

There are two stages to this part of this process, outlined below, that you may wish to sit down with a group from the chaplaincy and brainstorm.

Identifying your audiences

In this first stage of finding your audience, brainstorm all the groups, organisations and individuals who you could reasonably engage with to achieve your goals.

Group task one

Gather together a group of people who have a good broad knowledge of the potential audiences you could/want to communicate with. Between four and eight people is a good number. Allow at least 45 minutes to complete the task.

The question your group needs to brainstorm is 'Who could we engage to achieve our objectives?'

Log all possible audiences. Flip chart paper and marker pens are useful for this. Try to think creatively. Do not attempt to judge or prioritise any audiences at this stage. Simply record all ideas. Never put 'the public', or other generic groups – this does not help to focus your work.

Prioritising your audiences

After you have identified all of the audiences you could engage with to achieve your objectives, the next task is to prioritise the most important ones. In doing this, you can focus your time and communications resources on reaching the people who can help achieve your objectives in the most efficient way.

The most efficient way of conducting this exercise is to use the same people involved in the mapping of your audiences. Others can join in, but by including those who have contributed to the first stage of the process you should be able to complete this task quickly. Allow at least an hour to complete the exercise.

Group task two

Write each potential audience identified in the mapping exercise on a large post-it note in thick, clear lettering. Use flip chart paper to create a quadrant (use four pieces of flip chart paper stuck on a wall, if space allows). The below explains what quadrant should be used for what audience segment. Taking one post-it note at a time, the group should ask the following questions:

- What level of interest does this person/organisation/group currently have in helping us achieve our chaplaincy or project objectives?
- What level of ability (or influence) does this person/organisation/group have in helping us achieve our objectives?

The group then decides, on the basis of the discussion, where to place the post-it note on the quadrant.

TOP RIGHT: These audiences have a shared interest in what you are trying to achieve AND they are in a good position to help you achieve it.

BOTTOM RIGHT: These audiences have a shared interest in what you are trying to achieve but have little direct ability or influence over the outcomes.

TOP LEFT: These audiences currently have a low interest in (or are opposed to) what you are trying to achieve, but a high ability/influence.

BOTTOM LEFT: These audiences have a low level of interest in your objectives and low levels of ability/ influence.

Identifying your priorities

Ideally, you are looking to identify four priority audiences.

The most easily engaged will be those in the top right. It is most efficient to make between one and four from this quadrant your priority audiences. In some circumstances, you may wish to target those in the top left (low interest/high ability). However, be aware it is likely to require more time and resources to engage these audiences.

It is rare to prioritise any audiences in the bottom two quadrants – although you may decide to keep those in the bottom right (high interest/low ability) informed. If you have too many audiences in top quadrants and need to narrow down further, you can ask each participant to 'vote' for their preferred priorities and see if a consensus emerges. Otherwise, you will need to assign the final choice to one member of the team.