



## Ways to Engage with Stakeholders

### When It's Useful

### When It's Less Useful or Should Be Avoided

#### Online Engagement

- Stakeholders are geographically dispersed.
- Time constraints prevent physical meetings.
- Cost-effective when budgets are tight.
- Good for initial outreach and broad surveys.
- Stakeholders are comfortable with technology.

- Limited access to internet or technology.
- Complex or sensitive topics requiring in-depth discussion.
- When building trust and rapport is critical.
- Stakeholders are not comfortable with technology.
- Potential for miscommunication.

#### Face-to-Face Meetings

- Discussing complex or sensitive issues.
- Building trust and strong relationships.
- Small groups where interactive discussion is needed.
- Cultural contexts where personal interaction is valued.
- Immediate feedback is desired.
- Collaborative problem-solving.
- Training and capacity building.
- Engaging stakeholders in co-design processes.
- When interactive and hands-on activities are beneficial.
- Ideal for medium-sized groups.

- Geographical distance makes travel impractical.
- Time or budget constraints.
- Health crises (e.g., pandemics) restrict in-person gatherings.
- Large groups where logistics become challenging.
- Accessibility issues prevent attendance.
- Scheduling conflicts among stakeholders.
- Limited availability or commitment from participants.
- High costs and logistical complexity for large groups.
- Not suitable when anonymity is preferred.

#### Workshops

#### Surveys (Online or Paper)

- Gathering quantitative data from a large audience.
- When anonymity may encourage honest responses.
- Useful for initial information gathering.
- Cost-effective for widespread distribution.
- Stakeholders are literate and have access.

- Low response rates can limit data validity.
- Not ideal for complex or nuanced feedback.
- Stakeholders with low literacy levels may struggle.
- Cannot observe non-verbal cues or emotions.

#### Focus Groups

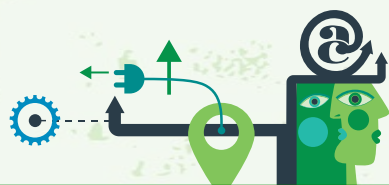
- Exploring in-depth opinions and attitudes.
- Group dynamics can stimulate discussion.
- Testing ideas or concepts.
- Engaging with specific demographic groups.
- When interaction among participants is valuable.

- Groupthink may influence individual responses.
- Scheduling can be challenging.
- Not suitable for sensitive topics requiring privacy.
- Requires skilled facilitation.
- Potential for dominant personalities to overshadow others.

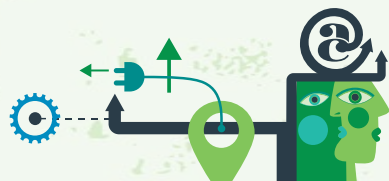
#### Telephone Calls

- Personal touch when face-to-face isn't possible.
- Quick clarifications or updates.
- Engaging stakeholders uncomfortable with digital platforms.
- Useful when internet access is limited.

- Time-consuming for large groups.
- Lacks visual cues.
- Not suitable for complex discussions requiring visual aids.
- May be intrusive if unsolicited.
- Stakeholder availability may vary.



