Mindsets Assessment

# Purpose

This tool supports City government practitioners in identifying the mindsets that shape engagements. To learn more, review the Mindsets guide at [engagement-toolkit.phila.gov](https://engagement-toolkit.phila.gov/).

# Instructions

Set aside 30 minutes to review the example and complete the mindsets assessment below. Find a comfortable space to think and prepare to sit with questions about your engagement.

Review the example mindsets table below. Then complete the assessment to identify mindsets in your engagement.

## Example

You’re surveying the Hunting Park community about the design for a new playground in the neighborhood.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mindsets: Closer to equity  Mindsets: Further from equity | Equality  The survey is available online in English. | Equity  The survey is available online in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. It’s also printed and available at local community centers. |  |
| Extractive  You launch the survey after community members communicate that they don’t want the new playground in their neighborhood. | Generative  You launch the survey after it was requested by community members to collect their input anonymously. |
| Government-centered  The survey contains questions that City government has already made decisions about. City staff are also expected to review the survey results on their own to inform other decisions. | Community-centered  The survey contains questions that City government wants input on from the community. You also define a clear decision making process for City staff to review and consider the survey results. |
| Individual  The survey is written at a high reading level. It also doesn’t offer opportunities for community members to ask clarifying questions or request support. | Collective  The survey is written in plain language at a low reading level. You also train survey collectors and community-based organizations to provide support. |
| Reactive  You wait to collaborate with community-based organizations until after failing to receive completed surveys. | Proactive  You collaborate with community-based organizations to collect completed surveys. You plan this in advance because you’ve done so successfully in the past. |
| Scarcity  You don’t have time to collect enough surveys to accomplish your engagement goal. But, there’s a community-based organization engaging the same community. You decide not to collaborate with them because you’re feeling rushed and under resourced. And you don’t want to have to support their work also. Without discussing it with your sponsor, you forgo collaboration. As a result, you duplicate engagement efforts in the same community and may miss your goal. | Abundance  You don’t have time to collect enough surveys to accomplish your engagement goal. But, there’s a community-based organization engaging the same community. You decide to collaborate with them to increase your capacity to collect surveys. And you want to support their work also, so you and your sponsor agree to extend your  goal deadline. As a result, you build a new partnership, improve the community’s experience, and may reach your goal. |

## Assessment

What’s your engagement? Consider a past, present, or future engagement.

Use the table below to consider how your mindsets shape your actions in your engagement.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mindsets: Further from equity | Equality | Equity | Mindsets: Closer to equity |
| Extractive | Generative |
| Government-centered | Community-centered |
| Individual | Collective |
| Reactive | Proactive |
| Scarcity | Abundance |

## Reflection

Do your mindsets tend to move you closer to or further from equity in your engagements?

What did you learn about your individual practices from this exercise? Do they tend to strengthen or weaken your equitable engagement practice?

What did you learn about our institutional conditions from this exercise? Do they tend to strengthen or weaken your equitable engagement practice?

## Takeaway

Mindsets aren’t always obvious, but they’re always shaping your actions. While you may be further from equity in some mindsets, you may be closer to equity in others. Nobody embodies an equity mindset all the time.

Inequity in our engagements is caused by our individual practices and institutional conditions. Becoming aware of our mindsets challenges the inequitable beliefs and thoughts that shape both. Through the Equitable Engagement Collaborative, we advocate for mindsets that help us improve institutional conditions within City government. To get involved, contact [engagement.toolkit@phila.gov](mailto:engagement.toolkit@phila.gov). Note that this resource is only available for City of Philadelphia employees.