



The Maytree Foundation

Maytree Public Policy Training Institute

Building policy capacity to strengthen democratic society

Developing and Analyzing Policy Options

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Objectives

1. To understand that 'Policy development and analysis is the language of governments –it is *'what they do'*.
2. To understand public policy-making as a public good
3. To discover why governments and others can make bad and good policy
4. To discover the common errors
5. Whose job is it to develop public policy options?



Objectives

6. To understand what Governments will accept and can implement
7. To understand the role of the policy analyst
8. To be clear on big public policy issues
9. To understand the role of the 'public' in public policy making.
10. Do your homework: Learn the value of implementation-ready policy



1. Policy is the Language of Governments – *it is what they do*

- We have no choice but to understand some of the basics of policy analysis and development to be engaged in the policy arena.
- What if governments did not do good policy?
- Is policy development and analysis a stabilizer?



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**"We don't have the answer, but
we're really getting off on the attention."**

2. Is Policy about being good?

- The objective of public policy making is to achieve a public good
- It involves a process of making good decisions (Shari Torjman – What is Policy? Caledon)
- What is best for the public?
- Why doesn't the government always make good policy?



3. Around the Cabinet Table

Focus Group – Leaders at Work – or a Think Tank?



- Timeframe of government's business/election cycle –*make the tough decisions early*
- Difference between election/post-election periods –*firm to fluid ideology*
- Short attention span of politics, short shelf life of policy – *“In two years, it's not my problem”*



3. Around the Cabinet Table

Focus Group – Leaders at Work – or a Think Tank?

- Values, beliefs, ethics – *find the social consensus*
- Media attention/perspective, opinion polls – *understand the public mood*
- *Government is heterogeneous*



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"He's not a very civil servant!"



3. How does policy making go bad?

- Having wrong or inappropriate evidence e.g. Freakonomics example Roe vs. Wade
- Failure to take into account unintended consequences; e.g. \$100,000 salary publicity
- The strength or weakness of key stakeholders e.g. Kyoto? New Caledonia? The poor?
- Unanticipated changes in public expectations e.g. clean water, available electricity,



4. What is good evidence?

- Though some policies seem not to be based on any evidence at all, good public policy making requires the best available evidence
- In the information age good hard evidence wins over conjecture, or good stories e.g. The 'risky' Minimum wage debate





5. Whose job is it?

What Cabinet Ministers and Parliamentary Assistants Say

- “Give me something I can implement!”
- “Continue lobbying for your issue – get it in front of the public”
- “I don’t hear your issue on constituency day”
- “Make it compelling.”



5. What Some Interest Groups and Activists Say

- “Governments have to take responsibility”
- “It’s their job to **lead** and get things done, not to run a popularity contest
- “It’s my job to say what’s right – not to convince the public of what is right. That’s their job”



6. Can you influence policy?

- Each Year, HRSDC asks SSHRC to produce papers of policy interest to the government
- Have your issue, evidence, communications, sound bites stakeholders, champions and conventional wisdom ready
- Be ready to move when the moment strikes.....(e.g. Income splitting)



7. Caught in the Gate?

- Doing policy development makes some people uncomfortable when so much needs to get done.
- Get on with it. Leave the analysis to those responsible to implement the policy.
- Policy is not 'heresy'.



MAKING STAFF GET A SICK NOTE
AFTER ONE DAY IS ESSENTIAL
IF WE'RE TO MAKE THE WHOLE
SYSTEM WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY!



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7. Caught in the Gate?

- Good policy involves consideration of other/all options
- Broad consideration is ‘what governments do’
 - It is good for them and it is also good for you
- Do the least, in the middle, the most, or something different
- Timeframes – measurable goals
- Tracking key evidence – ‘canaries down the well’



8. Policy involves being clear about objectives and analysis

- Big public policy imperatives like:
 - ‘ending clawbacks’ or
 - ‘making poverty history’ or
 - ‘eradicating homelessness’.
- Good policy development is about being clear about objectives and analysis; putting steps in place and setting timelines.
- Think of the “Microphone in your face”



9. Moving Mountains

Making Research relevant to Public Policymaking

- The Gold Standard - *Second Hand Smoke*
- The Silver Standard – *Community Mental Health*
- The Bronze Standard – *M.A.D.D.*



We're from the Government...
And we're here to help...



9. Moving Mountains

Shaping your policy options:

To “make the case,” distinguish what is the same, what is different and why?

- How is the issue framed?
- Who is affected?
- What is the political and policymaking environment?
- How is the solution communicated?



