

Power–interest grid

Sort stakeholders by power and interest, to see where to start engaging each one.



Our own labels for the four boxes: where to start engaging, not a verdict on people. After Mendelow (1981) and Eden and Ackermann (1998).

WHAT IT IS

The grid places each person or group by **power**, how far they can affect the project, and **interest**, how much its outcome matters to them. Many books trace it to Mendelow (1981); Colin Eden and Fran Ackermann (1998) describe the grid. The box shows **where to start**, not a verdict on people.

HOW IT WORKS

- 01 List stakeholders inside and outside.
- 02 Rate each one's power, its source, and interest.
- 03 Place each one; check it with a colleague.
- 04 Map again each phase; keep notes private.

MID-LEVEL • WORKED EXAMPLE

Apply it well

The situation: A city team has eight months to move resident parking permits online. Its groups include a sponsor, a finance controller, 18 service-desk staff, 40 wardens and residents.

Sponsor: partner closely. Finance controller (high power, low interest): consult at key points. Service desk and residents: inform and listen. The wardens' supervisors have no formal say, yet 40 wardens follow them: partner closely.

In the exam: Place three or four real stakeholders, say why and where their power comes from, and give one action each.

SENIOR • WORKED EXAMPLE

Design and lead it

The situation: A city is joining 14 online services under one login over 30 months, with a board of department heads, a council committee, suppliers and advocacy groups.

The team redraws one map before each phase. As the city council election nears, the committee's interest rises; accessibility groups gain power through the press. The team also weighs each group's power, legitimacy and urgency (salience model; Mitchell, Agle and Wood, 1997): all three, act first.

In the exam: Show the map as a team tool: how positions moved over time, an owner per group, and the grid's limits.

WHERE IT SITS

IPMA • ICB4	PMI • PMBOK® GUIDE 8 • PMP® EXAM	APM • BOK 8 • PMQ EXAM
4.3.4 Power and interest: informal power and its reach; 4.5.12.1: interest and influence	Guide: power/interest grids, pp. 200–201 (power = authority). Exam outline: People tasks 4–5	BoK (APM's Body of Knowledge) §4.1.1: power-interest graph; §4.1.2: sources of power. PMQ (APM's Project Management Qualification) objective 10a

Sources: Mendelow (1981); Eden & Ackermann, Making Strategy (1998); Mitchell, Agle & Wood (1997); IPMA ICB4 (2015); PMI, PMBOK® Guide, 8th ed.; PMI, PMP® Examination Content Outline (2026); APM Body of Knowledge, 8th ed.; APM, PMQ handbook (v6, 2026)

Key: IPMA = International Project Management Association; ICB4 = IPMA's Individual Competence Baseline (4.3.4 etc.: its competence elements); PMI = Project Management Institute; PMBOK® Guide = PMI's body-of-knowledge guide; PMP® = PMI's Project Management Professional; APM = Association for Project Management. Unofficial study material for IPMA®, PMI® and APM exams. Not affiliated with, endorsed by or approved by IPMA, PMI or APM, and not an accredited or endorsed training provider. IPMA® and IPMA ICB® are registered trademarks of IPMA in Switzerland and other countries. PMI, PMP, CAPM and PMBOK are registered marks of Project Management Institute, Inc. APM is a trade mark of the Association for Project Management. Other marks belong to their owners. PMP® exam facts are from PMI's public PMP® Examination Content Outline (2026); check the current version on pmi.org. APM's qualifications are its own; this series is not an APM Accredited Provider or APM Endorsed. Examples use a fictional city and its projects. Levels (this series' labels): Mid-level = moderately complex projects (IPMA Level C, PMI's PMP®); Senior = complex projects and people (IPMA Level B, APM's Chartered Project Professional).

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