TOOL | KEY FACTOR MAPPING TOOL

This is a tool to develop shared understanding of the factors that have the most impact on addressing a complex issue or challenge.
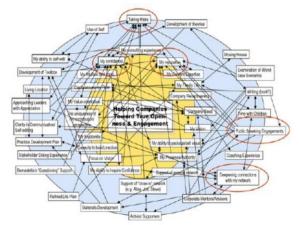
TOOL DESCRIPTION

The **Key Factor Mapping** Tool is most useful when a group wants to get a better understanding of the underlying issues and dynamics that may make a challenge or issue difficult to implement or move forward. The tool is most effective when it is used by a diverse group of stakeholders who share a common interest or passion about solving a specific issue. Some of the benefits of using the **Key Factor Mapping Tool** include:

- It is a quick way to identify and prioritize factors that are likely to have the greatest impact on the challenge you are wanting to address, and therefore might be the most important to develop strategies around
- Helps a diverse group to map out, visually depict and consider their collective knowledge about the challenge. This ultimately will facilitate a richer, shared appreciation of the challenge amongst all stakeholders
- Any type of factor – policy, practices, institutions and or broader environmental factors – can be noted on the map.

TOOL HOW-TO

1. Draw a large circle in the centre of a piece of flipchart paper and write your challenge in the centre of that circle. For example, *How Can We Create a Happy City?*

2. Consider any factors that may impact the addressing of our challenge. Write each factor on a post-it note (one idea per post-it). It can be helpful to cluster similar factors into themes.   Next, place the factors and themes in a ring around the centre circle.

3. Using a different colour of post-it note, list anything that impacts the factors in the inner circle (one idea per post-it) and place these in an outer ring around the factors.

4. As a group, draw a line between any two elements on the map to illustrate a connection where one element seems to impact another.

Source: www.cocreativeconsulting.com
Developed by Russ Gaskin

5. Eventually, a few of the elements – the ones with the most connections – will begin to become visible. These are the elements that have the most influence on the other elements on the map and therefore are likely to be the most leveraged to consider in developing an action plan.