9. Moving Mountains

- Who benefits, who doesn't?
- What alternatives were considered?
- Is the outcome relevant?
- What are the next steps?
- What would we have to change for it to work here?





9. Moving Mountains

How can you use stakeholders to support your options?

- Create communities of interest
- Look for opportunities to build consensus and credibility
- Work from the grassroots
- Practice collaborative consultation
- Develop parallel advocacy strategies



10. Doing your Homework: Developing Options

What makes a policy option relevant?

- It has a human dimension
- It's a simple concept
- It's a great story
- It reflects current or emerging values



10. Doing your Homework

Developing Options

What makes a policy option relevant?

- It reflects “good government”
- Its benefits outweigh its costs
- Its investment can be justified
- It’s a new way of doing things



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10. Doing your Homework Developing Options

How do you choose a policy instrument?

- Instrument – is what you use to implement the policy
- Range of least to most intrusive interventions
- Rational relationship between policy objective and means to achieve it



10. Doing your Homework

Developing Options

Least Intrusive	Less Intrusive	More Intrusive	Most Intrusive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal best practices (communities of practice, networks) • Self- regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal information dissemination • Research and stakeholder funding • Administrative policy • Arm's length relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax, user fees, subsidy, other financial incentives • Standing and advisory committees • Program policy • Contracts (accountability, governance) • Non-arm's length relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation, • Regulation • Restructuring (organizations, government)





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10. Doing your Homework

Developing Options

Maximize your strengths

- Expertise
- Passion
- Network
- Leadership
- Credibility

Write for the environment

- Use plain language
- Keep it short – *summaries, bullet points*
- Distinguish between facts vs. values, analysis vs. advocacy
- Be practical, realistic – understand “fit”



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SCHWADRON
"WAIT A MINUTE! HOW CAN THAT BE?"



10. Doing your Homework: Developing Options and Understanding “fit”

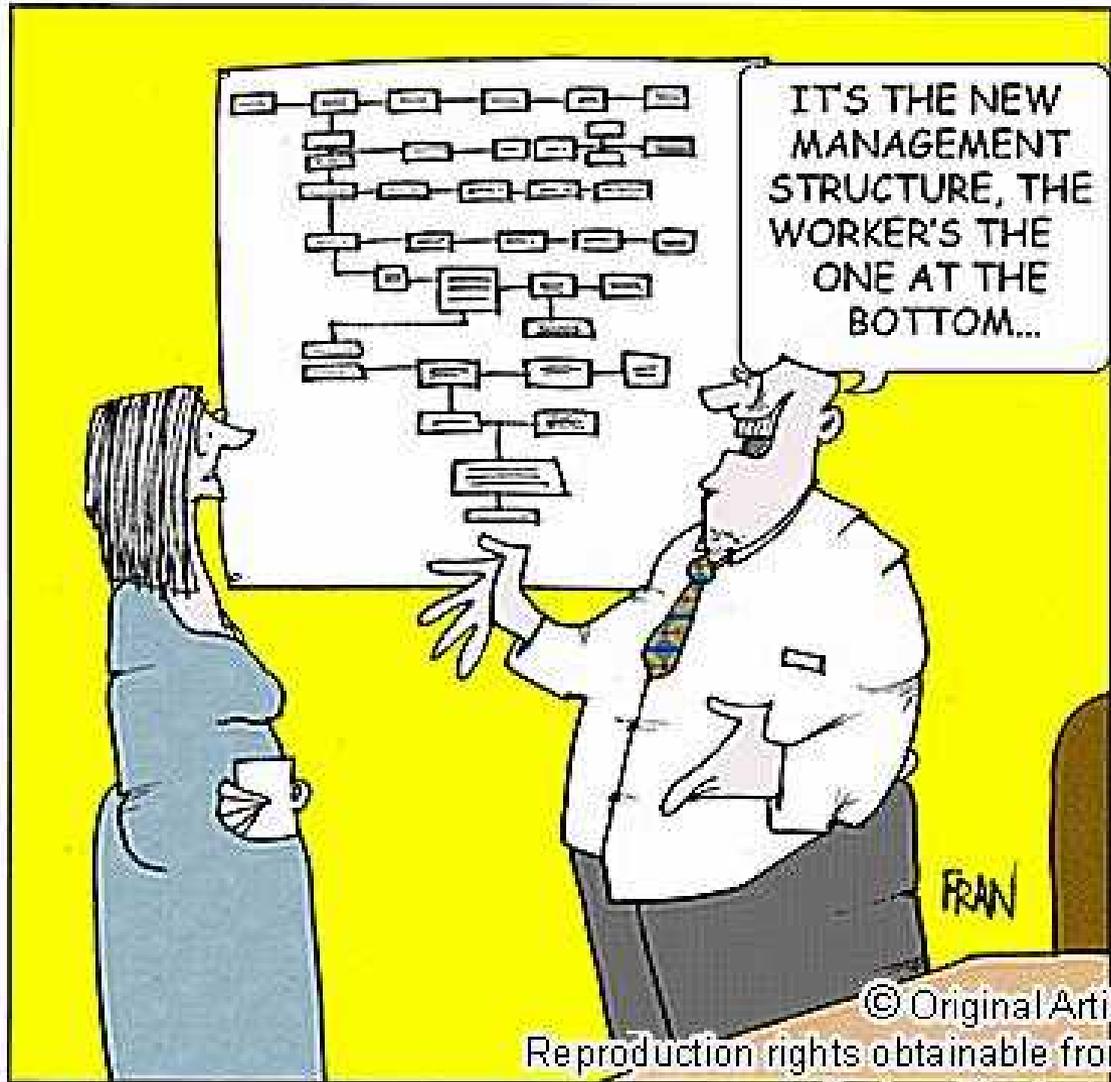
Does your issue and policy option deliver on:

