

Unpack the Complexity of your Problem (again)!

Convene a meeting

Step 1 of Systemcraft is to dig into the complexity of the issue you are working on. This can feel counter-intuitive or frustrating to those of us keen to get going with 'the' solution. We can find it hard (and not a lot of fun) to really explore why we are where we are and what is getting in the way of change. In Systems Change work, however, it is imperative that we invest time to deeply understand what is really going on right now. And we must do this from as many perspectives from across the system as possible. It will provide new clues as to where you can intervene in later steps of Sytemcraft.

That is why we are asking you to convene a meeting with 4-5 people who represent different perspectives from across 'the system' that your problem inhabits. You will have identified some of those people/organisations already. Take a risk, think broadly and invite a diverse group to a 1-hour session (online is OK) and use the guidance and meeting structure below.

General guidance

1. Your only goal is to understand the 'current state' of the issue from as many perspectives as possible.
2. Only use the 4 questions given (not your 'favourite' questions) but also use follow-up questions to illicit more (e.g. what else, who else, say more).
3. You must resist the temptation to discuss any solutions whatsoever! And do not give or seek advice in 'what to do about the issue'.
4. Follow the meeting structure so that you ensure you cover everything.
5. Appoint a facilitator (that might be you) to ensure everyone sticks to the process and timing.

Meeting structure: 60 mins

10 mins	Welcome and thanks. Introduce each other. Provide the context to the meeting (Leading Beyond Boundaries, Learning about Systems Change) and the Goal: to understand the current state
5 mins	Explain the meeting structure/agenda and walk through the General Guidance. Q&A for clarity.
5 mins	Story telling by you. You describe the issue as you currently see it and why you feel it is stuck. Everyone else just listen and make notes.
5 mins	Q&A from the participants to gain clarity about the scope of the problem (but interrupt and block any discussion about solutions)
25 mins	Work through each of the 4 questions below (approx. 5 mins per question). Be a generative as possible. Keep asking 'what else?'. Ensure everyone is able to express their perspective. There is no right or wrong answers to the question. Collate all responses in one place. You should not record who said what. It is all valid as a big pile of complexity.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Who is involved? Who else?2. What are the key drivers/root causes? What else?3. What is adapting/changing? How?4. How is it delivering benefits (to some)? Who is the status quo working for? How?
10 mins	<p>As a group – step back and look at what you have surfaced and ask “what are we learning about this issue”? Draw out individual insights.</p> <p>Thank everyone and let them know you will be doing Steps 2 & 3 in April and that you’ll keep them in the loop.</p>