Policy Implementation Toolkit

SUPPORTING TOOL: POLITICAL MAPPING FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

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Political Mapping for Policy Implementation

Why is it important?

Preparing for an implementation campaign can feel overwhelming–especially after so much time and energy has already been spent on passing the policy. A key strategy will be to ensure you have the political support needed to fully implement the policy: drafting and adopting regulations, developing an implementation plan, educating the public about the policy change, enforcing the law, and assessing compliance.

The implementation process is often complex. There may be different policy makers involved each policy objective and each step in the implementation process. For example, the Ministry of Transportation may be responsible for educating the public about new speed limits but it is up to the police to enforce those new speed limits. As a result, you'll need to understand the implementation process and prioritize your targets.

Political mapping for policy implementation follows the same basic logic as political mapping for a campaign for new legislation. If you've read the GRSP Advocacy Campaign toolkit, much of the following information may be familiar.

Political mapping should not be undertaken without a clear implementation objective identified first (see GRSP's *Determining Your Implementation Objective* tool).

What needs to be done?

Conducting political mapping during the early planning stages can provide clarity by helping you understand the complex implementation process through which regulations are developed and policies are implemented. It will also help you identify opportunities to engage with and influence decision-makers. This is knowledge that will be critical to your campaign's success.

Political mapping serves as the foundation for your implementation campaign plan and can help guide decision-making throughout. The following mapping techniques can be applied whether your campaign is focused on adopting a new regulation, issuing an executive order, amending a budget, or calling for strengthened enforcement.

A political mapping exercise generally outlines the following:

- Government bodies and agencies with the power to approve, amend or reject your proposal and/or which have responsibility for specific stages of implementation;

- Steps and timelines for policy implementation through these bodies and agencies, including opportunities for civil society input into the process;

- Important decision-makers during each step of the implementation, including their positions on your proposal and broader interests;

- Individuals and organizations able to influence the implementation process and what might motivate them to champion or support your efforts; and,

- Potential opponents, motivations and tactics.

Once you have completed your political mapping, you can use this information to help you design advocacy strategies, activities and messages, as well as decide how to direct your outreach efforts. You'll also have the information you need to track the positions of your target decision-makers as they evolve.

HELPFUL HINT: Complete the political mapping process as early as possible, ideally prior to developing your campaign plan. Once you've completed the mapping, regularly update it throughout the course of the campaign. Remember that the political map is a living document that reflects your current understanding of the political environment. As the political environment changes– as a result of an election or your advocacy efforts–your political map should, too.

Imagine you are going on a journey. What features would you look for in a useful road map? Many of these will be shared by a good political map.

The right type of map. A map of Shanghai won't help you to navigate Bangkok. Similarly, a political map should be tailored toward your policy objective and the specific processes required for it to pass. If your initiative is focused on an administrative regulation, for example, a map that tracks the process for a law will not be useful.

Directions. A useful map tracks your start point, endpoint, and a way to connect the two. A political map should also track the political process from beginning to end, laying out all the steps in between.

Up-to-date information. A map of ancient Rome will not help you drive across the city today. Likewise, a political map must contain current information. Years can pass from the start of a campaign to the end. Decision-makers can change. Events may shift political priorities. Regularly refresh the political map.

The right amount of information. A World Atlas may contain all the maps of the world, but you probably only need a few of those pages for your journey. In a similar way, your political map does not need to include every single government body or department – only those details relevant to your policy objective.

At the same time, you need enough information to guide your way. Note where you have large gaps in information that might hinder your efforts, and make an effort to fill those.

Easy-to-read. Road maps cluttered with confusing icons and technical jargon may become unreadable. Likewise, your political map should be easy to read and understand. It is not intended to be a published, academic paper, but rather a tool for advocates.

Alternative Routes. A good road map shows you multiple routes so you can easily adjust your travel if an unexpected obstacle presents itself. A political map should also outline alternative avenues for reaching your policy objective.

