



The Engagement Triangle

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE
OF YOUR ENGAGEMENT

capire

Giving every person a voice.

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement refers to how organisations connect with communities to develop and implement policies, programs, and projects.

Engagement can range from information sharing and community development initiatives to active participation in government policy development and decision-making processes. There is a strong impetus for the private and public sectors to adopt strategies to encourage greater community participation and opportunities for engagement.

Community engagement enables organisations to make well-informed decisions at an operational and strategic level and achieve effective and transparent governance. Community engagement can also strengthen community resilience, increase knowledge and empower local groups.



Defining community engagement objectives is an essential step in ensuring the community and stakeholders understand the purpose and outcomes of the engagement process. Often, when organisations use a generic term such as engagement, people misinterpret their opportunity to participate and contribute to public dialogue.



Navigating the Engagement Space

The term 'engagement' can have different definitions depending on your sector, services, resources, and communities. There are significant risks to any engagement unless the true context is established.

The Engagement Triangle is a spatial tool that identifies desired outcomes of engagement. The Triangle should be used in the early stages of engagement planning to help clarify goals, map stakeholders and identify appropriate tools and techniques.

Project teams should use the Engagement Triangle to determine the intent of the community engagement.



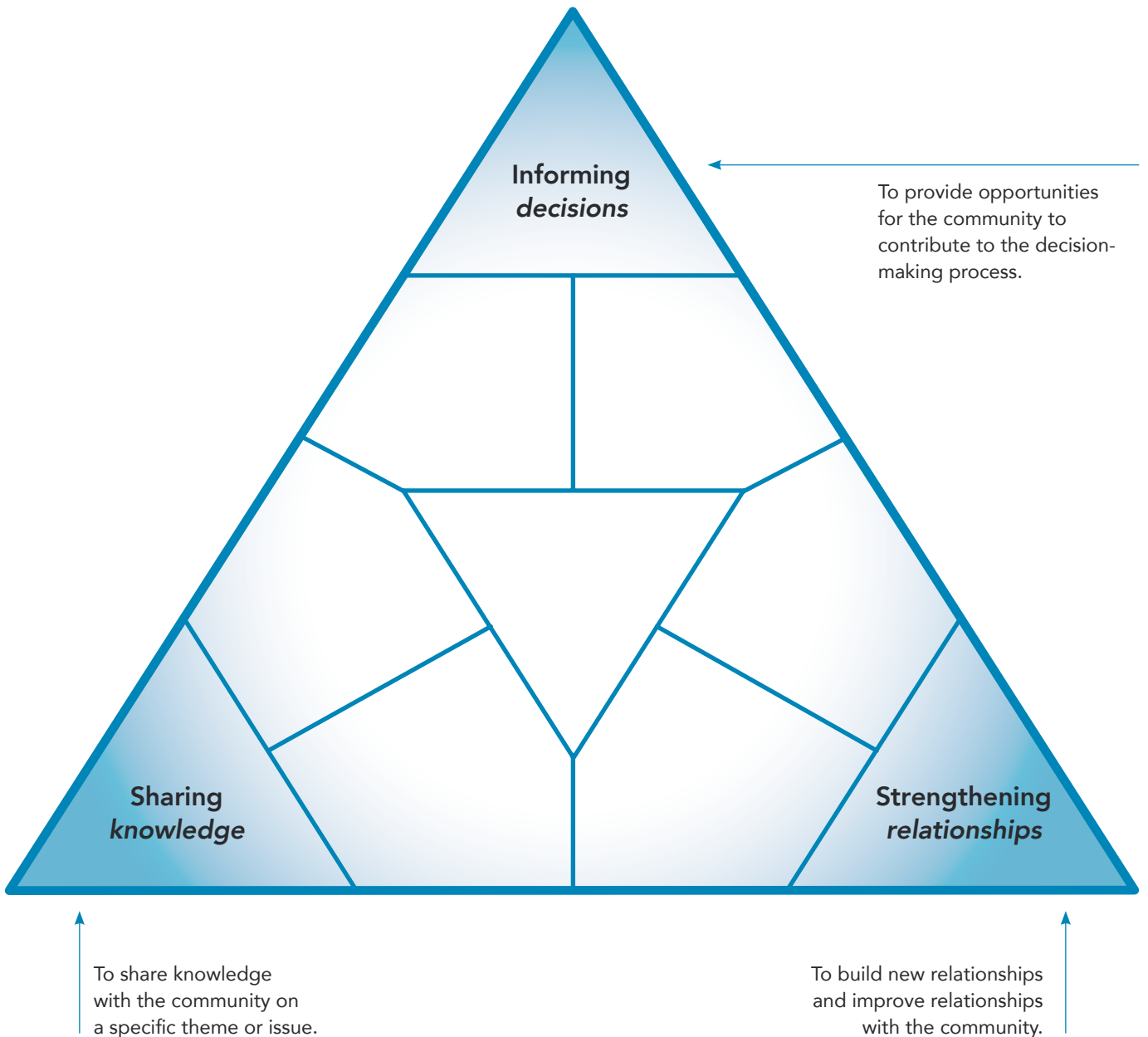
The Engagement Triangle has been updated.