- Government’s policy agenda/priorities
- Government’s communications agenda/priorities
- Current/prospective health of government finances

Challenges, considerations:

- Credibility of fit
- Timeframe of business/election cycle
- Compromising on your integrity





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10. Doing your Homework

Developing Options

The concept of “pros/cons,” “benefits/costs”

- For government: Basic knowledge exchange and risk management tool
- For you: Basic information, strategy and credibility tool
- Pros and Cons
- It's never neutral or non-political



10. Doing your Homework: Impacts

Consequences that should be obvious and planned for and may have a direct or indirect effect on policy outcomes

- Legal/regulatory requirements via legal advice
- Technical issues in program design/implementation
- Institutional capacity to deliver, evaluate and modify (human and fiscal resources)
- Effect on intergovernmental relations (federal/provincial/territorial)



MIKE LUCKOVICH
ARTIST JOURNAL -
CONSTITUTIONAL
2-16-16 Broom

HA! WE HAVE
HIGHER APPROVAL
RATINGS!...

BIRD
FLU

MAD
COIN



10. Doing your Homework: What are expected impacts?

- Legislative reaction via political party statements, Question Period
- Stakeholder reaction via third party statements, consultation
- User/client reaction via patterns of use, consultation
- Media/public reaction via polling, consultation
- ***Other implications?***



10. Doing your Homework: What are unexpected impacts?

- Socio-economic outcomes
- Gender impacts
- Ethno-cultural and racial impacts
- Other equity-based impacts, e.g., disability, language, age, immigrant/refugee status
- Cross-cutting impacts that involve other policy areas
- Longitudinal outcomes, i.e., change in outcomes over time
- Changes in larger structures, e.g., political instability, economic decline etc,
- ***Other implications?***



More Sources

Texts

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- Swanson, Jean. *Poor-Bashing: The Politics of Exclusion* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2001)



More Sources

Journals

- *Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, www.isuma.net
- *Canadian Public Administration*, www.ipac.ca
- *Canadian Public Policy*
- *The Canadian Journal of Political Science*
- Journals for specific policy areas, e.g., *Journal of Community Practice*, *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, *Journal of Urban Health*, *Ethnicity and Health*, *Social Problems*, *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, *Journal of Health and Social Policy*, *Research on Social Work Practice* (access via e-indices by topic or search engines, e.g., Silverplatter, Scholars Portal, Medline)
- Advocacy journals, e.g., *AIDS and Public Policy Journal*

Websites

- Institute of Public Administration Canada, www.ipac.com
- Canadian Policy Research Networks, www.cprn.com
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, www.policyalternatives.ca (includes federal and provincial alternative budgets)
- Caledon Institute, www.caledoninst.org
- Local/regional social planning councils, community service organizations, communities of research and practice
- Government (federal departments; provincial/territorial ministries, ;agencies, boards, commissions)



WELL WE'VE HAD OUR 15% BUDGET CUT CONFIRMED, NOBODY'S APPLIED FOR OUR VACANCIES AND WE'RE MOVING THE OFFICE INTO A PORTOCABIN IN THE CARPARK, ITEM 2 STAFF MORALE



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