

A Deeper Dive into Methods for Stakeholder Listen

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are individuals or groups of people that care about your work—have a stake in it. *Internal* stakeholders are already committed to the work of your organization (staff, volunteers, board members etc.), *external* stakeholders are impacted by your organization (service beneficiaries, community members, partners, funders, competitors etc.)

Engaging your stakeholders during your strategic planning is important. Here you find a list of questions you should consider when reaching out to stakeholders.

Questions for internal stakeholders (officer, board member, committee member, staff, volunteer, advisor, etc.)¹

- What topics or matters do you hope we can address at the planning session? Or, what would you like us to focus on in the [year/months] ahead?
- In your opinion, what are the most important services that we currently provide?
- In your opinion, are there any services that we do not currently provide or constituents that we should consider offering or focusing on?
- What do you consider to be our strengths?
- What do you consider to be our weaknesses or areas to be improved upon?
- What would you like to see us do in order to become a better or more effective organization? Think in terms of opportunities.
- What should we do differently or change in order to remain a relevant and effective organization? Remember to consider “competing” organizations.
- Is there a special function or role you would like to play in terms of our development, e.g. finances, fundraising, marketing, communications, planning, etc.
- How do you envision the organization in 2018? How should we be different than we are now?
- Other comments, suggestions, or ideas

Questions for external stakeholders²

Major donors

- Why did you first get involved with us?
- What are the particular projects and programs that most interest you?
- Are there some other projects and programs that you would be interested in having us support if resources were available?
- How would you prioritize our possible efforts to raise discretionary endowment funds versus using resources to raise funds for specific projects?
- What ideas do you have about how we might increase our membership and/or fundraising efforts?
- How do you best like to be communicated with? How might we best keep you informed of our progress?

Foundations

- How do you think we are doing? How do you see us fitting in the overall service delivery system and what do you think makes us unique?

¹ Nonprofit Works: [Board Survey – Strategic Planning](#)

² International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: [Example questions to ask to external stakeholders](#)

- What are the prospects for funding from your organization? Are there funders who might be interested in funding our work?
- What do you think are most important issues facing our organization today?
- Who else should we be talking to and could inform our strategic planning process?

Media

- What major issues and challenges are affecting the constituencies served by our organization?
- How would you like us to keep you informed about what is happening in the field?
- Do you have any ideas about how we might increase our visibility? How can we raise our image and name?

Organizations that do similar work

- What services do you offer?
- How are you funded?
- How many clients do you serve?
- How do you measure success?
- How are you structured?
- What are the main challenges you experience in delivering services?
- Where do you see the National Society fitting in within the matrix of service providers?

Things to keep in mind:

- Survey fatigue and response rate: Try to make sure that your survey doesn't overlap with other surveys or reporting duties of your stakeholders. Otherwise response rates might be lower or the quality of the responses poor.
- Anonymity: Stakeholders may be reluctant to giving authentic information if their responses could be traced back to them. Ensuring anonymity is important to getting valid and reliable results.