The original version included three objectives *informing decisions*, *strengthening decisions* and *building capacity*. While the first two objectives are essential elements of contemporary engagement, we believe engagement practice has moved beyond building capacity. The term 'capacity building' stems from the international development sector, where experts would develop and strengthen the ability of the community to move towards self-actualisation and empowerment. However, within this relationship was a hierarchy or power imbalance. Community engagement practice has matured to recognise that both parties, the decision-makers and the community, have knowledge, skills, and experiences to share. It is not one side. Therefore, we have changed the third element of the Engagement Triangle to 'sharing knowledge'.

Using the Engagement Triangle

STEPS

- Ask participants to individually map what they believe is the intent of the engagement
- Observe the differences in the positioning
- Ask participants to describe the rationale for the positioning
- The differences will stimulate discussion and debate, helping to clarify the objectives of the engagement.



What Are You Aiming For?



What Tools Do You Need?

A range of tools and techniques have been mapped on the Engagement Triangle, based on the intent of the community engagement.

These tools and techniques are just mediums to facilitate the community engagement. The content and delivery need to be tailored on a project by project basis.

Note: This sample of tools and techniques are drawn from Capire's recent projects and experiences.

		To inform decisions	To primarily inform decisions and secondly share knowledge	To primarily inform decisions and secondly strengthen relationships	To share knowledge	To primarily share knowledge and secondly inform decisions	To primarily share knowledge and secondly strengthen relationships	To strengthen relationships	To primarily strengthen relationships and secondly share knowledge	To primarily strengthen relationships and secondly inform decisions	To inform decisions, share knowledge and strengthen relationships
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
One-to-one	Interviews	●	○	○		○				○	○
	Telephone survey	○									
	Intercept survey	○									
	Vox pop	○	○	●		○				○	
	Briefing		○	●	○		●		○		
Small group	Meeting	○	○	○		○			○	●	○
	Focus group	●	○	○		○				●	○
	Walking tour		○	○	○	●		○	○	●	○
	Consultative group	○	○	○		○				●	○
	Citizen jury	●	○	○		○				○	○
	Kitchen table discussion		○	●		○		○	●		○
Large group	Workshop	○	●	○		○				●	○
	Field trip			○	○			○	●		
	Deliberative forum	●	○	○		○				○	○
Drop-in	Pop-up			○			○			○	●
	Listening post	○		○		○					●
	Information session				○		●		○		
	SpeakOut	○	○	○		○				○	●
Written	Self-completion survey	○									
	Formal submission	●									
	Ballot	●									
Online	Forums (e.g. Engagement HQ)	○	●							○	
	Website				●		○				
	Film (e.g. YouTube)				●						
	Mapping (e.g. Crowd Spot)	○	○	○							
	Photo sharing (e.g. Instagram)				○						
	Social network (e.g. Facebook)						○	○	●		
	Micro blog (e.g. Twitter)				○						
	Blog (e.g. Tumblr)				○						
	Online survey	○									
Communication & Correspondence	Display				●						
	Newsletter, fact sheet				○		○				
	Poster, postcard				○						
	Media release				○						
	Letters, email							○	●		
	Telephone	○	○	○			○	●	○	○	○

KEY ○ Recommended ● Highly Recommended

Capire Consulting Group believes that engagement is an essential element of an equitable and sustainable community. Every engagement is unique. Capire has worked with many organisations and communities where engagement has not merely informed decision-making and did not fit neatly within a project spectrum or existing tool. As a result, the Engagement Triangle was created to assist our clients in identifying the outcomes for their engagement and ensure the maximum benefit for all projects and communities.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT
THE ENGAGEMENT TRIANGLE, PLEASE
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