

As you learned to take your leadership vision and create a progressive strategy in Module 11, it should be apparent that our stakeholders are a priority.

Module 12 identifies how to effectively communicate with our stakeholders.



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Module 12 **Effective Communication, The Who**

Stakeholder Identification & Engagement

Objectives

- Appreciate the benefits of engaging stakeholders.
- Understand how to define and identify stakeholders.
- Provide techniques for engaging stakeholders.

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What is a Stakeholder?

A person, group, or organization that has interest or concern in an organization.



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Identifying Stakeholders

- Those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist
- Those who might affect or be affected by the actions of a business as a whole
- Everyone with an interest in our work

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Stakeholders Have...

- The **POWER** to influence outcomes
- A level of **INTEREST** in your work
- A **POSITION** in support of or against you

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Stakeholders

Internal: People within ALDOT who deliver a service or solution

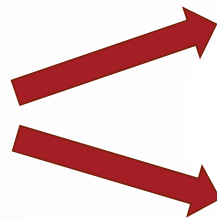
External: Those non-ALDOT people or entities that are involved in or indirectly affected by ALDOT work



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Stakeholders

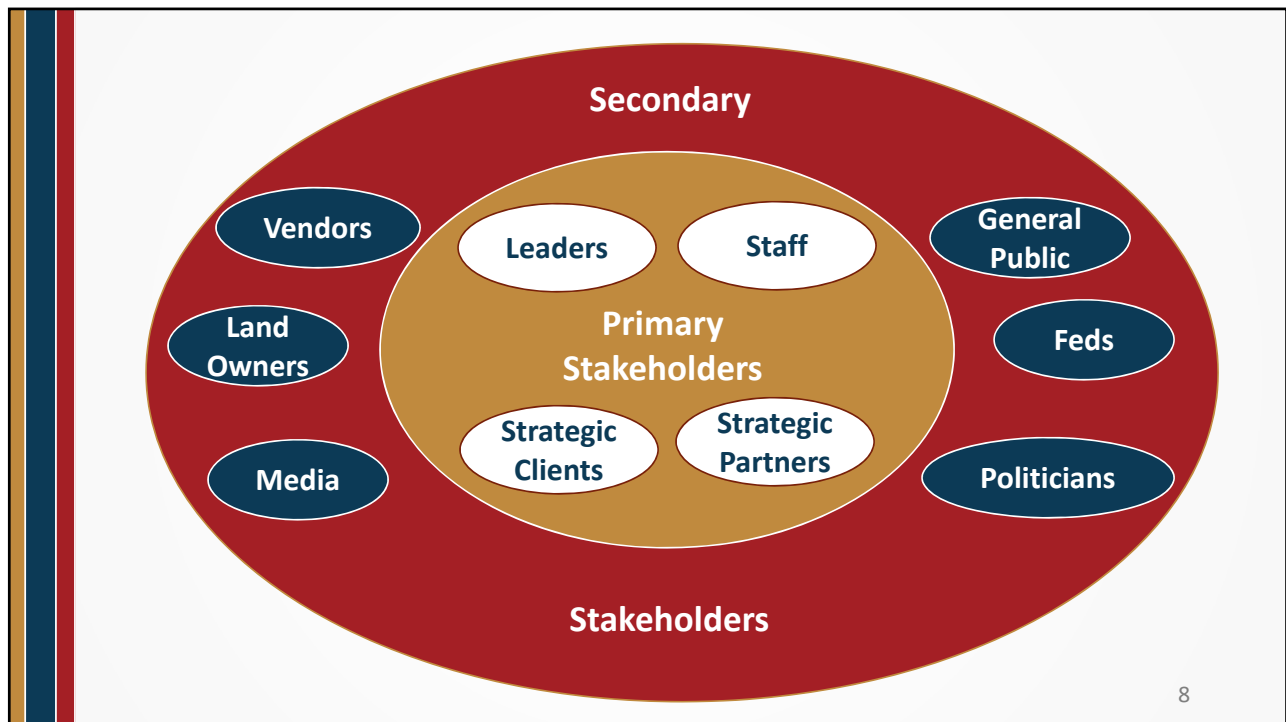
External



Categorized by the different stages of a project or initiative such as pre-construction, construction, and/or post-construction

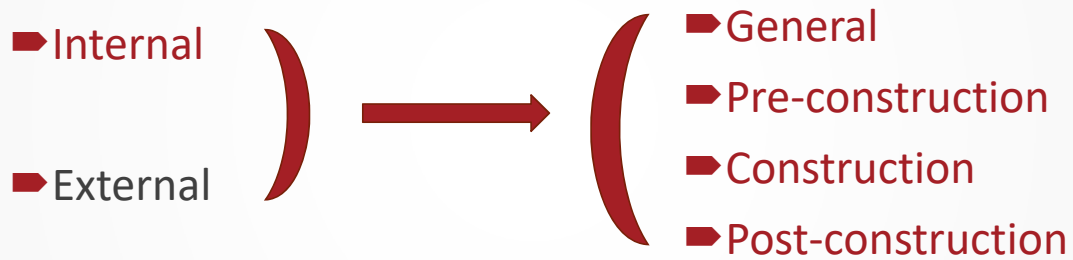
Categorized by those working with ALDOT to deliver a service or solution not necessarily involved in the direct work or services

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- ### Steps in Stakeholder Analysis
1. Identify and list all potential stakeholders.
 2. Categorize the person or group by area or role.
 3. Determine if they are primary or secondary.
 4. Set priorities.
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Stakeholder Involvement (Project-specific or Non-Project-specific)



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Group Discussion: Analysis Examples

- ALDOT is starting a 52-mile beltway.
- ALDOT is deciding to implement a new payroll software.