Getting Started

1. Gather your team
Developing a political map is usually a collaborative effort, and you should assemble a small team of dedicated, knowledgeable colleagues and partners to help you populate your map. The size of the group will depend on the level of skill, knowledge, and trust existing between you and your partners. You'll definitely want to ensure that your political mapping team represents your campaign's core leadership. You may also want to engage a consultant, such as a policy/legal expert or a political insider, to conduct research or help you complete specific sections of

your map. Journalists and friendly government officials can also be useful sources of information.

2. Define your implementation objective(s)
Before you begin, your team must reach a consensus on your campaign's implementation objective(s), as that objective will set the direction for your political mapping. Political mapping should not be undertaken without a clear implementation objective identified first. The objective should address a gap or weakness in the existing policy environment and provide an evidence-based solution that your advocacy campaign can achieve.

Your policy objective should be **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Achievable**, **Relevant**, and **Time-bound** or **SMART**. It should also contain the following three items:

- A policy "actor" or decision-maker - the person(s) or decision-making body with the power to make your desired change a reality.

- A policy "action" or decision - the specific action you want them to take or decision you want them to make.

- Timeline for change - The date by when you want them to act or decide.

GRSP's *Determining Your Implementation Objective* tool can help you and your partners to define your campaign's implementation objective.

Your team should also agree on the overall purpose of the political map, including how it will be used and who will have access to it. Your political map will likely contain sensitive information that you may not want to become public. You will probably want to share the mapping with the team that is responsible for developing and implementing your overarching campaign plan, but be selective. Ultimately, the entire group will share responsibility for ensuring that sensitive information remains confidential.

3. Determine roles and responsibilities
Once you have agreed on your implementation objective, it's time to determine the roles and responsibilities for completing the mapping process. Appointing a "point person" or "map administrator" who holds overall responsibility for developing and maintaining the political map is a good first step. That person is usually central to the campaign and can then assign team members or outside experts to collect the variety of information required.

Political mapping can be costly. Early on, the team should discuss what financial support and other resources will be necessary to complete the project. If you choose to hire outside policy or legal experts to help, ensure that you have adequate resources in place before you begin.

Completing the political map

It's now time to complete your political map. Ideally, after conducting research, you'll complete the map together during a team exercise or workshop setting. During this process, team members can debate, discuss, and develop consensus, which will lead to a shared understanding and a more complete map. If such an exercise is not possible, an alternate option is for one person to compile the map using information gathered by the team members.

Use additional sheets of paper as needed to complete your political map.

Political Map

1. Define the Implementation Objective
The implementation objective(s) addresses a key step or steps in the implementation process that your advocacy campaign can achieve. Your objective will set the direction for both your political map and overall implementation campaign plan. Write your SMART policy objective at the beginning of your political map.
Implementation Objective(s)

2. Determine the Implementation Process

No matter what your implementation objective is –issuing a regulation, educating the public about the new law, establishing or strengthening a standard, reforming a budget, assessing compliance or some combination – you need to know and understand the appropriate legal and implementation process that can make it a reality.

A general understanding of the policy implementation system in your country will allow you to identify the most relevant process. If you're unsure, then you may need to make your implementation objective more specific or engage the help of an expert on the policy implementation system, like a policy expert or lawyer, in order to complete this section of your political map.

In some countries, the implementation process is formal and straightforward. In those cases, writing down the implementation process will be fairly simple. In other countries, policy implementation can often involve a number of informal or unofficial steps. As you put together your political mapping team, consider including members who have knowledge of any informal or unofficial steps in the implementation process as these steps can often be difficult to understand.

Relevant Policy Implementation Processes

3. Identify Government Bodies and Departments

In the next step, you'll identify the government bodies involved in helping you achieve your implementation objective. They may be executive, ministerial or legislative bodies, standards bureaus, enforcement agencies or some combination. Depending on your implementation objective (particularly if it involves supporting enforcement) and country's political system, you may also need to consider bodies at multiple levels of governance.

List the relevant government bodies as well as the specific departments or committees that will have a formal role in approving your policy objective.

