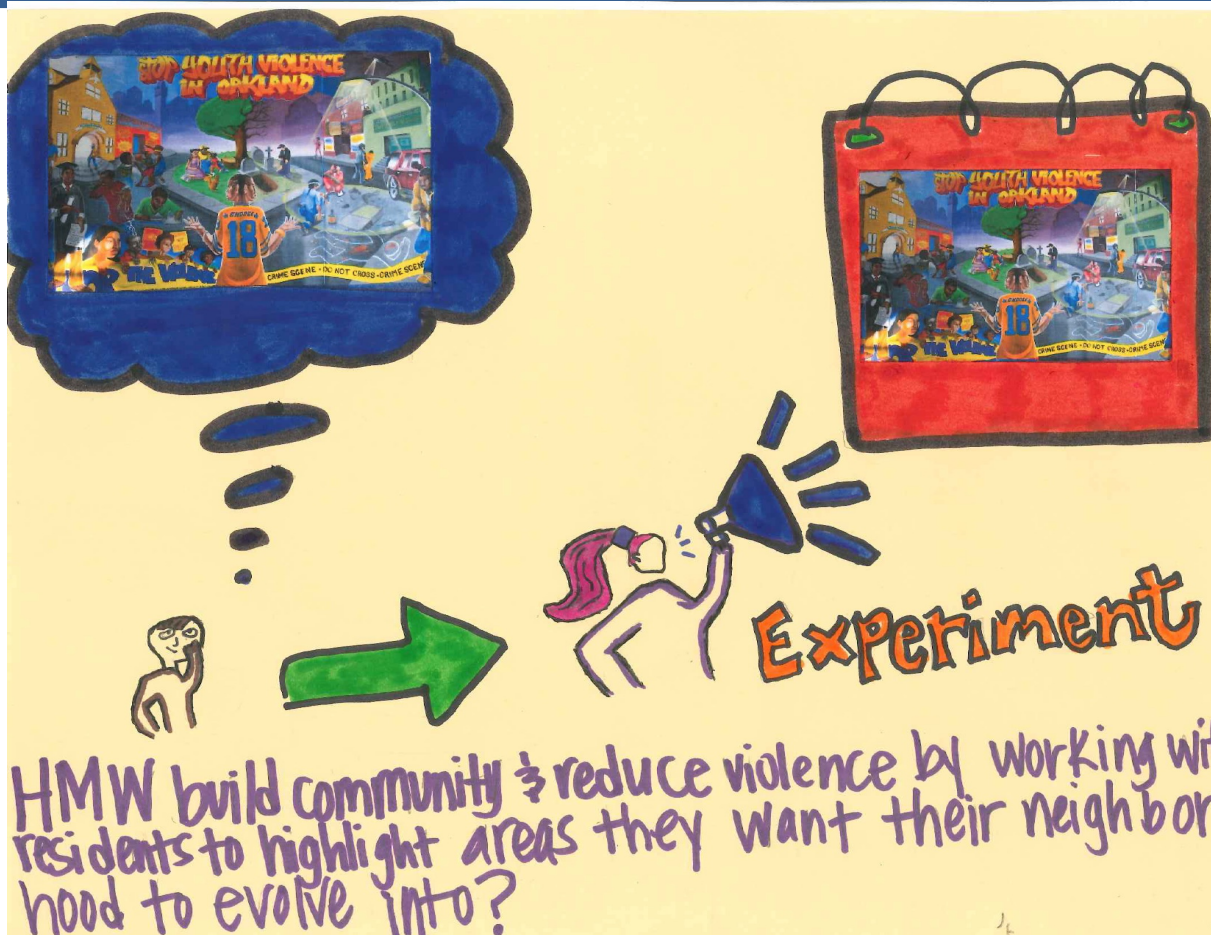


Summer and Fall 2014

Experimentation Toolkit



HMW build community & reduce violence by working with residents to highlight areas they want their neighborhood to evolve into?

Created by Mariela Nevárez

TA provided by Gobee Group

East Oakland Innovators

Best Babies Zone

Alameda County Public Health Dept.