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Special Stakeholders

- ALDOT Leadership
- ALDOT Legal or other Administrative Offices
- Elected Officials
- Media



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Understanding Elected Officials

- Generally have no formal training for their job
- Generally have no “construction” related experience
- Serve the interests of those who elected them
- Held accountable by voters
- Tend to be short-term focused
- Do not like to be surprised or embarrassed
- Expect us to be problem solvers
- Do not like us to use technical jargon when conversing with them

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George Conner, PE

Deputy Director, Operations

Communication

Communication Is the Key

*Our recurring problems
are because we don't communicate well.*

George Conner



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Communication With Stakeholders Is Important.

Think about the following consequences:

- We can cause a landowner to become very wealthy.
- We have situations where our work causes the family farm to be split up.
- We can enhance and bring awareness to a natural landscape.
- We can make a pristine section of stream disappear forever.
- We can displace entire neighborhoods if there is a need.

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Seventy percent of your job performance is based on interpersonal relationship skills.

- These skills involve more than the ability to communicate.
- They allow you to establish and build relationships with stakeholders.
- They allow you to maintain relationships with stakeholders.
- They give you an advantage during conflict or negotiation.

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Dealing with Conflict

Stages of Conflict Resolution

1. Empathetic listening
2. "I" statements
3. Finding common ground
4. Positive redirection
5. No alternative

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- This should never be our default reaction.
- Try alternative solutions and discussion first.
- Sometimes we must decline and maybe disappoint others.
- Stay in alignment with our mission, whether saying "Yes" or "No."
- "No" can mean several things:
 - "Never, not ever."
 - "I can't."
 - "I could, but I won't."
 - "I might, but something stands in my way."
- Always be very clear about which meaning we would like to convey.



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- Overall tips:
 - If you can't or shouldn't, then don't.
 - If it's possible and maybe we should, then offer something less than "no."
 - Maybe the request deserves more consideration.
- Give them an avenue of our choosing if the stakeholder wants to appeal.



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Stakeholder Engagement

- Engaged—passionate, connected, working hard
- Not Engaged—checked out, just making it through the day
- Disengaged—miserable, actively working to undermine the effort



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Tips for Engaging Stakeholders

- Have a plan—be strategic and intentional.
- Connect with stakeholders early and often.
- Keep stakeholders informed and involved throughout the entire project.
- Discuss, consider, and evaluate options before making decisions.

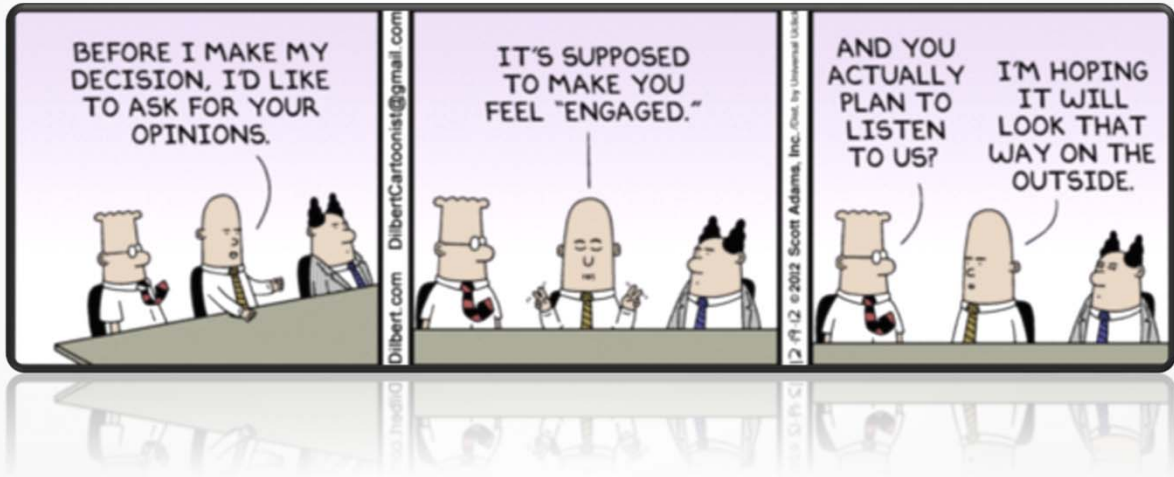
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Tips for Engaging Stakeholders

- Identify stakeholders' preferred action ahead of time so there are no surprises.
- When meeting with stakeholders, ask strategic and open-ended questions.
- Look to make peace in every situation in order to overcome resistance.

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Listening To Options



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Barriers to Transportation Professionals Engaging Stakeholders

- May already know the solution
- May lack interest in hearing other viewpoints
- Lack of training in the process
- Do not recognize the importance of the issue
- May fear criticism
- May bring past baggage to the table
- Prefer to hide from stakeholders

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Effectiveness Audit

Score the following questions on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being strongly disagree and 10 being strongly agree.

- _____ 1. I can state ALDOT’s mission.
- _____ 2. I am clear on my personal mission.
- _____ 3. ALDOT does a good job engaging its stakeholders.
- _____ 4. If a reporter cornered me, I would know what to say and do.
- _____ 5. Our stakeholders appreciate our work.



John Cooper

Transportation Director

Impact Someone

Final Thoughts

*You can't influence someone you are not willing
to hang out with.*

Barry Fagan, ALDOT Chief Environmental Evangelist

*Peace is not the absence of conflict
but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict—
alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence.*

Dorothy Thompson

American journalist and radio broadcaster, recognized in *Time* magazine as one of
America's two most influential women in 1939
(the other being Eleanor Roosevelt)

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