

Engagement levels

Compare engagement now with what the project needs, and close the gap.

LEVEL	WHAT YOU SEE	A MOVE THAT HELPS
Unaware	Does not know the project or how it affects them	Tell them early, in their terms
Resistant	Knows, and opposes the change or its effects	Listen, find the fear, involve them
Neutral	Knows, and is neither for nor against it	Show what is in it for them
Supportive	Backs the work and its results	Keep them informed; ask for help
Leading	Works actively to make it succeed	Give them a role: ambassador, reviewer

Level names from the PMBOK® Guide (PMI's body-of-knowledge guide) (8th ed., p. 200); the signs and moves are our own. Mark each group now and needed.

WHAT IT IS

A five-level scale shows how engaged a person or group is, from **unaware to leading**; the level names follow the PMBOK® Guide (8th ed., p. 200). Mark each key group **now** and **needed**, by a date: the gap directs your effort. Not everyone must lead: the sponsor should, while many users need only support. Resistance often comes with awareness, so treat it as information.

HOW IT WORKS

- 01 Judge each key group's level now.
- 02 Set the level needed from each, and by when.
- 03 Work first on the largest gaps that matter.
- 04 Involve people to move them up; check again.

MID-LEVEL · WORKED EXAMPLE

Apply it well

The situation: A city team has eight months to move resident parking permits online. In month one, 18 service-desk staff fear for their counter work; most residents have not heard of it.

Sponsor: leading, as needed. Service desk: resistant now, supportive needed by month two, so the project manager listens in small groups, then invites two into design workshops. Residents: unaware now, neutral needed before January renewals.

In the exam: Place three real stakeholders, now and needed, with a date and one move each. Say when you checked again.

SENIOR · WORKED EXAMPLE

Design and lead it

The situation: A city is joining 14 online services under one login over 30 months. Customer-service roles will change, so the staff union must be consulted.

Needed levels are set for each phase, each group has an owner, and the steering board reviews the gaps at each phase gate. The sponsor must lead; each department head must at least support their service's move. Staff union consultation starts before design.

In the exam: Show engagement as a system: needed levels per phase, an owner per group, the gaps reviewed by the board, and each gap linked to a benefit or a risk.

WHERE IT SITS

IPMA · ICB4	PMI · PMBOK® GUIDE 8 · PMP® EXAM	APM · BOK 8 · PMQ EXAM
4.4.4 Relations and engagement: involve early, ask for commitment (4.4.4.5); 4.5.12.2: strategy and plan	Guide: engagement assessment matrix, current vs desired, p. 200. Exam outline: People task 4	BoK (APM's Body of Knowledge) §4.1.1: support, opposition or undecided; an objective per group. PMQ (APM's Project Management Qualification) objectives 10a–10b