Summer and Fall 2014

To adapt or replicate, please contact

Rachel.berkowitz@acgov.org



CONTENTS

Introduction

- I. Where We Are Now
- II. Background
- III. Why Experiment?
- IV. Description of Tools for Each Stage

Experimentation Tools for Step 1

- a) Drawing
- b) Scenarios
- c) Role play
- d) Prototype
- e) Storyboard
- f) Skit
- g) Storytelling
- h) Shoot a video
- i) Do it Yourself

Experimentation Tools for Step 2

- ❖ Options for Communicating
-  Insights Table

V. Conclusion

I. Where We Are Now

At this point, you have completed both the Understanding Phase as well as the Ideation Phase for the Big Win! That means that you have landed on a narrow and focused **HMW (“How Might We”) question** and have **brainstormed ideas** to address this HMW question. You will now be transitioning from brainstorming to **testing out 2-3 promising ideas** in a way that makes the most sense for your project.

(Cheat Sheet Created by Gobee Group)

Design Thinking Cheat Sheet

UNDERSTAND

Shadowing: Follow people to understand what they do

Data dive: Find and explore quantitative data to create insights

Behavioral mapping: Track movements over time and space

Secondary research: Use the Internet, go beyond journal articles

Contextual interviews: Ask people what they do, as they do it

IDEATE

Analogous models: Look to other industries for similar problems

Sticky brainstorming: Each team member generates ideas on sticky notes

Dot voting: Prioritize ideas by having your team vote on ideas with “dots”

Bottom-up clustering: Organize ideas into categories, to create more ideas

Study the competition: See how others tackle the same problem

EXPERIMENT

Drawing: Sketch out your solution on paper

Scenarios: Describe how your solution works to interviewees

Roleplaying: Assume the role of your users with your team

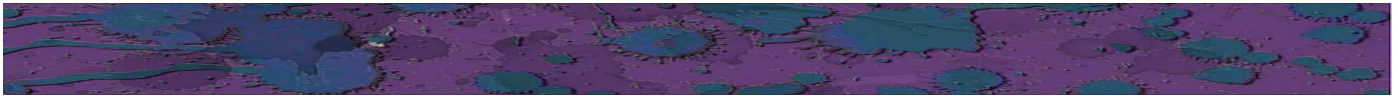
Prototype: Build an inexpensive mockup of your solution

Do it yourself: If feasible, try out your solution on your own

Health Equity by Design

Alameda County Public Health Department & Gobee





II. Background

The Experimentation Phase is the point when the **best ideas** generated in the Ideation Phase are **tested and refined**. The Experimentation Phase is important because it is an opportunity to examine your ideas to uncover unforeseen challenges and unintended consequences. Essentially, it is a cheap, easy and fast way of getting a good sense of which ideas are appropriate ones that are likely to be successful, and how to make those ideas most successful during initial implementation. A way to gain this insight is by getting feedback about your ideas from other residents. We test out our prototype (the example/test of your idea) to **refine** our solutions and to help us **decide** on which idea to implement.

Prototyping is a way to learn quickly and affordably. When deciding what and how to prototype, think about what **questions** you want to answer. For example, you may want to know about the desirability, usefulness, feasibility, or financial viability of your idea. Create prototypes and plan to gather feedback in a way that will answer your critical questions.

When thinking of the most effective tool to use for prototyping, keep in mind the time and money constraints. How much money do you have in your budget to create the prototype, how much time do you have? Is it worth it to create multiple prototypes to appeal to different audiences and preferences? After deciding on a prototype begin planning and ask yourself how you will create it and how you will test it.

There are two steps in this phase.



2 Steps of the Experimentation Phase:

1. The first step is to prototype your ideas. Think of different ways to **test** your ideas for a solution.
2. The second step is to communicate and share out your prototypes with a diverse set of stakeholders (other community members, funders, partners, etc.) in order to get feedback and decide which idea to implement.



III. Why Experiment?

There are three main reasons why you should include an Experimentation Phase in your project organizing.

- ✓ **To refine our prototypes and solutions.** Testing out our ideas further with individuals provides insight on what the next steps should be, whether to revise our prototypes or deciding on a different prototype.
- ✓ **To learn more about additional residents of the Castlemont neighborhood.** By engaging residents (whose knowledge is important and valuable) you might find unexpected insights.
- ✓ **To test and refine our point of view.** Sometimes testing reveals that not only did we not get the solution right, but also that we have failed to look at the problem correctly.