NATIONAL	
Government Body	Departments and Committees

SUB-NATIONAL (e.g. provincial, county, district)	
Government Body	Departments and Committees

LOCAL (e.g. city, township)	
Government Body	Departments and Committees

4. Outline Rules and Procedure	
Each government body will have its own set of rules – both formal and informal – for supporting policy implementation. While there's no need for you to know every detail of the implementation procedure, a basic understanding will help you determine where and how your campaign can provide input into the process. For each government body previously identified, answer the guiding questions below. Remember to include specific roles and responsibilities of departments or committees.	
GOVERNMENT BODY:	
Agenda-Setting and Approvals	
How are implementation roles and objectives introduced, prioritized and placed on their agenda?	
How do they approve your implementation objective? *Example: supporting evidence, letters of support, economic analysis*	
What type of documentation must accompany your implementation proposal *Example: supporting evidence, letters of support, economic analysis*	
What happens after the government body approves the implementation proposal?	
What happens if they do not approve the implementation proposal? Is there another body that can override their decision?	
Channels for Input	
In what ways are their meeting processes open and transparent (e.g. notice of meetings provided, open to members of the public, public records available)? *Example: notice of meetings provided, open to members of public, public records available*	
Who has the right or privilege to provide input into the government body? How is this input provided? *Example: topical experts* *Example: oral or written testimony, informal meetings or hearings*	
Is there a public comment period before decisions are taken? When does this occur? What form do comments take?	
Who must be notified once a decision is made? How are they notified?	

5. Outline the Government Calendar

The implementation process is often characterized by intense activity followed by long periods of little movement, and it's easy for an implementation campaign to underestimate how slowly government bureaucracies move. While you may not be able to accurately estimate the timeline for most implementation processes, mapping the annual government calendar can provide helpful clues for timing advocacy activities. It can also prepare you for times when events are likely to move quickly and when they might stall.

Calendar items to consider include the beginning and end of government sessions, timing of the annual budgetary cycle, elections, holidays and recesses. Enter those here.

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH

APRIL	MAY	JUNE

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER

6. Identify Decision-Makers

The individual policymakers with formal decision-making power during the implementation process are likely to become the primary targets of your advocacy outreach. These could include heads of state, ministers, permanent secretaries, parliamentarians, or heads of enforcement or standards bodies. In bodies where there are many decision-makers, it is helpful to focus on specific individuals who sit on relevant committees, hold leadership positions, or are known as highly influential among their colleagues.

When identifying decision-makers, be as specific as possible. Note down names in addition to titles or positions.

Government Body:

Decision-Makers

Government Body:

Decision-Makers

Government Body:

Decision-Makers

Government Body:

Decision-Makers

7. Identify Influencers

Once you have named your decision-makers, it's time to identify their key "influencers." Influencers are individuals who have sway over individuals with roles in policy implementation and hold informal power to move implementation forward. Some of the most powerful influencers are government staff advisors since they prepare reports and recommendations on proposed policies. Other powerful influencers might include political party leaders, deputy police commanders and quasi- or non-governmental organization representatives. Consider which influencers are accessible to your implementation campaign and could accelerate your efforts to reach and persuade decision-makers.

As you did when you identified decision-makers, note down names and titles of key influencers.

