

POWER, INFLUENCE and RESISTANCE: Week 5

Step 6: Mapping Power

The sixth step is mapping the terrain that you and your colleagues will have to navigate as change agents. It is necessary to understand the politics of change in your community – local power and governance.

In recognizing that racial equity work is as much political as it is technical and programmatic, much of it includes:

- Building alliances for action
- Developing public will to support change, and
- Productively countering any resistance you are likely to meet

Who, and what governance bodies, have the most power and influence to shape the named PPRs that you've found most relevant to your goal?

In mapping the local landscape, the process can reveal who are the critical “gatekeepers” and “authorizers” on particular policy issues, media postures and so on. These key players will be:

- Elected officials
- Interest groups
- Government bureaucrats
- Business executives
- Media/entertainment
- Unions
- Opinion leaders
- Other important state and local actors

→ **EXERCISE:** Chart which individuals or institutions have power relevant to the PPR's in your community, city, county and state. Which ones are likely to be allies or obstacles regarding your interests?

Those with the most Power to Effect Change	
Potential Allies	Potential Obstacles

→ **EXERCISE:** Chart the key decision-making bodies relevant to your issue at the local, state and federal levels.

Key Decision-Making Body	Who has influence and/or control (who sits on these bodies)	Mandates, Timetables and/or Activities	Mechanisms for Public Access and Accountability
Arizona State Legislature	Chairperson, committee(s)	Committees typically meet weekly, session begins the first Monday of the year, see committee schedules,	Public committees (Request to Speak in committee), calling to request a meeting, attend Floor Sessions

→ **EXERCISE:** Chart the legislative or institutional history relating to the policy or practice under considerations:

- o Are there changes or regulations in the “pipeline” to know about?
- o Who’s supporting or opposing the coming changes?
- o Has this issue been contested already historically? Why?

Particular Legislative or Institutional History	
Important Changes or Development	
Main Supporters/Opponents	
Historically Contested experiences	

Step 7: Resistance and Retrenchment

The seventh step is to identify possible barriers or sources of resistance to your goal – the dynamic of *Progress and Retrenchment*. This dynamic refers to the ways in which progress toward racial justice is made but is then challenged, neutralized or undermined by backlash.

The website/non-profit organization, www.racialequitytools.com defines:

- **Resistance** - the actions (or inactions) that people use to slow work that is threatening to them in some way.
- **Retrenchment** - the phenomenon in which racial equity or justice gains are often followed by losses; this is a form of organizational, institutional or structural resistance to changing the status quo.

What are the possible sources of resistance to and/or retrenchment around achieving your goal?

→ **EXERCISE:** How might we anticipate backlash toward our progress? What might backlash look like in regards to our preconditions?