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<b>Emails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing detailed information and documents.</li> <li>- Asynchronous communication allows flexibility.</li> <li>- Keeping a record of communications.</li> <li>- Useful for stakeholders in different time zones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May be overlooked or ignored.</li> <li>- Not ideal for urgent communications.</li> <li>- Lacks personal interaction.</li> <li>- Potential for misinterpretation without tone or body language.</li> <li>- Overload of information may overwhelm recipients.</li> </ul>
<b>Webinars/Web Conferences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presenting information to large, dispersed groups.</li> <li>- Interactive elements like Q&amp;A sessions.</li> <li>- Cost-effective alternative to in-person events.</li> <li>- Useful for training and educational purposes.</li> <li>- Recording can be shared later.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical issues can disrupt engagement.</li> <li>- Limited interaction compared to face-to-face.</li> <li>- Participants may experience 'webinar fatigue'.</li> <li>- Time zone differences can be challenging.</li> <li>- Requires reliable internet access.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reaching a broad audience quickly.</li> <li>- Engaging with younger demographics.</li> <li>- Gathering public opinions and feedback.</li> <li>- Useful for awareness campaigns.</li> <li>- Encouraging community interaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited control over message dissemination.</li> <li>- Potential for negative publicity or trolling.</li> <li>- Not all stakeholders use social media.</li> <li>- Complex issues may be oversimplified.</li> <li>- Privacy concerns may arise.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Meetings/Town Halls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engaging local communities.</li> <li>- Discussing issues of local importance.</li> <li>- Allows for open dialogue and public feedback.</li> <li>- Building community relations.</li> <li>- Transparency in decision-making processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May be dominated by vocal individuals.</li> <li>- Logistical challenges in organising events.</li> <li>- Not accessible to all community members.</li> <li>- Potential for conflict in contentious issues.</li> <li>- Requires significant planning and resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews (Structured/Semi-Structured)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Obtaining detailed, qualitative insights.</li> <li>- Building rapport with key stakeholders.</li> <li>- Exploring sensitive topics in private.</li> <li>- Flexibility to probe deeper into responses.</li> <li>- Suitable for expert opinions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time-consuming.</li> <li>- Limited to small numbers.</li> <li>- Requires skilled interviewers.</li> <li>- Potential interviewer bias.</li> <li>- May not be generalisable to larger populations.</li> </ul>
<b>Advisory Committees/Working Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders.</li> <li>- Collaborative decision-making.</li> <li>- Access to specialised expertise.</li> <li>- Fosters ownership and commitment.</li> <li>- Facilitates complex problem-solving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May exclude broader stakeholder perspectives.</li> <li>- Potential for group dynamics to hinder progress.</li> <li>- Requires significant time commitment from participants.</li> <li>- Possible conflicts of interest.</li> <li>- Administrative support needed.</li> </ul>



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<b>Printed Materials (Brochures, Flyers)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Distributing information where digital access is limited.</li> <li>- Tangible materials for reference.</li> <li>- Useful at events or locations with high foot traffic.</li> <li>- Simplifying messages with visuals.</li> <li>- Supporting other engagement methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited ability to convey complex information.</li> <li>- Can be easily discarded or overlooked.</li> <li>- Not environmentally friendly.</li> <li>- Costs associated with printing and distribution.</li> <li>- No direct feedback mechanism.</li> </ul>
<b>SMS/Text Messaging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quick updates or alerts.</li> <li>- High open rates.</li> <li>- Useful for reminders or urgent communications.</li> <li>- Reaching stakeholders without internet access.</li> <li>- Suitable for concise messages.</li> <li>- Central hub for project information.</li> <li>- Enables ongoing engagement and feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited message length.</li> <li>- Not suitable for detailed information.</li> <li>- Can be seen as intrusive.</li> <li>- Stakeholder may incur costs for receiving messages.</li> <li>- Requires up-to-date contact information.</li> <li>- Requires stakeholders to proactively visit the site.</li> <li>- Potential technical barriers.</li> </ul>
<b>Interactive Websites/Online Platforms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Useful for complex projects requiring regular updates.</li> <li>- Can host forums, polls, and resources.</li> <li>- Accessible anytime.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintenance and updates require resources.</li> <li>- Not accessible to those without internet access.</li> <li>- May need promotion to increase visibility.</li> </ul>
<b>Deliberative Polling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engaging stakeholders in informed discussions.</li> <li>- Measuring opinion changes after participants receive information.</li> <li>- Useful for exploring how opinions evolve with knowledge.</li> <li>- Encourages thoughtful deliberation.</li> <li>- Can reveal informed public perspectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time-intensive and may require multiple sessions.</li> <li>- Not suitable for stakeholders unwilling to commit time.</li> <li>- Requires skilled facilitation and resources.</li> <li>- Complex to organise and analyse.</li> <li>- May not represent wider population if sample is small.</li> </ul>

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Kylie Berg at [kberg@allenandclarke.com.au](mailto:kberg@allenandclarke.com.au).