

EXPECTATION MAPPING



This Citizen Engagement Technique is part of a series that Cities of Service has created to help city leaders work with citizens to solve problems. To learn more and access additional techniques, visit citiesofservice.org.

Expectation Mapping¹ gathers impressions about a service or initiative from participants to identify and reconcile differences between their expectations and service delivery.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Prior to implementing any Citizen Engagement Technique, it is important to set goals and expectations, identify stakeholders, and more. For a checklist of steps you should take before you begin, please visit citiesofservice.org/techniques.

HOW TO LEAD AN EXPECTATION MAPPING SESSION:

1. Before meeting with citizens, develop categories to guide participants as they share their impressions and understanding of the service or initiative. These categories may include original intention, intended reach, short-term impact, delivery method, and delivery frequency.
2. Welcome citizens and remind them of the meeting purpose, the challenge they are helping to address, and how their input will be used.
3. Introduce the Expectation Map categories and instruct participants to reflect on them. Give each participant sticky notes and ask them to write the expectations they have about the service or initiative as it is currently offered, with one item listed per sticky note. For example, the expectation might be that trash pickup occurs once per week.
4. Ask participants to populate the Expectation Map by placing their sticky notes under the appropriate category.
5. Engage the group in a discussion about what the Expectation Map reveals about their understanding of the service or initiative. Highlight any new, incorrect, or surprising information.
 - You may invite the group to reflect on how the participant responses confirm or challenge any of the research findings.
6. Thank citizens for their participation and remind them how they can stay up to date on the project's development and any future events.



¹ Adapted from Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider, *This Is Service Design Thinking* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2011), 176

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7. Repeat steps 1–6 with various stakeholders, as appropriate for your service or initiative, such as executive staff, program managers, field staff, volunteers, or beneficiaries.
8. Summarize your Expectation Mapping results in a document or presentation.
9. Assemble participants from the various groups to attend a presentation of your findings and brainstorm ways to address gaps revealed through this process between expectations and the actual service or initiative.
10. Capture the lessons from the Expectation Mapping technique and integrate them into the final design.
11. Report what you've learned to the participants and explain how their input will be used by the city.

EXAMPLE:

In 2019, Lancaster was certified as a Welcoming City by the National Welcoming America Initiative, making it the first city in Pennsylvania with this designation. As part of the city's commitment to create an inclusive environment where all residents can thrive and belong, the Department for Neighborhood Engagement used Expectation Mapping to assess the city's language access services across departments.

The Department for Neighborhood Engagement created a digital survey to assess city staff's expectations of their department's language needs and services.

Senior leadership members were surveyed, followed by department managers, and then all city hall staff. The Neighborhood Engagement team reviewed the results and created a visual representation of the survey responses. Their report revealed expectation gaps between the staff and senior leadership — such as whether bilingual staff should act as translators outside of their primary job function. This process also uncovered existing resources, such as an Audio Lab inside of city hall and a County Language Access Line used by the fire and police departments, which could be expanded for other departments.

The Expectation Mapping report was shared with the various participants and several key actions were proposed to resolve the gaps it identified. Informed and empowered by this process, Lancaster is already implementing several of these proposals, including a new language policy requiring the use of professional translation and interpretation services and better training on existing resources. Additional processes and policies are currently being put forward for City Council's approval, including using the existing Audio Lab for translation and developing a portal for residents to request language interpretation services at public meetings. These changes will help advance Lancaster's commitment to expanding equitable access to programs, services, and activities for its many diverse residents.

For guidance on using this and other citizen engagement techniques, or to learn more about customizing solutions for your city, contact Cities of Service at info@citiesofservice.org.