Decision-Maker	Influencers

Decision-Maker	Influencers

Decision-Maker	Influencers

Decision-Maker	Influencers

Decision-Maker	Influencers

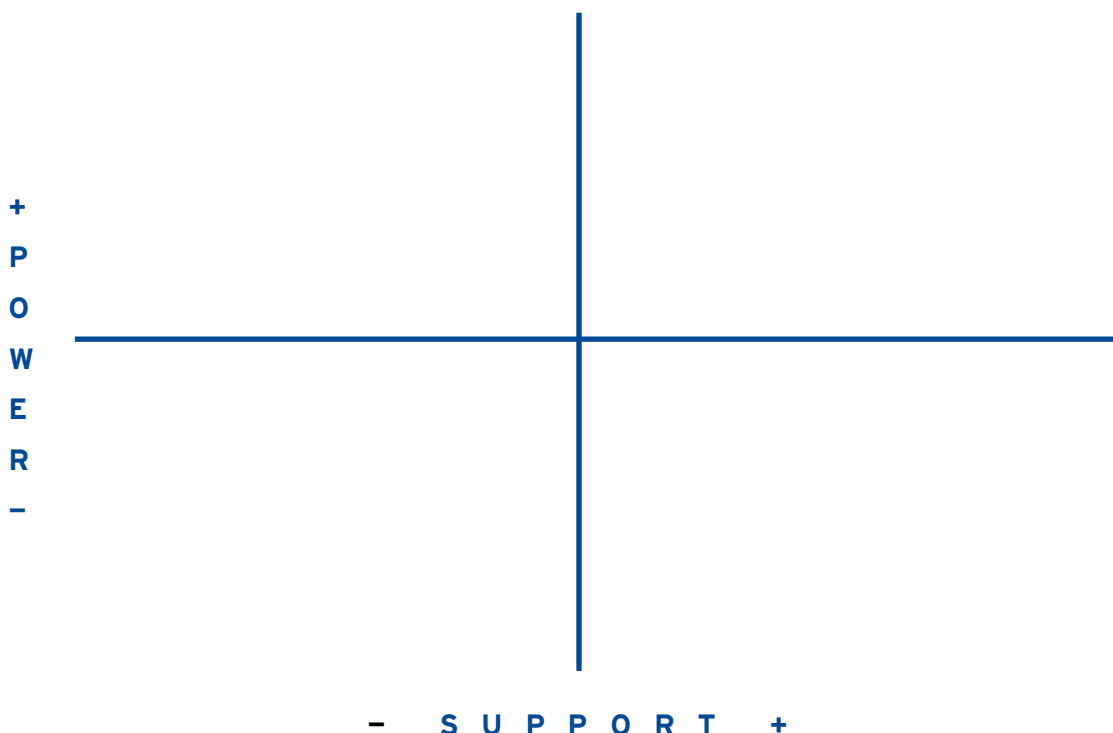## 8. Determine Decision-Makers' Positions

While identifying your decision-makers is important, you also need to understand their background and constituency, as well as their position on your implementation objective and why they hold that stance.

To gather this information, you may need to meet with the decision-maker or their staff. Try to gather the following:

- Voting records

- Positions on comparable issues

- Public statements they have made

- Personal background and history

- Their base of support, including constituents, benefactors, stakeholders or interest groups

- Past and current relationship with the affected industry and its allies

- Self-interest with regard to your policy objective

- Superior's or staff's stance on your policy objective

- Potential political risk for taking a particular position

Once you have determined the position of a decision maker, plot them on the "power map," which is a visual representation of both a decision-maker's level of power and his or her support for your issue. The vertical line represents how powerful the decision-maker is; the more powerful they are, the higher they should be plotted along the vertical line. The horizontal line represents their level of support for your issue; the more supportive they are, the further to the right they should be plotted. You can use this map to determine which individuals will be more receptive to your implementation campaign, which will in turn help you decide where to direct outreach efforts. Try to ensure that you don't have too many decision-makers in the top left box, which would indicate high levels of power but strong opposition to your objective.

Revisit this section of your map often, in order to track how key decision-makers positions' shift over the course of your implementation campaign.

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9. Identify Implementation Champions

While identifying your decision-makers is important, you also need to understand their background and constituency, as well as their position on your implementation objective and why they hold that stance.

To gather this information, you may need to meet with the decision-maker or their staff. Try to gather the following:

- Voting records
- Positions on comparable issues
- Public statements they have made
- Personal background and history
- Their base of support, including constituents, benefactors, stakeholders or interest groups
- Past and current relationship with the affected industry and its allies
- Self-interest with regard to your policy objective
- Superior's or staff's stance on your policy objective
- Potential political risk for taking a particular position

Policy Implementation Champions

10. Track Movement In Relevant Government Bodies

If your implementation objective requires approval by a specific government agency, it's critical that you know how much support there is for your objective at any given time. While you have already identified the key decision-makers and implementation champions who will be your campaign's main targets, you should still track the positions of other individuals within the specific government body or bodies since you will need their support to achieve your goal.