Note: You can use DIFFERENT prototype/experiment methods for each of your ideas, depending on what you are hoping to test. The most important thing is to ensure that your prototype/experiment **highlights** parts of your ideas that you want feedback on.

Summary: The Experimentation Phase is an opportunity for your ideas to take on a **physical form** of some kind in order to improve the ideas. You can prototype by identifying **what** you want to test and then **testing it out!**



IV. Description of Tools for Each Stage

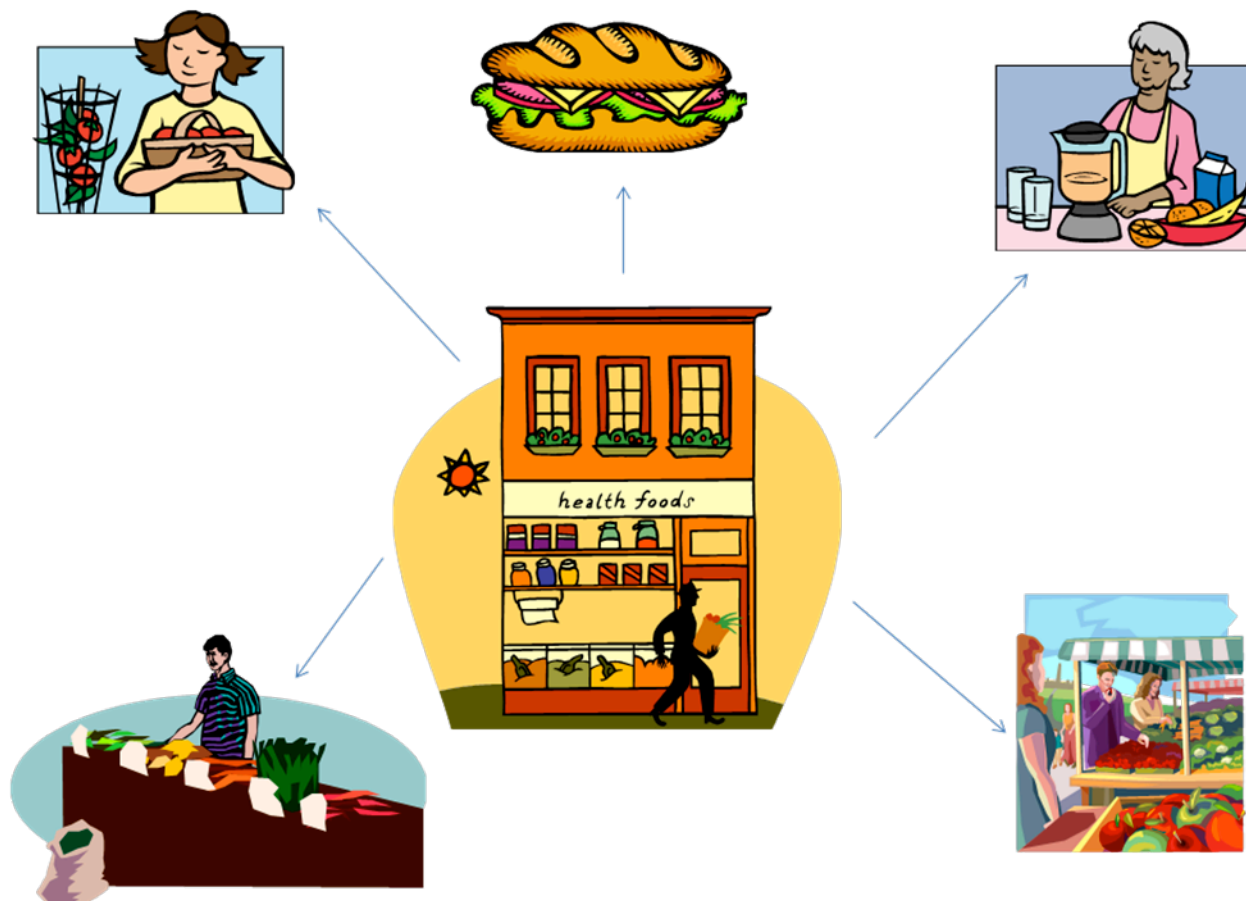
Experimentation Tools for Step 1

a) Drawing

Purpose: To sketch out your solutions on paper

Description: On a piece of paper, draw out your idea.

