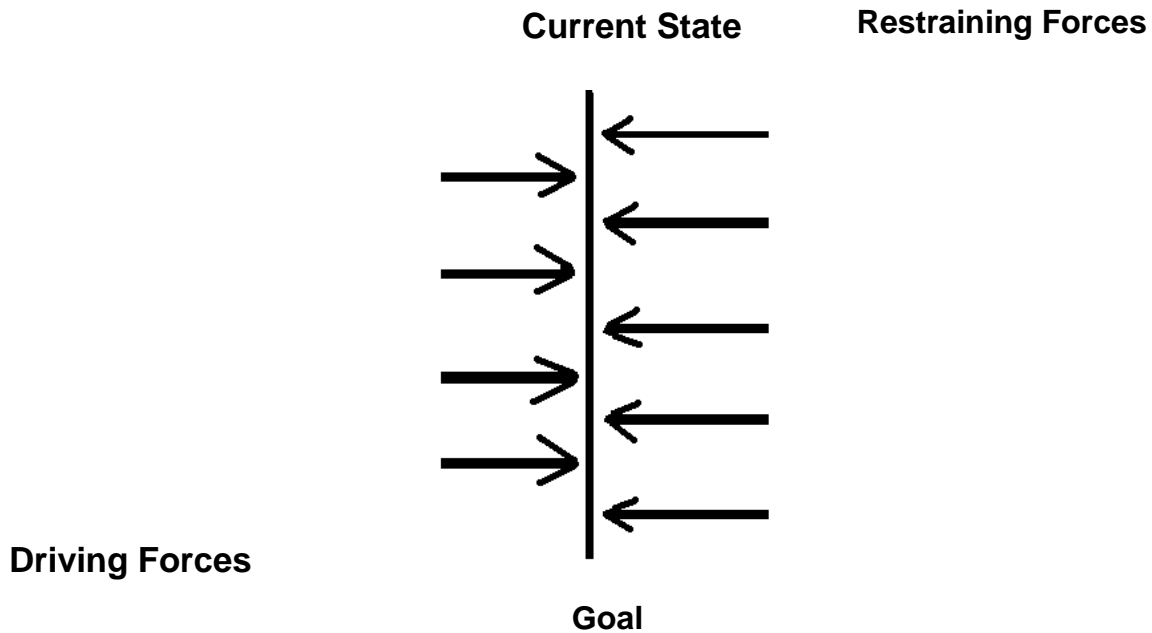
What is Force Field Analysis?

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

Handout 3.2: Worksheet: Force Field Analysis

Current State: _____
 Identify Driving Forces and Restraining forces and rank the Restraining Forces by priority

| <i>Driving Forces</i> | <i>Restraining Forces</i> | <i>Rank</i> Priorities |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

GOAL: _____

Remember: 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.

CURRENT STATE: _____

| <i>Restraining Forces</i> | <i>Driving Forces</i> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

GOAL: _____

Handout # 3.3

**DEVELOPING A LOGIC MAP
EXAMPLE**

Current State – Core Problem, PRIMARY Causes and Anticipated Outcome
(First, the logic model presents the problem)

Students do not receive adequate attention and supports, leaving learning obstacles such as language barriers and learning needs are ignored.

Parents are unsure what engagement looks like or what to do: If parents lack the knowledge, information, and supports to engage in schools they will fail to involve themselves as parents, or teachers at home, and thus fail to positively influence their children's education. Lack of communication and collaboration between parents and schools.

Schools are unsafe schools, low teacher expectations of students, and lack of cultural competence make students feel as though they are not valued.

