

VISION PIVOT | ECOSYSTEM MAPPING

ACTIVITY TITLE: Ecosystem Mapping

OBJECTIVE: To identify key stakeholders involved in a personal or work-related challenge, uncover hidden dynamics, and strategize creative ways to engage or pivot relationships to better achieve your goals. This activity uses creative pivots to support proactive thinking to transform challenges into opportunities.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Pens or highlighters in three colors (e.g., green, yellow, red)
- Large sheet of paper or whiteboard
- Sticky notes (optional)
- Your favorite background music (optional, to stimulate creative thinking)

Activity Instructions:

This is an interactive and creative self-reflection exercise designed to help you reframe challenges by analyzing and mapping the network of people around you. Use this activity when you're feeling stuck or when you feel there are obstacles, like individuals or perceived barriers, that are blocking your progress toward a key goal, whether it's personal or work-related.

Step 1: Clarify the Challenge

- Think of a current challenge that feels unresolved or difficult. **Write it down in the center of your paper.** Spend a moment thinking about why this challenge is important to you and what it means to overcome it.

Step 2: Define Success

- Imagine you've already solved the challenge. What does success look and feel like?
- Be specific. What outcomes will have changed? How will your environment, work, or relationships be different?
Write this down near the challenge.

Step 3: Map Stakeholders (The Web)

- **Draw a circle** around your challenge. Around this circle, use sticky notes or write names in separate circles to map out all the key stakeholders—people, teams, or even processes—that impact or are impacted by this challenge.
- **Add more people** as they come to mind, whether they're directly involved, indirectly influential, or hidden forces behind the scenes.

Examples: Managers, colleagues, clients, mentors, family members, systems, tools, etc.

Step 4: Color Code Connections

- **Green** (Support): Use this color to highlight stakeholders who are likely to help or support you in achieving your goal.
- **Red** (Blockers): Use this color to mark those who might hinder your efforts or are obstacles to progress.
- **Yellow** (Neutral/Unsure): Use this color for stakeholders whose impact is unclear, neutral, or who have the potential to shift to either support or hinder your efforts.

Step 5: Deepen the Insights – Creative Reflection Prompts

Connection Patterns: Are there any patterns or commonalities among supporters or detractors? Consider things like values, communication styles, or past experiences.

Assumptions Check: What factors or assumptions have influenced how you categorized people? Is there any evidence that backs up these assumptions? Are you willing to test any assumptions with the detractors?

Surprises: Were you surprised by anyone's role? Did anyone unexpectedly land in the “supporter” or “blocker” categories? Why?

Creative “Pivots”:

- What would need to change for a “blocker” to become a supporter?
- Could there be a different way of engaging with them that could shift the dynamic?
- How can you influence neutral stakeholders to join your side?
- Is there an unexplored opportunity to collaborate with someone unexpected?

Step 6: The Vision Pivot Strategy

Revisit your vision of success. Based on your map, brainstorm 3 creative strategies to help you engage with your stakeholders in new ways.

Examples:

- “Have a direct, but empathetic conversation with [Person X], focusing on their concerns and showing how addressing them aligns with their goals.”
- “Ask [Supporter Y] to act as an advocate for this project in larger meetings.”

Can you reframe the relationships with blockers or create a fresh approach that aligns their interests with your goals?

Step 7: Action Plan

Based on your insights and strategies, **identify 3 key actions** you can take in the next week to engage with your ecosystem differently. **Write these down and set a deadline for each.**

Wrap-Up Reflection:

- How do you feel after doing this exercise?
- Did you uncover any surprising insights or new possibilities for collaboration?
- How will you apply this awareness to your challenge moving forward?