In an excel spreadsheet, type the names and contact details of each individual and categorize their level of support: supportive, neutral, or opposed. This is a quick-and-easy technique for coding and referencing large numbers of decision makers. You can use filters to sort as needed and organize mail merge emails at key moments. You will want to update this section often.

This list will likely be long, but you can concentrate your efforts by working with your implementation champions to convert neutrals to supporters. By using this system you may also be able to advise your champion on when it is time to push for a vote and when to wait until there is sufficient support for your proposal.

11. Understand The Opposition

No matter how noble your cause, you can expect some form of opposition. Your political map should identify any groups or individuals that are likely to intervene against your implementation objective. It should also detail the arguments that objectors are likely to use, and the decision-makers with whom they have influence.

You can find information on opposition in the media and online. If you have strong relationships with key government staff, they may also be able to provide talking points, proposed language changes, and policy papers that can help you understand opposing voices. These staff relationships can be invaluable in keeping this section of your map updated.

Opponent	Arguments	Decision-maker Influence
Opponent	**Arguments**	**Decision-maker Influence**
Opponent	**Arguments**	**Decision-maker Influence**
Opponent	**Arguments**	**Decision-maker Influence**
Opponent	**Arguments**	**Decision-maker Influence**

12. Put It All Together

Now that you have completed the necessary research, it's time to prepare a flowchart that shows each step in the implementation process that is necessary to achieve your implementation objective. This simple diagram will provide guidance throughout your implementation campaign planning and implementation.

When developing your flowchart, try picturing your implementation proposal being passed from desk to desk within the government. When it leaves one desk, where does it go next? Perhaps, an agency head needs to approve your proposal before it is submitted to government, but within the agency several desks need to approve the proposal before it reaches the Cabinet. Your flowchart should show the progression from implementation idea to final approval with every desk in between. It should also clearly delineate when and how you plan to exert influence during the process.

You can use the template provided as a guide for mapping the implementation process. However, you may need to use additional sheets of paper to ensure that all steps are represented.

Policy-Making Process   **Path of Influence**

1. [ ] → 1. [ ]

2. [ ] → 2. [ ]

3. [ ] → 3. [ ]

4. [ ] → 4. [ ]

5. [ ] → 5. [ ]

