

The Influence Graph Analysis Canvas

Understanding how work really gets done

E

Sketch the four layers of the informal organization from your listening tour notes. Nothing here asks anything separate of anyone. Every entry comes from conversations you have already had. Fill each layer with the names and patterns that kept coming up, then set them beside the formal org chart on page two.

01 Trust

Who do people rely on when a question is hard or sensitive?

In the notes: the names people give when asked who they really go to.

02 Connectors

Who holds the organization together across its functions and levels?

In the notes: the "you should really talk to..." names that keep recurring.

03 Knowledge

Where does real expertise and institutional memory live?

In the notes: who everyone is pointed to on a hard question, often below the expected title.

04 Decision-making

How do important decisions actually come together, and who takes part?

In the notes: accounts of how a past decision really formed, and who was in them.

Read the Differences · Use It Well

Where the two pictures differ is where the understanding is

READING THE DIFFERENCES · SET AGAINST THE FORMAL CHART

- ☐ **The hidden connector**
Someone others rely on is a bridge across the organization. Involve them early.
- ☐ **The unclear decision**
Looks like one person's on the chart, but really comes together among several.
- ☐ **Knowledge resting on one person**
Something essential lives with one person, unwritten. Reduce the risk now.
- ☐ **The missing link**
Two teams that must work closely have no real relationship. Often worth closing.

THE ETHICS OF USE · KEEP THIS IN MIND

- ☐ I am looking at organizational patterns and dependencies, not building files on individuals.
- ☐ I will use this to strengthen how the organization works: involve the right perspectives, protect knowledge, reduce risk.
- ☐ I will support healthy working relationships, not undermine them.
- ☐ I treat this as a picture to check and discuss openly, and I hold it lightly, because people change.
- ☐ I keep it in service of the organization and the people in it.

RESEARCH & SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The Influence Graph is an original ERM Advisory concept. The primary research below is dated.

- Krackhardt & Hanson. "Informal Networks: The Company Behind the Chart." HBR (1993)
- Cross & Prusak. "The People Who Make Organizations Go—or Stop." HBR (2002)
- Rogers & Blenko (Bain). "Who Has the D?" HBR (2006)
- McKinsey. "Harnessing the Power of Informal Employee Networks." (2007)

EXPLORE THE FULL METHODOLOGY

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