

Engaging your 'sphere of influence'

'Sphere of influence' is a term you will commonly hear throughout the development of your RAP. This is to help you think broadly about the stakeholders involved in your operations, and how you may be able to engage them in reconciliation. First and foremost, RAPs are about engaging your employees in reconciliation, but who else does your organisation have the capacity to influence? What is the unique contribution your organisation can make toward engaging all Australians in reconciliation?

Your sphere of influence

Who is in your sphere of influence?

Broadly, stakeholders can be divided into those that are internal and external to your organisation. When brainstorming stakeholders, it is also helpful to think about individual, organisational, community and societal levels, and who exists within each of these 'spheres'.

Activity: Understanding your influence

Identify your stakeholders

You will need:

- Post-it notes
- Pens
- Butcher's paper

Hand out post-it notes to each participant. Read out the following questions and ask participants to write their responses on the post-it notes, one response per post-it note (allow two to three minutes per question). Remind participants to think broadly about both internal and external stakeholders, at individual, organisational, community and societal levels.

- Who is affected by your core business?
- Who has power and influence over your core business?
- Who will actively support or promote reconciliation activities?
- Who is likely to oppose or derail reconciliation activities?



Map influence and interest

Now divide participants into small groups. Provide each group with a sheet of butcher's paper, divided into four quadrants. Ask groups to title the four quadrants as follows:



Now ask participants to share their responses with their group and discuss which quadrant their stakeholder belongs in (allow 15 minutes). Ask each group to report back to the larger group (allow five minutes per group). At the end of the activity, briefly discuss the recommended course of action for engaging the stakeholders listed in each category. For example:

- High influence, high interest – MANAGE
- High influence, low interest – SATISFY
- Low influence, high interest – INFORM
- Low influence, low interest – RECOGNISE

A helpful next step is to organise your information for each target stakeholder, discuss why they are important, and ideas for how you plan to engage with them. A table format is useful to capture this discussion and list next steps. For example:

Target stakeholder	Why they are important?	How will we engage?
Internal employees	All employees should have a clear understanding of reconciliation, how they can contribute and why the organisation is dedicated to reconciliation	We will run an internal staff survey to better understand employee interest and knowledge about reconciliation

Still unsure?

Please email us at rap.team@reconciliation.org.au.