

Force Field Analysis for Team Coaching

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If you're a Star-trek fan you're probably wondering what force fields have to do with coaching. This is a different kind of force field! Last month we walked through the process of [strategic planning with Post-it™ Notes](#). We all know that we can develop beautiful plans but as we get started with implementation, unexpected pot-holes and road-side bombs can derail our progress. It can feel like we've been ambushed! What can we do to increase the probability of reaching our goals and effecting lasting change?

A Lewin Force Field Analysis (see tool on page three) can be used when coaching a team to determine the ease or difficulty of reaching a specific goal. On a large white board or newsprint, write down the goal you are attempting to reach. Beneath it, draw a line down the center of the page. To the left of the line, write down all the forces which will enhance or support the change you are seeking. To the right of the line, write down all the forces which will inhibit or oppose the change process. Be as specific as you can about each force.

Change forces can be people, values, structures/programs, contextual factors, crisis, knowledge/ideas, benefits, traditions/history, or vision/mission. You may find that these forces show up on both sides of the force field. For example some of your values may enhance the move toward your goal while some of your values may inhibit that move.

After you have brainstormed all the contributing forces, ask the team to draw an arrow under each force toward the center line. Make the arrow long or thick for stronger forces and short or thin for weaker forces. You can now look at your change situation at a glance.



Analyzing the Results

As you consider the forces on the left (supporting), which forces could you strengthen or take advantage of to increase the movement toward the goal. For example, there may be a core value in the church that supports the proposed goal. Consider how you could highlight that value in presenting the proposed goal.

Then take some time to consider the forces on the right (opposing). Which forces could you reduce or erase, which ones could you turn into supporting forces? For example you may realize that Fred is not going to support this change...unless...someone from the team sits down with Fred and takes the time to hear his concerns and help him see how the proposed goal will actually address some of his fears. He might even become a proponent of the goal!

As a team, incorporate these actions into the plan you have developed. Spend time together as a team, asking God for wisdom in negotiating the path ahead. Remember, the force field analysis does not tell you whether the change or goal you are pursuing is a good idea or a bad idea, it simply tells you the ease with which you can accomplish that goal and clarifies possible pot-holes along the way which, with some forethought and appropriate action, can be avoided.

This tool can be used when coaching a team. You can also use it personally for any changes you want to make in your life and ministry. Talk to your coach about the inhibiting forces slowing progress toward your goal and how you can overcome them or even use them for God's purposes.

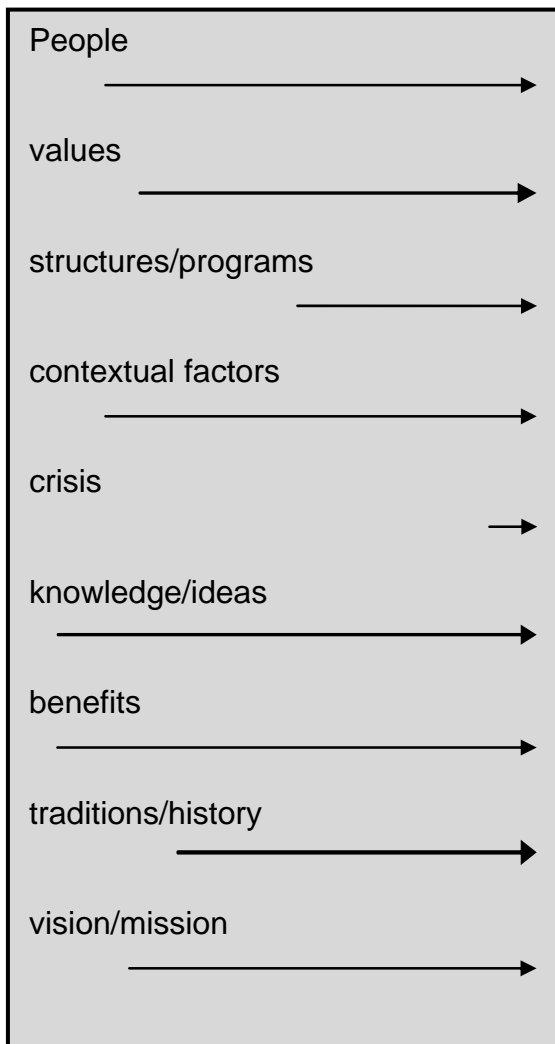
Jeannette Buller Slater has been a coach since 1984. She offers executive coaching for pastors and church planters through www.CoachingPastors.com

Force Field Analysis Tool

The chart below includes sample forces that can support or oppose change. Create your own list of forces to fit your unique situation.

Change Goal: _____

Supporting Forces



Opposing Forces