CORE PROBLEM:
*Student' achievement and self-confidence decline, academic achievement gaps increase, and students feel further alienated.
Student absenteeism increases.*

OUTCOME:
High dropout rates especially among students of poor and cultural diverse communities

Handout # 3.3

LOGIC MAP EXAMPLE

Intervention Strategies

Second, the logic model then presents intervention strategies to address the problem and outcomes anticipated

***Students** receive counseling, tutoring and academic support. Teachers receive training on language barriers and cultural competency.*

***Parents** and teachers increase communication and collaboration to support student achievement. **Schools** provide better outreach to parents and provide training on how parents can support their children's education .*

***Teachers** have high expectations of all students
School safety becomes a priority
Cultural competence is integrated into the curriculum.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

*Students' achievement and self-confidence increase, academic achievement gaps decrease, and students are pushed farther alienated. Student absenteeism decreases. Students feel valued
Parents more engaged in their children's education .*

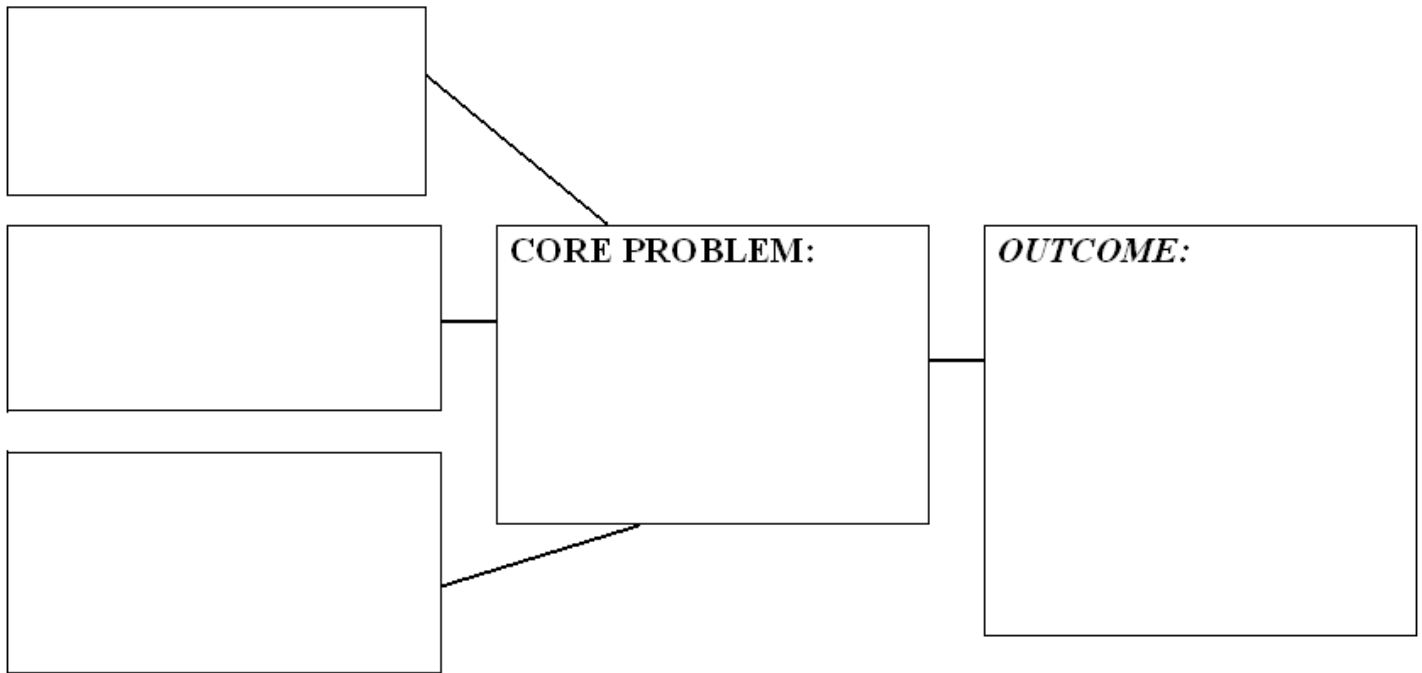
OUTCOMES:

Student drop out rates decline, graduation rates increase, college enrollment rates increase

Handout # 3.3

MY LOGIC MAP

Current State – Core Problem, PRIMARY Causes and Anticipated Outcome
(First, the logic model presents the problem)



Handout # 3.3

MY LOGIC MAP

Intervention Strategies
Second, the logic model then presents intervention strategies to address the problem and outcomes anticipated

