Policy Advocacy Choice Tool

The Policy Advocacy Choice Tool is a decision matrix to help groups select the policy or systems change that will have the greatest likelihood of successful adoption in their communities. Working through the tool helps groups identify who will support and who will oppose each option, providing information that will help in planning a successful communications campaign.

Groups consider multiple criteria when selecting a policy/systems change, including:

* Community values
* Health impact
* Public support
* Political support
* Implementation ease

“Status quo” is one of the options weighed by the criteria throughout the activity. Evaluating the status quo helps groups consider the amount of support for keeping things the way they are.

# Pre-Work

* Defined targeted focus of the change (institution, geographic area).
* Goal statement for the change (e.g. Improve access to healthy foods).
* Short list of specific policy/systems change options for addressing a health factor.[[1]](#footnote-1) Be sure to include ONLY policy/systems change options (not programs), so that you’re comparing “apples to apples.”

# Directions for Activity

*Use the* ***Policy Advocacy Choice Tool[[2]](#footnote-2)*** *to work through the following steps*. There are 3 sections:

* Community Values Analysis
* Health Impact Analysis
* Stakeholder Analysis
* Public acceptability
* Political support
* Implementation feasibility

Each section includes summary space for analysis after scores are totaled. At the end of the Worksheet, all sections’ scores are added, and space is provided for selecting a first and second option, based on all the analyses. Use the Advocacy Analysis Summary (last page) to summarize overall findings from the activity.

# Community Values Analysis

Decide what your community values most and rank these values 1-4 (1 being the most valued).

* Equity/Fairness (how fairly resources are distributed)
* Efficiency (costs vs. benefits)
* Liberty/Freedom of choice (individual rights to choose)
* Security/Future (ensuring health today and tomorrow)

The Worksheet will automatically double the scores for the top ranked value in the Community Values section.

# Health Impact Analysis

In order to score this section, review the literature and any data sources for impact on health of each option. Use your specific goal statement to measure. For example, if your goal is “Increase availability of health foods in institutional settings,” determine how well each option meets this goal.

# Stakeholder Analysis

1. Brainstorm all stakeholders.
   1. Public (citizens/taxpayers, advocate groups, non-profit agencies, businesses, those with vested interests)
   2. Political (elected and appointed officials, lobbying groups)
   3. Implementers (administrators, staff/employees)
2. Decide who the decision maker is for each option (it will probably differ by option).
3. Work through the Policy Advocacy Choice Tool, using the scoring system.

# Next Steps

Use the information gathered from this activity to plan a communications campaign.

Advocacy Analysis Summary

# Status Quo

Summarize how each stakeholder group feels (public support, political support, implementation support):

What does this option look like when you add in the community values measurement?

Next Step in Campaign:

# Policy Option 1

Summarize how each stakeholder group feels (public support, political support, implementation support):

What does this option look like when you add in the community values measurement?

Next Step in Campaign (if applicable):

# Policy Option 2

Summarize how each stakeholder group feels (public support, political support, implementation support):

What does this option look like when you add in the community values measurement?

Next Step in Campaign (if applicable):

# Policy Option 3

Summarize how each stakeholder group feels (public support, political support, implementation support):

What does this option look like when you add in the community values measurement?

Next Step in Campaign (if applicable):

# Policy Option 4

Summarize how each stakeholder group feels (public support, political support, implementation support):

What does this option look like when you add in the community values measurement?

Next Step in Campaign (if applicable):

*Thanks to* [*Deborah Stone*](http://books.google.com/books/about/Policy_Paradox.html?id=CP23QgAACAAJ) *and Directors of Health Promotion and Education for developing the* [*Shaping Policy for Health curriculum*](http://dhpe.site-ym.com/?page=Programs_SPH)*, which served as a springboard for this tool.*

1. [*What Works for Health*](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/what-works-for-health), a database available on the [*County Health Rankings & Roadmaps*](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/) website, provides communities with information to help select and implement evidence-informed policies, programs, and system changes that will improve the variety of factors we know affect health.   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See second page of the Tool for a completed example. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)