- For example, if your idea is to connect liquor stores with local gardens, produce companies, farmer's markets, or other avenues to bring healthier choices to the neighborhood, you could sketch a representation of this.
- A good visual for this could be a vibrant corner store offering all of these things with arrows coming out of the corner store to other networks to highlight the collaborations with different food providers.



b) Scenarios

Description: Create a scenario that describes one of your ideas for a solution. Keep in mind:

- Your audience, who are you trying to reach. Is the scenario delivered in an effective way to communicate the issue?
 - Use the insights gathered during the Understanding Phase in creating your scenario. Keep in mind the feedback you received from the Castlemont neighborhood residents and make sure to incorporate it into your ideas where it is appropriate.
 - Describe your interaction with a system (the larger issue)
- ❖ For example, let's say your HMW question is: **HMW work with Castlemont residents to create unity and have a permanent space to discuss important issues affecting the Castlemont community?** Maybe after getting feedback from residents during the Understanding Phase and brainstorming, one of your ideas for solution was to create a neighborhood association. To describe your idea in an engaging way that is relatable to other residents you could write a scenario. See example below.

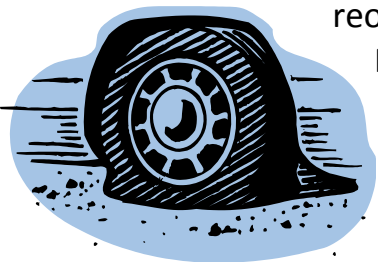
Scenario Example:

Michael was driving along MacArthur Blvd on his way home from work when he drove into a small pot hole. He was a little annoyed but did not think much of it until he heard his rim scraping the ground. Luckily he was close to home and was able to change his tire with minimal damage. When he saw his neighbor, he complained to him. His neighbor let him know that his cousin had also popped a tire while driving in the Castlemont neighborhood. Michael was not sure what he should do but he knew something had to be done. He was upset that this was a

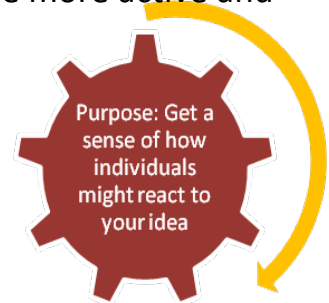
reoccurring issue! His neighbor reminded him of the Castlemont Resident Association that meets every month to discuss issues and take action.

They both decided to attend that month's meeting to express their concern and discuss possible actions. At the meeting, they were told about a simple request form they could file to get the City of Oakland (Public Works) to repair the pot holes. In order to express the urgency of this

Purpose: To describe in a story how your solution works



issue and get a response from the city, all 23 members of the Castlemont Resident Association decided to file a request form the following week. Only two months after the requests were filed, all of the pot holes in the Castlemont neighborhood were fixed and Michael and his neighbor became more active and proud members of the Castlemont neighborhood.



c) Role playing

Description: Assume the role of other residents with your team to practice and get a general sense of how individuals might react to your ideas. Some things to consider:

- How are you going to convince other individuals that you have a good idea?
- Are you providing an opportunity for individuals to provide input? How are you going to integrate feedback from individuals?
- How are you going to communicate the issue?
- Think about individuals who will likely be supportive of your idea as well as individuals who may be more resistant or hesitant to be on board.
- Try role playing with a friend or relative to practice and receive preliminary feedback from these individuals.

d) Prototype

Purpose: Have a physical sample of your solution

Description: Build an inexpensive mockup of your solution.

Instructions

- Make detailed drawings of your idea. They should be as detailed as possible and show all the working parts of your solution. You can use paper and pencil.

