

Force-field analysis: Take a step back and try to analyse the problem.

Description: The aim of this tool is to identify negative and positive forces that influence the issue being discussed and begin to generate a strategy or plan of action.

How to use?

We propose to use this tool in a small team. Together you can brainstorm ideas regarding forces that influence a specific situation.

1. Identify and agree on a desired outcome or goal and write it at the top of the chart.
2. Brainstorm facilitating (positive) factors that could help you move toward the desired outcome. Think about individual, personal, professional, school-wide, societal etc. forces as well.
3. Now think about restraining forces that could prohibit you or the group from realising the desired outcome. Again, think about the possible factors as broad as possible.
4. After that try to rank each positive item in your list according to the degree of influence they have on the desired outcomes. Then rate each negative item according to how easily they can be solved. Retain only those items that the group or you can influence. Write positive factors in the left column and negative factors in the right column in this order.
5. Have another brainstorming session on how to strengthen or enhance the top positive items and on ways how to neutralize the negative elements (or how to convert them into positive forces).

You can use the following template (click on the image to download an editable template in Word):

FORCE FIELD	
Desired state:	
Positive forces	Negative forces
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
...	...
Strategies to move forward	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	

Source: Wald, P. J., Castleberry, M. S. (2000). Educators as Learners. Creating a Professional Learning Community in Your School. Alexandria: ASCD. (pp. 79-81.)