



Developing Buy-In for Engage and Your Implementation Team

Buy-in is the acceptance and willingness to actively support or participate in something. Understanding how to involve new implementation team members and/or generate buy-in among upper administration for Engage efforts is important. Below are steps to create buy-in.

Identify what you need

Understand what you are hoping to achieve in advance. Are you asking someone to join the implementation team? Do you need funding or support for Engage from the administration? Before presenting an idea or asking for action, consider the following:

- What is most important?
- What is the goal/outcome I'm working towards?
- What do I need this person/entity to do?
- What do I want to see happen or change?

Decide what you can give up.

Make a list of your priorities from most to least important. Separate what you need from what you want. You may need to weigh the short-term goal of accomplishing something now versus the long-term goal or the impact on relationships. Ask:

- What am I willing to give up?
- What can I compromise on?

Lay the groundwork.

If you're trying to gain buy-in for your Engage implementation team or invite a new member, prepare your pitch (or ask) carefully. Create talking points and make clear what is most important (see Step 1 of this toolkit). Share the mission/vision of your Engage team. Prepare facts and data and know the details to ensure that your proposal has credibility.

Understand your audience.

Think about what might motivate or influence an individual or group. Is retention a priority at your university? Discuss how the critical health behaviors addressed in Engage can help lead to retention and student success. Are sense of belonging and student involvement common goals? Talk about how the goals of Engage are to create a community that fosters a sense of awareness, care, and inclusion which are all built on sense of belonging.

Remember to listen and be flexible. Though you will come prepared with a certain set of ideas in mind, you may have to adapt your approach.

What do you have to offer?

To get buy-in you may need to offer something in return. Before trying to persuade or argue, think about what each stakeholder wants, needs, or values. Recognize what you have access to that you can offer to give or trade.

Handle opposition.

Be prepared in case there is pushback or dissent and try to anticipate how you might handle that situation. This goes along with laying the groundwork; if you come ready with facts, data, evidence of prior success, or outspoken support from others you are more likely to be able to address concerns. Remain calm and listen to feedback but do respond and address critiques raised.

Adapted from 'Creating Buy-In from Hagberg Consulting'

Resources

- [Creating Buy-In - Hagberg Consulting - hagbergconsulting.com/creating-buy-in](https://hagbergconsulting.com/creating-buy-in)
- [5 Steps to Create Buy-In With Your Strategic Plan - SME Strategy - smestrategy.net/blog/5-steps-to-increase-buy-in-with-your-strategic-plan-](https://smestrategy.net/blog/5-steps-to-increase-buy-in-with-your-strategic-plan-)