- Build a simple model using whatever materials you have available. You want to use cheap materials that are easy to work with, such as wood, cardboard, glue, pins and string. Your model should show the basic shape and major parts of the prototype in approximate scale.
- Look at your model. Does it look workable? Are there any obvious problems you need to work out before making it into a working prototype? Jot down some notes.
- Research options for building your prototype. The cheapest option is to build it yourself. Uncomplicated models can be built out of wood or other materials. For many inventors, however, rapid prototyping is the best option. Rapid prototyping companies can build any shape out of polymers (a type of plastic) in a matter of hours.
- Make or build your prototype. If you opt to do it yourself, you will want to build it out of durable, inexpensive and easy-to-work-with materials. Wood is an extremely popular choice, because it fulfills all of these requirements.
- Make it look nice. You want to sand and paint your prototype and make sure that any joints or gears turn smoothly. You are going to be marketing your prototype to residents, community organizations or organizations with funding opportunities, so appearance is as important as functionality.

e) Storyboard

Description:

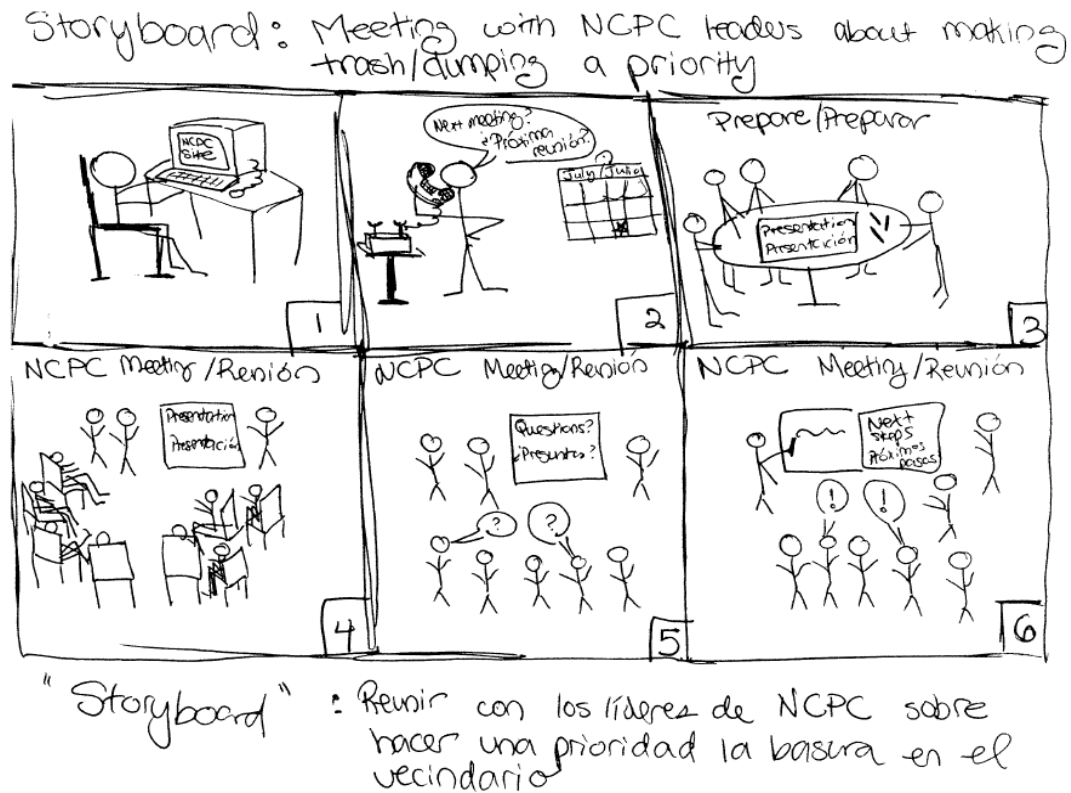
Before starting to create a storyboard, think about what part of your idea you want to test out. Keep these questions in mind:

- What part of the idea are you curious about?
- What part of your idea would benefit from additional feedback or input to make your idea stronger and more applicable?

After thinking through these questions, create your storyboard (see example below).

Purpose: To describe your idea in a written story form

Example Storyboard:



f) Skit

Description: When creating your skit, keep the same questions in mind from the storyboard.

- Your skit should include the issue and provide a solution (your idea!)
- Your skit should communicate how your idea is addressing the need through different characters
- Be creative and present your idea with an engaging example in your skit

Purpose: To communicate via a story acted out.

g) Storytelling

Description: Storytelling as a form of communication is a great tool to share your ideas with others. It seems stories are hard-wired into our psyche. People have been passing information along via storytelling for as long as humans have had a language to draw from. Stories are a great way to connect people with ideas, at a human level. A well-told story – focused on sharing important details that express surprising meaning and emotions – affects the emotions and the intellect simultaneously.