6. [ ] → 6. [ ]
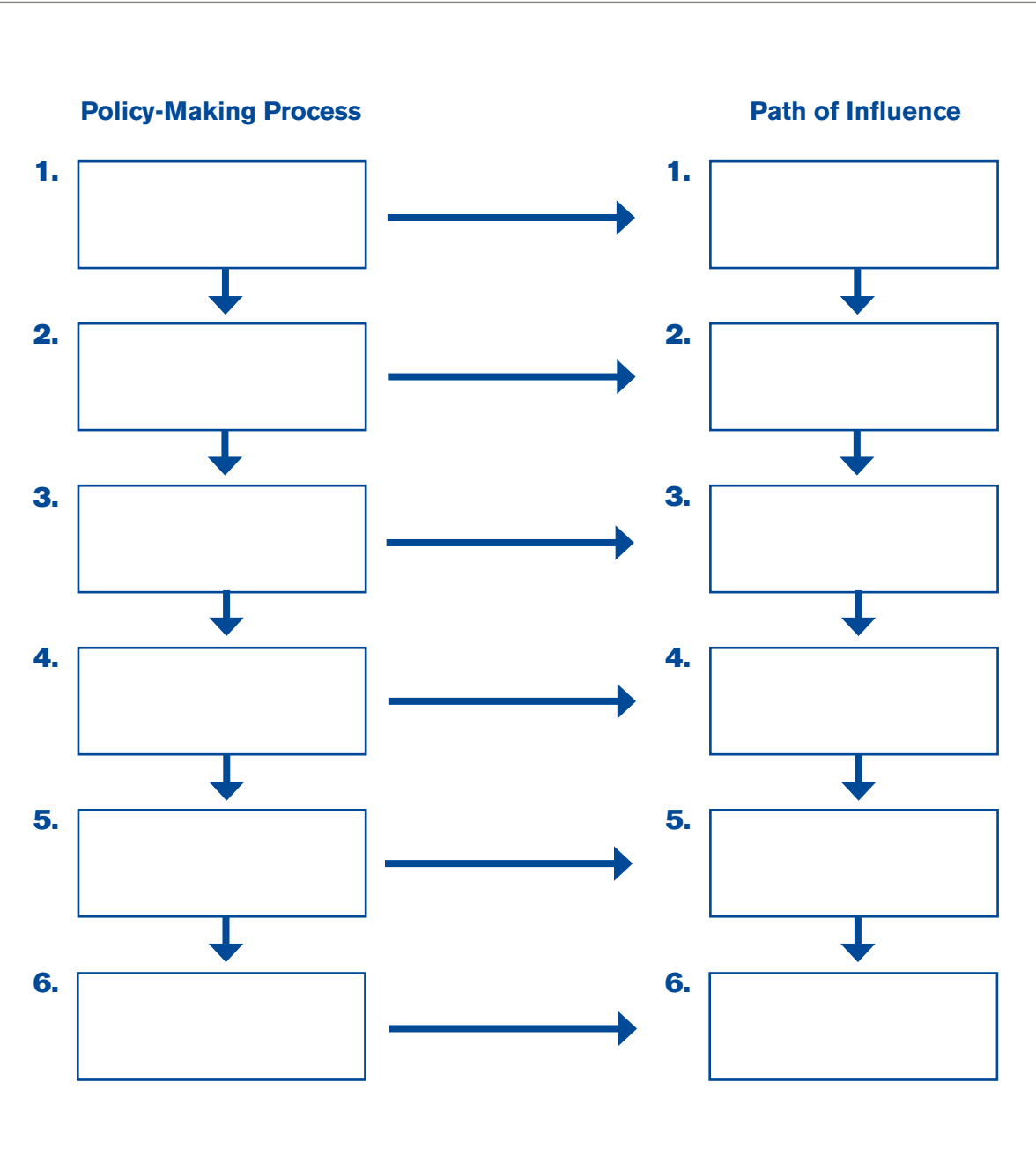
13. Identify Back-Up Paths to Success

Now that you have mapped the step-by-step process for approving your implementation objective and your path of influence, it's important to critically examine your map for any alternate pathways so you can create a back-up plan. If the obvious path becomes stalled or blocked during your campaign, being able to deploy an alternate plan will be a major advantage. For example, consider that the key enforcement agency leader you were persuading to champion your implementation objective decides she can not act. Is there a member of government who can force action by the enforcement agency? Answering this question and others like it before it happens will allow you to act quickly if and when circumstances change.

Use the template provided to map out alternative paths of influence throughout the implementation process. If you only see a single path for success at this point in time, consider whether another implementation process can be leveraged to make your desired change. For example, can a ministerial decree motivate an enforcement agency to begin enforcing a new policy? Can the budget process be used to move forward a public education campaign? While there's no need to map these secondary processes in extensive detail, it's important to consider them now.

