



Consultation Techniques

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6.0 Consultation Techniques

6.1 Introduction

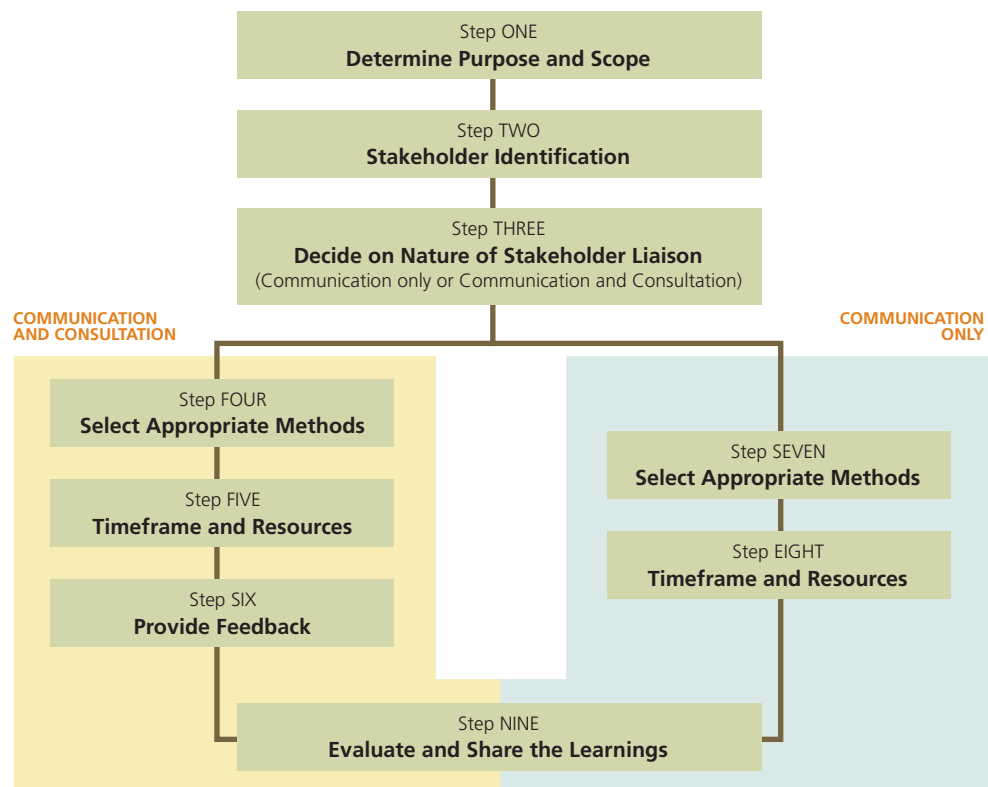
The planning, development and management of trails is likely to involve a number of organisations, groups and individuals who have an interest in the project. The term ‘stakeholder’ is commonly used to describe these groups and individuals. Stakeholders are generally directly affected or have a strong interest in the proposal. Failure to adequately consult with stakeholders is one of the most common reasons for the collapse of trail proposals. However, projects which include genuine and transparent consultation are more likely to be successful and can generate a level of goodwill which can assist in the ongoing management of the trail once construction is completed.

6.2 Consultation or communication?

Whenever there is a potential that a stakeholder may be affected in relation to a trail project, consultation will be required. There are two consultation processes that are available: a) *Communication Only* and b) *Communication and Consultation*. A decision should be made during the early stages of planning for the trail to determine if stakeholder issues are likely to have an impact on the outcome. This will then determine the most appropriate process of consultation. Further information on the two processes is provided on page 31.

The following flow chart identifies the key steps of the Communication and/or Consultation Process. A combined Communication and Consultation Process is highlighted in pale yellow while a Communication Only Process is highlighted in blue.

Figure 3:
Communication and Consultation Determination Flowchart
(Source: A Hazebroek)



Communication process

The Communication Only Process should be adopted when the stakeholder has no, or minimal ability to influence the decision or outcome. However, it will be important to get a message across in a consistent way ensuring that a stakeholder is kept informed. This will assist in building a positive relationship that may impact favourably on future activities.

Communication and consultation process

The combined Communication and Consultation Process should be adopted when it is important or necessary that stakeholders have input which may influence a decision or outcome. Stakeholders may test ideas or options and in some cases, may contribute to a mutually acceptable outcome. It will be important to use a combination of effective communication and consultation techniques to ensure that a positive result is achieved.

The figure below is designed to assist in identifying if the Communication or the Communication and Consultation Process should be adopted. The degree of sensitivity or potential stakeholder impact (shown at left of the chart) displays the impact the stakeholder issues are likely to have on the project.

Figure 4:
Communication and Consultation Complexity Chart
(Source: A Hazebroek)

		Degree of Complexity, Technical or Design Difficulty		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Degree of Sensitivity or Potential Stakeholder Impact	LOW Stakeholder issues WILL NOT IMPACT on project/activity outcome	Least complex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication plan • Minimal time impact • Minimal \$ impact 	Low to Moderate complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication plan • Moderate time impact • Moderate \$ impact 	High complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed communication plan • Moderate time impact • Moderate \$ impact
	MEDIUM Stakeholder issues MAY DRIVE CHANGE to some aspects of the project/activity	Moderate complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication plan and consultation plan • Moderate time impact • Moderate \$ impact 	Moderate complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication plan and consultation plan • Moderate time impact • Moderate \$ impact 	High complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed communication plan and consultation plan • Moderate-high time impact • Moderate-high \$ impact
	HIGH Stakeholder issues WILL FORCE CHANGE OR DERAIL project/activity	Moderate to High complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed communication plan and consultation plan • High time impact • High \$ impact 	High complexity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed communication plan and consultation plan • High time impact • High \$ impact 	Most complex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed communication plan and consultation plan • Extreme time impact • Extreme \$ impact

Projects that fall into this category will require only a low level plan

Projects that fall into this category will require a detailed plan

6.3 Communication and consultation techniques guidelines

The figure below highlights the key techniques that may be considered for Communication and/or Consultation and the objectives that using those techniques will achieve.

Figure 5: Tools and Techniques Matrix
(Source: A Hazebroek)

		OBJECTIVE												
		Provide information	Maintain awareness / Updating information	Identify concerns and issues	Develop objectives / Issues	Develop options	Test ideas / Prioritise options	Build relationships and involvement	Achieve consensus	Reach large numbers of stakeholders	Reach people who don't readily participate	Influence small groups / Individual contact	Obtain input into decision making	Satisfy statutory requirements (eg veg clearance)
COMMUNICATION	Advertisement / Media	■	■							■	■			■
	Letter / Phone call	■	■	■				■		■	■	■		■
	Newsletter / Brochure	■	■				■			■	■			
	Internet	■	■	■			■			■	■		■	
	Signs / Maps / Models	■	■							■				
	Public Display / Exhibition	■	■	■			■	■		■	■		■	■
CONSULTATION	Meetings with key individuals	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			■	■	
	Submissions from stakeholders			■	■	■		■		■		■	■	■
	Telephone Hotline	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	
	Surveys	■		■			■			■	■		■	
	Presentations to existing groups	■		■			■	■	■			■		
	Local community group meetings	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			■		
	Public meetings	■		■			■	■	■	■			■	■
	Community event	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	
	Open day information session	■	■	■				■		■	■	■		