

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’.



What can they influence?

Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity; unity; institutional integrity; and historical acceptance. The [State of Reconciliation in Australia Report](#) outlines seven action areas that all Australians can play a role to advance as follows:

| Dimension | Areas for action |
|-------------------------|---|
| Race relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overcome racism. |
| Equality and Equity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renew focus on closing the gap. Recognise and respect the cultures and collective rights of First Australians. |
| Institutional Integrity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalise on the RAP program. Improve the governance of government. |
| Unity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a process to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and unite all Australians. |
| Historical acceptance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge our past through truth, justice and healing. |

Activity

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 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 is likely to oppose or derail reconciliation activities?
- Who will actively support or promote reconciliation activities?

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:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| High influence, high interest. | High influence, low interest. |
| Low influence, high interest | Low influence, low interest. |

Now ask participants to share their responses with their group, and discuss which quadrant their stakeholder belongs in (allow 10 minutes). Ask each group to report back to the larger group (allow two minutes per group).

At the end of the session, 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

Still unsure?

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