

Stakeholder Affinity Mapping

adapted from the National School Reform Faculty protocol

Description (3 minutes)

Take a moment to think about a moment this year that felt truly successful or magical, a moment when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for every moment to feel like that?

Each of you knows what types of questions either motivate or deflate you; this exercise should aim for questions that motivate. Some frames for questions that motivate:

- *How might we . . . In what ways might we . . . What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . . Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .*

This activity asks participants to step into the shoes of a range of community stakeholders and to ask questions that create excitement around what's possible for LREI. In five years, LREI will be 100 years old. How do we create the momentum now to carry us forward into the next hundred years?

Setup

- 6 large sheets on walls/floor; each labeled with a stakeholder and the momentum question.
- table in center with postits and pens/markers
- box with dots to be handed out later
- Stakeholders:
 - parents, teachers, students, administrators, board of trustees, outside community

Materials

Make sure that you have a "block" of post-it notes (6-10 maximum) and a pen.

Step 1 (10 minutes)

Choose one of the stakeholders and write one motivating question from that stakeholder's perspective. Put the post-it note on the corresponding chart paper. Choose another stakeholder and repeat. Write at least one question per stakeholder. Feel free to read other posted questions for inspiration, but work silently on your own.

Examples of questions written from stakeholder's perspective:

- **Faculty:** How might we create stronger relationships with our students' parents?
- **Students:** In what ways might we create for a wider audience?
- **Parents:** What would happen if every time the school reached out to me I saw it as an invitation to a partnership?
- **Board of Trustees:** How might we more easily learn about mission forwarding initiatives so that we can better support them?
- **Administration:** Wouldn't it be fun if faculty meetings deepened our social connections AND furthered projects/initiatives?
- **Outside Community:** Wouldn't it be amazing if LREI students could help to better connect me with my clients/patrons?

When time is called, go to the chart where you posted your last question.

(Note to facilitator: If groups at each sheet are uneven, ask folks to move to even things out)

Step 2 (7 minutes)

At your station, organize ideas by "natural" categories. Do this without talking. Which ideas go together? As long as you do not talk, feel free to move any post-it note to any place. Move yours, and those of others, and feel free to do this. Do not be offended if someone moves yours to a place that you think it does not belong, just move it to where you think it does belong — but do this all in silence. If any questions are framed in the negative, you may write the positive framing on a second post-it and place it on top of the negative framing.

(Note to facilitator: Post the sheet with the simple version of this step next to each sheet after giving the directions)

Step 3 (5 minutes)

Converse about the categories and come up with a name for each one. These should encompass the thematic scope of the questions. It may be helpful to move the post-it notes into neat columns so that the categories are clear during this stage.

(Note to facilitator: Post the sheet with the simple version of this step next to each sheet after giving the directions)

Step 4 (15 minutes)

(Note to facilitator: Hand out or direct participants to the dots. If doing with more than one group (e.g., faculty from multiple divisions), make sure that each group uses the same colored dots)

Groups break up. All walk around and review each of the charts and affinity maps from your divisional perspective (as a faculty member). Place one of your colored stickers next to any theme (category) that resonates for you.

Step 6 (5 minutes)**Debrief**

Do a quick popcorn closing to provide an opportunity for any impressions, ideas and questions.

FACULTY

Think about a moment this year that felt truly **successful** or **magical**, when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for all the other moments to feel that way?

What might that look like from the perspective of the stakeholder listed above? Where are the opportunities for positive change?

Some frames for questions that motivate:

How might we . . . In what ways might we . . .

What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . .

Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .

STUDENTS

Think about a moment this year that felt truly **successful** or **magical**, when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for all the other moments to feel that way?

What might that look like from the perspective of the stakeholder listed above? Where are the opportunities for positive change?

Some frames for questions that motivate:

How might we . . . In what ways might we . . .

What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . .

Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .

PARENTS

Think about a moment this year that felt truly **successful** or **magical**, when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for all the other moments to feel that way?

What might that look like from the perspective of the stakeholder listed above? Where are the opportunities for positive change?

Some frames for questions that motivate:

How might we . . . In what ways might we . . .

What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . .

Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .

BOARD

Think about a moment this year that felt truly **successful** or **magical**, when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for all the other moments to feel that way?

What might that look like from the perspective of the stakeholder listed above? Where are the opportunities for positive change?

Some frames for questions that motivate:

How might we . . . In what ways might we . . .

What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . .

Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .

ADMIN

Think about a moment this year that felt truly **successful** or **magical**, when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for all the other moments to feel that way?

What might that look like from the perspective of the stakeholder listed above? Where are the opportunities for positive change?

Some frames for questions that motivate:

How might we . . . In what ways might we . . .

What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . .

Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .

OUTSIDE COMMUNITY

Think about a moment this year that felt truly **successful** or **magical**, when all the pieces worked perfectly. What would it take for all the other moments to feel that way?

What might that look like from the perspective of the stakeholder listed above? Where are the opportunities for positive change?

Some frames for questions that motivate:

How might we . . . In what ways might we . . .

What would happen if . . . Wouldn't it be fun to . . .

Wouldn't it be amazing if . . .

Step 2

In your group, organize post-its by “**natural**” categories.

Do this without talking.

Which ideas go together?

As long as you do not talk, feel free to move any post-it note to any place. Move yours, and those of others, and feel free to do this.

Do not be offended if someone moves a question to a place that you think it does not belong, just move it to where you think it does belong — but do this all in **silence**.

(If any questions are framed in the negative, you may write the positive framing on a second post-it and place it on top of the negative framing.)

Step 3

Converse about the categories and come up with a **name** for each one.

These should encompass the **thematic scope** of the questions.

It may be helpful to move the post-it notes into neat columns so that the categories are clear during this stage.