

## **ESEI Stakeholder Management Series Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

*By Dr. Lynda Bourne*

Using the **Effective Stakeholder Engagement Initiative (ESEI™** - pronounced *easy*<sup>2</sup>) is probably the quickest way to create an organisational culture focused on achieving success based on mutually beneficial stakeholder engagement. The freely available **Stakeholder Circle®** methodology underpins **ESEI**; offering organisations a range of options to build their stakeholder relationship maturity from an 'ad hoc' initial use of some processes to 'Level 5' in the **SRMM®** maturity model where measurements of the attitude of the stakeholder community are used for health checks, predictive risk assessment and management.

There are two components to **ESEI** stakeholder management:

- A thorough assessment of the stakeholder community to identify who in the community is really significant *at this point in time*, so appropriate engagement activities can be planned.
- Effective communication management to implement the planned stakeholder engagement activities and monitor their effectiveness, both at the individual level and across the whole stakeholder community.

Both elements of the **ESEI** stakeholder management approach need to be routinely reviewed and adapted to optimise the effort being expended on stakeholder engagement and maximise the probability of a successful outcome, that delivers the anticipated value, the project or program was initiated to achieve. Additionally, there needs to be processes and capacity within the overall stakeholder engagement effort to deal efficiently with ad hoc communication requirements and issues as they arise.

This series of articles will map out the key components of the **ESEI** stakeholder management approach and show how they support: Ed Freeman's '*Stakeholder Theory*', an organisation's commitment to *GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines* and ISO 26000, and offer a cost effective way to enhance the probability of project, program and organisational success. Over the next 14 months, this series will cover the following topics:

### **1. Part 1 Why Stakeholders Matter**

- a. *Stakeholder Theory* - Defining stakeholders and their importance to successful organisations
- b. Why effective stakeholder management is 'free'

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<sup>1</sup> This series of articles on effective stakeholder management is by Lynda Bourne, PhD, Managing Director of Stakeholder Management Pty Ltd (Australia) and author of the books *Stakeholder Relationship Management* and *Advising Upwards*, both published by Gower (UK). Dr. Bourne is one of the world's leading authorities on program/project stakeholder relations. Her author profile can be found at the end of this article.

<sup>2</sup> You can be among the first to benefit from using the **ESEI** approach to stakeholder management, the concept is being developed for this series of articles, with first publication here in the **PM World Journal**.

- c. Stakeholders and risk
2. **Part 2 Stakeholder Analytics** - measuring your stakeholder community; '*you cannot manage what you cannot measure*'.....
  - a. Stakeholder identification and prioritisation
  - b. Understanding and visualising your stakeholder community (2x2 matrices are not enough)
  - c. Stakeholder attitudes and ways of developing your stakeholder engagement strategy to influence expectations
  - d. Monitoring the 'health' of your stakeholder community
3. **Part 3 Stakeholder Engagement** - communicating for an effect!
  - a. The three types of stakeholder communication
  - b. Planning and managing your stakeholder communication effort
  - c. Communicating effectively
4. **Part 4 The wider Picture** - supporting the organisation.
  - a. Meeting the stakeholder component of the *GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines (G4)* and *ISO 26000:2010, Guidance on social responsibility*.
  - b. The SRMM® model for stakeholder management maturity and governance
  - c. Series conclusion.

The tone of these articles will be practical and pragmatic focused on using stakeholder management practices to reduce the risk exposure on your projects or programs and increase their probability of success both at the project/program level and because of the interconnected nature of 'stakeholders', also at the organisational level.

After all most things are easy when you know how to accomplish them.....

Next month we begin the journey with a practical review of *Stakeholder Theory* from the perspective of projects and programs.

## About the Author



### **Dr. Lynda Bourne**

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**Dr. Lynda Bourne** is Managing Director of Stakeholder Management Pty Ltd – an Australian based company with partners in South America and Europe. Through this global network she works with organisations to manage change through managing the relationships essential for successful delivery of organisational outcomes. Lynda was the first graduate of the RMIT University, Doctor of Project Management course, where her research was focused on tools and techniques for more effective stakeholder engagement. She has been recognized in the field of project management through her work on development of project and program management standards. She was also included in PMI's list of 50 most influential women in PM.

She is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management (AIM) and a Fellow of the Australian Computer Society (ACS). She is a recognized international speaker and seminar leader on the topic of stakeholder management, the Stakeholder Circle® visualization tool, and building credibility and reputation for more effective communication. She has extensive experience as a Senior Project Manager and Project Director specializing in delivery of information technology and other business-related projects within the telecommunications sector, working as a Senior IT Project Management Consultant with various telecommunications companies in Australia and South East Asia (primarily in Malaysia) including senior roles with Optus and Telstra.

Dr Bourne's publications include: [\*Stakeholder Relationship Management\*](#), now in 2nd edition, first published in 2009, and, [\*Advising Upwards\*](#) published in 2011. She has also contributed to books on stakeholder engagement, and has published papers in many academic and professional journals and is a columnist for PMI's *PM Network*. Her next book *Making Projects Work* is due for publication in 2015.

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