Purpose: Share an idea through a story

Storytelling Tips:

What's the point? Know what you intend to convey both narratively and emotionally. You should be able to describe the essence of the transformation of your character in one sentence & the tone of the story in a couple of words. Be able to articulate the emotional tone in a couple of words.

Be Authentic: Stories are more powerful when they include a little bit of you. Honest expression is stronger and more resonant than cliché.



Character-Driven: Characters are a great vehicle through which to express deep human needs and generate empathy and interest from your audience. Focus on character.

Dramatic Action: Your story should have 3 components: Action, Conflict, and Transformation.

Action: What is the character trying to do? What actions are they taking to achieve it?

Conflict: What is in her way? What questions linger beneath the surface?

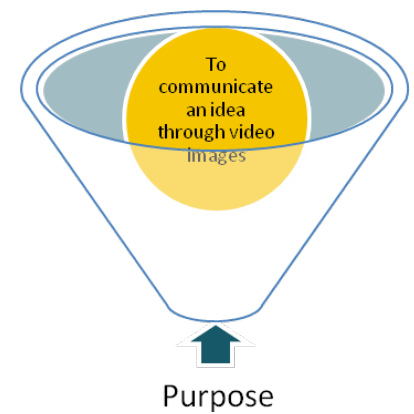
Transformation: What is the big insight? How do the action & conflict resolve?

Details: “Behind all behavior lies emotion.” What details can you share about your character and their situation that will suggest the emotions that lie beneath?

Design Process is a Built in Story: Use what you’ve learned during the design process.

h) Shoot a video

Description: A video is also an excellent way to communicate an idea. An image can be very powerful and resonate with someone. Below are some tips on why you should choose to use video as a tool and tips on how to shoot a video.



Why a Video

Video is a powerful medium for communicating ideas, insights & stories. Planning ahead, but staying open to possibility will give you the best chance of stumbling on a magical moment. Know what you are trying to do and be aggressive about communicating it in the frame. If it's not in the frame, it doesn't exist.

Tips:

Direct Attention:

- Know your intention. What are you trying to highlight? How do you want it to feel?
- Bias toward tight framing(a shot in which there is little visible space around the main subjects)
- Figure Ground: Get a good contrast between the subject & the background.
- Be conscious of light sources & shadows on your subject.
- Follow the rule of thirds, frame off-center. The rule of thirds is a guideline that proposes that an image should be imagined as divided into nine equal parts by two equally spaced horizontal lines and two equally spaced vertical lines, and that important subject elements should be placed along these lines or their intersections.

Plan to Improvise: Know what you want, be flexible about how you get it.

- Plan Ahead: Storyboard out your idea.
- Get Lucky: Follow your curiosity on the day of your shoot.
- Overshoot! Get more than you think you need! More stuff gives you more options when editing. Longer takes allow you some wiggle room for transitions.



Audio is Important!!! Remember the 2 rules:

- Mic close to the subject.
- Point away from (undesired) noise.

i) Do it yourself

Description:

It may be possible to try some ideas or parts of ideas.

For example, if you want to have a discussion about photos from a PhotoVoice project, you can organize a small gathering of 5 people to view the photos and have a dialog.

If you want to rate local businesses, you could try posting signs outside local stores with ratings and information about the store. You could talk with the store owner, customers, and people passing by to see what they think.



