

Forcefield Analysis tool for thinking critically and creatively

Forcefield analysis is usually done creating columns of data and info to which you assign ratings to come at the best way forward.

1. CURRENT OR DESIRED STATE

Write or state a brief description of your current situation or goal in the middle column.

2. EXAMINE THE DRIVING FORCES AND RESISTING FORCES

Consider all the things that will help the idea work and list them in the Driving Forces column. These can be existing or anticipated helping forces, as well as internal or external forces. For example, will the idea make you more competitive; can it be implemented quickly; is it more efficient; does it mesh well with overall vision and strategy; who or what can make the idea a success. Driving forces can also include things like new technologies changes in the market, legislation or strategic initiatives from leadership.

Next, contemplate all the things that would make implementation of the solution difficult? What could go wrong with it after it is implemented; could it create more problems in the long run; does it only partially solve the problem; will more support and training be needed after it is implemented; who or what can deter the progress of the idea? Factors such as organisational inertia, staff resistance or fear of failure can count as Resisting Forces. Sometimes, the solution with the greatest potential can also carry the greatest risk. List these factors in the Resisting Forces column.

3. ASSIGN RATINGS

Evaluate the driving and resisting forces by assigning a score to each one according to its strength on a 1 – 5 scale (1= weak, 5 = strong). Add up the e scores for all the driving and resisting forces. To move ahead with confidence, you would need a high driver score. If your totals are 21 (driving) vs 32 (resisting), then you might be inclined to decide against the decision. However, there will be flexibility around these forces – if you really want to proceed with a project and make it successful, this analysis will help you work out HOW to push it through by strengthening the supporting forces and reducing the opposing forces.

4. REVIEW OPTIONS TO INCREASE/DECREASE SCORES

Examine each of the driving forces in turn and discuss options to strengthen the score, in other words, make the solution easier to implement. For example, you could put systems in place or incentives to make it easier for staff and make it more attractive. Focus on decreasing the score of the resisting forces by exploring how to reduce them or remove them completely. Tackling the latter may well make the idea even stronger swinging the balance to a positive weighting. This activity expands your evaluation and fuses your final decision with both generative and analytical thinking.

5. TOTAL UP YOUR NEW SCORES

Check your new totals. Can you go ahead?