Policy-Making Process   Path of Influence

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
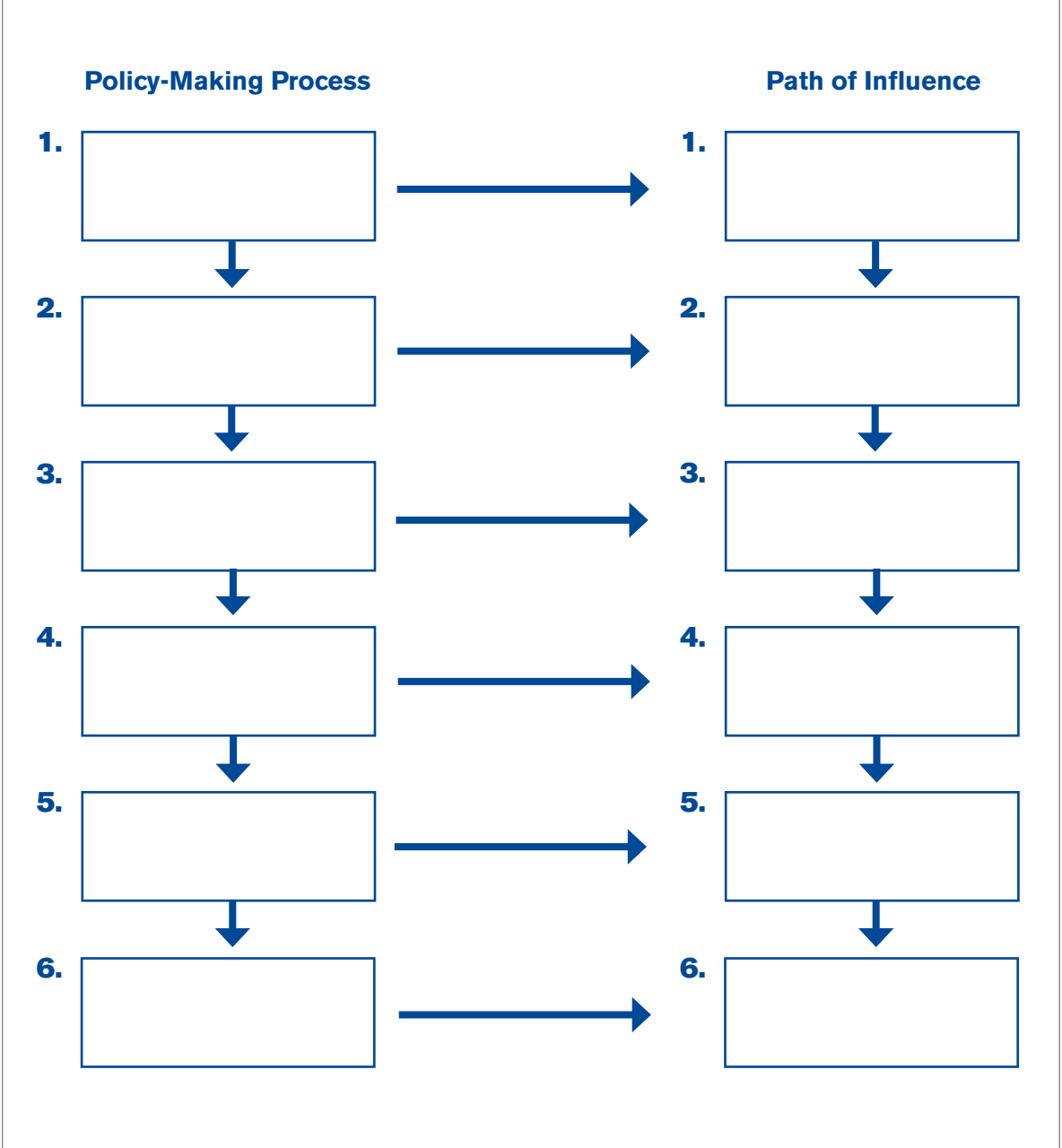
Using your Map

It's almost time to start developing your implementation campaign plan. First, review your political map for any major gaps in information. While you don't need to know every detail of the implementation process before you begin planning, it is important to identify where you have missing or incomplete knowledge so you can determine how to fill those gaps.

You will also want to develop a plan to continuously update your political map. You have just invested immense time, energy, and possibly resources, so you'll want to get the most out of it. Assign a team member to maintain your political map and present updates as part of regular meetings.

With the knowledge gained from your political mapping, you are now ready to develop a powerful implementation campaign action plan!

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