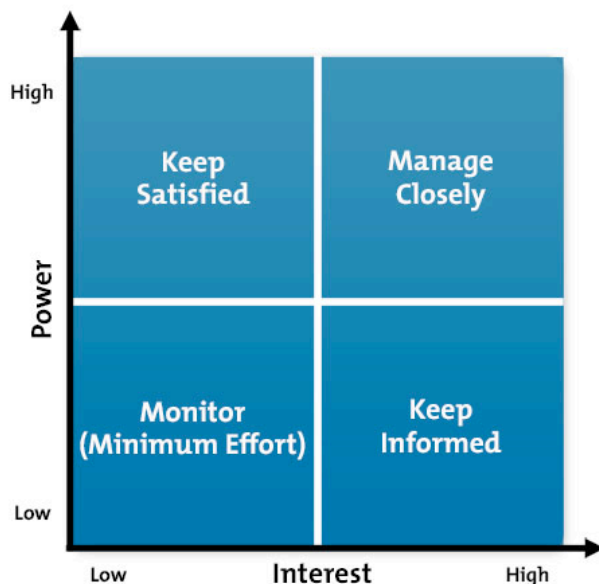
Experimentation Tools for Step 2

❖ Options for Communicating

Description: Once you have created your prototype/test of the ideas, you will want to get others' feedback as a way to test which idea would be best to implement. Since Step 2 consists of communicating the ideas for solutions to other residents, below is a list of possible ways you can communicate these. Feel free to use other forms of communicating or to communicate to other groups not listed below. Communicate to as many people as possible, so you can definitely outreach to more than one of the places listed below.

Which stakeholders will you ask for feedback?

- Try to talk with a diverse group of people. There can be diversity regarding several characteristics:
 - gender
 - age
 - culture
 - occupation (e.g., student, parent, teacher, store owner, etc.)
- The stakeholder map below can help you decide how to interact with and communicate your idea, depending on the power and interest level of the stakeholder.



Where will you test it?

- Attend a **townhall** and present your most promising 2-3 ideas to receive feedback
- **Community Café** with different tables focused on each idea. A community café is an event where residents generally explore priority issues in their communities.
- When you see a **neighbor**, share the ideas with them and hear their thoughts on each
- Share your ideas at a **community event** (such as the Castlemont Community Market)
- Communicate your ideas to **Youth Uprising** to get feedback there
- Ask people their thoughts at **local businesses (such as barbershops and stores)**
- Ask people their thoughts at community centers (**such as schools, libraries, and places of worship**) within and close to the Castlemont neighborhood (this could be a great opportunity to share with families)
- Ask people their thoughts at **Room to Bloom** so that you can also share with families

Gather what you learn from residents in a SYSTEMATIC way. One way to gather feedback is by having residents fill out a matrix with sticky notes:

- What they liked about the idea
- What they disliked about the idea
- What they would change about the idea
- Any new ideas or suggestions

Another way is to hand out feedback forms with questions for residents to answer.

You can also think of ways for other residents to interact with your prototype. If the prototype is a drawing, you can bring copies and pens so other residents can add to or change the drawing. If you make a physical model, can you provide ways that other residents can modify it to show you how they would like to change it? You can bring additional tape, glue, or parts for residents to use to modify or make a model.

Compare what you've learned for each of the ideas. Based on feedback and lessons learned, answer the following question:

Which idea will we begin implementing?

As you move into implementation, you will be evolving your idea based on real-time lessons learned. But the key is to get started – start small, learn, and grow!

Insights Table

Description: This tool is meant to help you organize the ideas tested, how you tested your ideas, where the ideas were tested, the insights gathered, and which idea you landed on.

| Ideas tested | Method of testing the ideas | Setting of where ideas were tested | Population reached | Insights gathered from the testing | Which idea was landed on |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Community garden | Skit & drawing | Room to Bloom, Youth Uprising, local barbershop | Families Youth Males | Community was not interested in working on a garden and were fearful that rents would increase as a result | No |
| Creating a parent committee | Scenario and storyboard | Youth Uprising, neighbors, Room to Bloom | Youth Adults Families | Residents felt that they could commit to this and were excited for this space | Yes |
| Carrying out a campaign | Video | Youth Uprising, neighbors, local barbershop | Youth Adults Males | Residents were concerned about the time commitment to carry out a successful campaign | Maybe |

V. Conclusion

These three toolkits were designed and created for you all (the East Oakland Innovators). However, please feel free to go outside of these toolkits provided, drawing on the vast resources already available online, and adapting these to your specific needs and objectives.

I hope these toolkits can serve as a tool for you all to uncover some of the knowledge that is alive in the Castlemont neighborhood and use it to advocate for social change. There is so much knowledge and strength in the Castlemont neighborhood. I look forward to seeing how you all tap into agency and expertise among Castlemont residents to work together in changing conditions in your communities. You have all been inspiring and it has been an absolute privilege to listen to your stories and thoughts. Thank you.

