Multi-Organisational Collaborative Large-Scale Engagements with Strategyfinder

Why use *Strategyfinder* for working on complex problems that require engagement from a wide range of organizations?

The *Strategyfinder* method and software tool enables the engagement of a wide range of participants in a manner that encourages contribution, enables exploration and learning, and facilitates effective action. It assists in effective collaborative working across organizations and helps increase the acceptance of large-scale projects.

Strategyfinder is particularly useful when:

- There are many participant organizations/entities needing to be involved (often widely dispersed).
- There is a wide range of knowledge bases (depth and breadth).
- There are differences in power bases.

The *Strategyfinder* tool and method enables engagement in a way that is time efficient, psychologically safe, and inclusive.

The four stages of discovery

1. Capture perspectives. Participants can quickly share their views in an anonymous manner which encourages openness and increases the likelihood of a more comprehensive picture.

2. Combine the different perspectives into themes/clusters, allowing participants to 'listen' to one another, take on board different views, and add material. The clustering helps manage the complexity by 'chunking'.

3. Explore and elaborate the representation by discovering how the different contributions impact one another – building a 'causal map' and helping develop shared understanding. Analysing the map can help revealing insights into central statements, feedback loops etc.

4. Gain focus through prioritization highlighting where action is best centred.

Summary

These four stages allow participants to feel free to engage and share their views, understanding better not only what they think about the topic but also what others think and as such increase their knowledge of the topic. It provides a solid foundation for decision making and helps in directing attention to where action is best targeted.

MOCLE-EXAMPLE 1: COLLABORATING ON MENTAL HEALTH PROVISION.

The Mental Health Network (MHN) was keen to involve a wide array of participants in a collaboration to provide support to those with mental health issues. This meant engaging with psychiatrists, carer-consumer advocates, GPs, physiotherapists, etc. all with quite different knowledge bases and aspirations.

The network recognized that these were very busy people and so engagement would have to be as effective and efficient as possible. They were also aware that not all felt comfortable having their say in public fora. To build a common shared direction (a strategy) the MHN co-leads along with an outside facilitator ran a series of 3-hour workshops seeking to understand the issues and opportunities faced by each and design effective ways forward. Each workshop comprised a mix of stakeholders benefiting from the software's combination of anonymity and causal mapping. All involved were able to share their concerns, understand better the challenges faced by colleagues and work together to develop actionable plans as well as agree to a set of goals to strive towards.

As one participant commented:

> *"it isn't just differences between psychiatrists and carer-consumers but also across mental and physical health, across different spectrums, e.g., youth, and geographical region and disorder. We are starting to understand pathways which are often very idiosyncratic."*

MOCLE EXAMPLE 2 – GAINING 'SOCIAL LICENSE' FOR PUBLIC SECTOR PROJECTS.

As with many large-scale, multi-stakeholder projects, de-commissioning of Oil and Gas platforms requires input from a range of different parties (industry, regulators, fishing (commercial and recreational), and communities. However, these parties are busy and wary of being involved.

Using Strategyfinder allowed for the different stakeholder cohorts to come together (via the software), share views, understand how one another perceived the issue, reflect on the emergent structure, and identify priorities. They saw added value in the process – a key requirement for continued involvement.

One participant noted:

> *"Using the strategy finder (the software) I think was really, really good because if I had just spent this much time of my day giving feedback without seeing it, how it all linked together and fed into another and helped inform my own mental map in live time. I may have thought it might be something I'm not too keen to do again but seeing it unfold in front of me and really understanding how it's been used is really, really helpful. And it feels like it was a good use of time. So, I want to thank you for engaging in that way".*

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