Force-Field Analysis
Information Processing: Exploring and Discovering

PROCESS
• Post a T-chart with a topic or goal at the top. On the left side, write “forces for” and in the right side, write “forces against.”
• Members list forces that fall into either category.
• Members may paraphrase or question for clarity.
• Limit each list to about 6 items. Once the list is deemed complete, mark the three strongest forces on either side.
• Explore how the forces against might be made weaker and the forces for might be strengthened. This phase may take the form of dialogue.
• Rate the forces and how feasible it would be to modify them.
• Select one or more on which to work.

ALTERNATIVES
• Assign the first three tasks above to small work groups, then chart and post group results.

cont.
• As a full group, entertain questions of clarification.
• Continue with the process as a full group.

TIPS
• Some forces may legitimately appear on either side of the chart.
• It is usually easier to weaken the forces restraining change than it is to strengthen the helping forces.
• Topics such as to decrease dropout rates, to increase attendance, or to increase student motivation to write might prove challenging, because their complexity exceeds this simple analysis.

NOTES AND APPLICATIONS
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