

Literature Review on the Advisors of Policy Makers – How to Use the Proposed Avenues for Reflection to Refine Your Knowledge-sharing Strategy

Knowledge sharing and public policy series

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This brief practical guide is part of a series of documents focused on sharing knowledge in the context of public policy development. All of the documents available to date in this series may be found at www.ncchpp.ca > Projects > Knowledge Sharing.

The tips offered here complement a literature review:

Morestin, F. (2017). *The Advisors of Policy Makers: Who Are They, How do They Handle Scientific Knowledge and What Can We Learn About How to Share Such Knowledge With Them?* Knowledge sharing and public policy series. Montréal and Québec, Canada: National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy. Available at: http://www.ncchpp.ca/181/publications.ccnpps?id_article=1670

In that literature review, we presented questions and observations at the end of each section (in green boxes) to help readers analyze their own contexts and determine the approach to knowledge sharing best suited to their needs.

This practical guide offers a few tips about how to use these green boxes to refine your knowledge-sharing strategy.

What to use:

It may be that not every question and observation offered will be useful in the context in which you wish to share knowledge. Select those that seem relevant to you.

By whom:

- You can select questions and attempt to answer them:
 - By yourself;
 - With your colleagues or work partners;
 - With other public health actors who have previously interacted with the political circle you wish to approach;
 - With advisors with whom you wish to share knowledge (if you have already developed a relationship of trust);
 - With other advisors of policy makers or other actors you know and who agree to be your guides in this political circle.
- Some persons are well placed to answer certain questions, but on the other hand, certain questions are quite sensitive: think carefully about to whom you should pose these questions and how to formulate them, so as not to compromise your future knowledge-sharing strategy.



How:

- To piece together answers to the various questions suggested, you can draw on your own knowledge and/or that of other persons, analyze the website or documents of the governmental organization you wish to approach, participate in public events that it organizes, keep abreast of media coverage of the public policy area that interests you, etc.¹
- This search for information is key to building a relevant knowledge-sharing strategy. However, avoid turning this into an overly formal and burdensome process, especially if you are seeking answers from other persons – you do not want to bother them. Prioritize your questions and do not expect to find precise answers to all of them.
- It is interesting to write down the answers for future reference, without, however, spending too much time polishing your writing, since this will be a simple working document.

When:

- You would benefit from carrying out an analysis of this type whenever you wish to approach a new political circle or new advisors.
- Besides, when one is aiming to influence public policy, immediate success is rare. Often, one must sustain the effort of sharing knowledge over a relatively long period. Moreover, political contexts evolve over time, as does one's understanding of them. Regularly re-reading answers you have recorded at some point, and revising them if necessary, could deepen your reflection and lead you to adjust your knowledge-sharing strategy.

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Information contained in the document may be cited provided that the source is mentioned.

¹ In 2018 we will be publishing another document with more details on how to go about this (based on advice gathered from interviews with Canadian municipal public servants). It will be made available at: www.ncchpp.ca > Projects > Knowledge Sharing.