

Working collaboratively

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Stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement is a critical skill for your success as a senior executive. You can form strong working relationships within and across agencies by applying some key principles that enable inclusiveness, openness and appreciation of the diverse stakeholder perspectives and expertise needed to achieve common business objectives.

A robust stakeholder engagement model can guide you and other employees through the process of identifying and categorising key internal and external stakeholders, so you can engage with them in a timely manner using appropriate techniques. You should familiarise yourself with your agency's internal stakeholder engagement policies and frameworks. Work closely with your internal communications team to ensure you are engaging in effective stakeholder engagement practices.

As a senior executive, you must continually and consistently engage with diverse internal and external stakeholders to ensure your projects are successfully implemented. Key strategies for successful stakeholder engagement include:

- keeping the outcomes at the centre of all project activities by having a clear description the outcomes of the project and engagement will achieve
- striving to achieve commitment early on, from the highest level required to support the project
- clarifying and acquiring the resources for the engagement process by drafting a project timeline, including the resources required and key due dates for delivery
- selecting a mixture of engagement strategies, and considering how you will use and disseminate the input
- ensuring all key stakeholders have an opportunity for their voice to be heard
- have clear risk mitigation strategies in place to identify and manage stakeholder relationships
- setting defined expectations among your stakeholders about the purpose and process of engagement

- measuring and evaluating progress by preparing an evaluation approach early on and being flexible and responsive to any required change in approach
- establishing feedback loops by designing a communication plan early on, and adhering to your commitments about who, how, when and to whom the results will be disseminated.

Dealing with the media

As a senior executive you may be asked by your media and communications team to provide information for responses to media enquiries or to assist with developing briefing materials for Ministers and other leaders. Media responses are often sensitive in nature and usually have short response timeframes. You will need to adhere to your internal media management policy when dealing with any media enquiry.

You cannot speak to the media unless you are authorised to by your agency's media management policy. Failing to adhere to this may result in a breach of the **Code of Ethics and Conduct**.

There are **whole-of-government Social Media Guidelines** which provide advice on how agencies can effectively use social media.