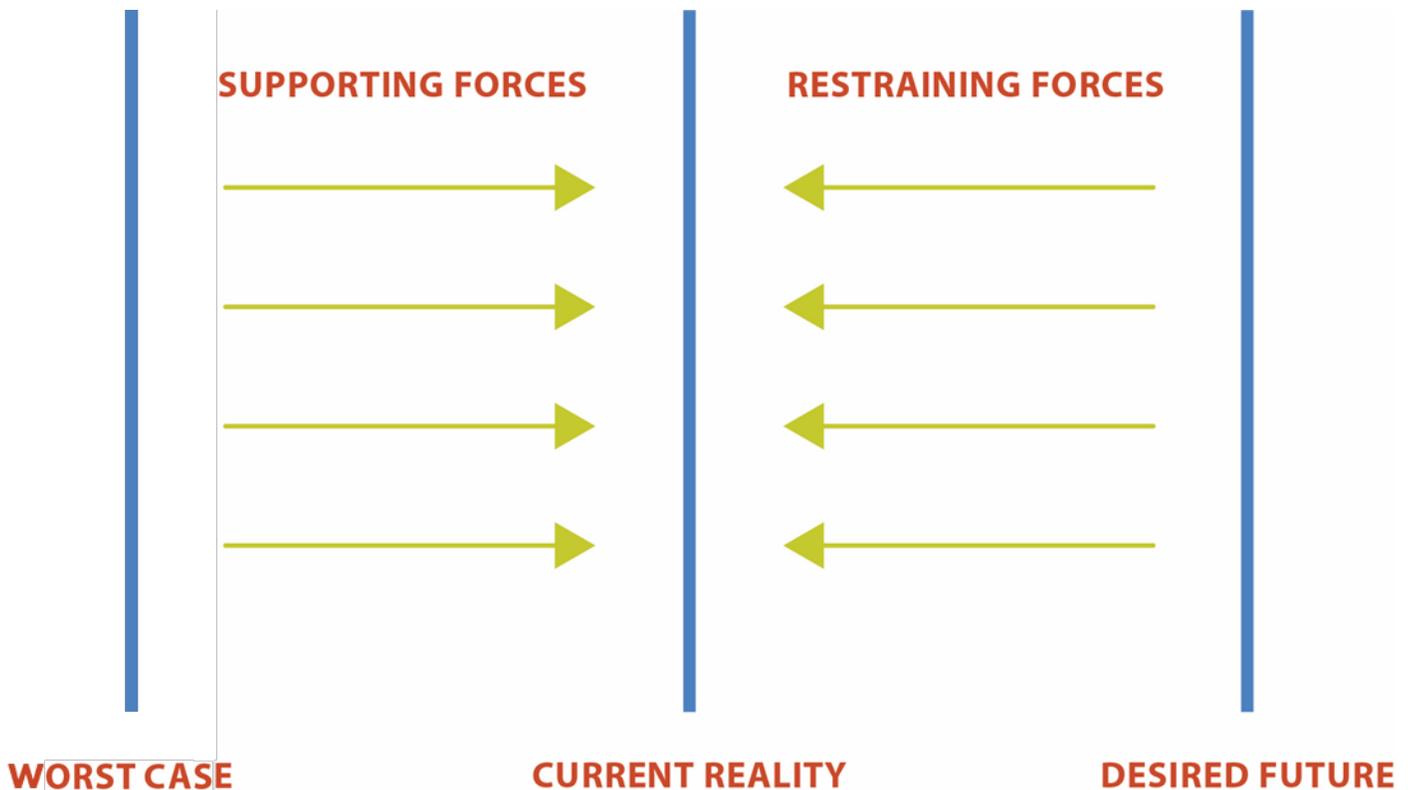


USING FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS TO PLAN STRATEGICALLY

Because of a perception of scarcity, many organizations focus on achieving only short-term goals and objectives. When this perception is combined with a management style that operates by moving from solving one problem or challenge to the next, then it is difficult to be strategic in an organization's planning efforts. These organizations do not understand the importance of acknowledging the context within which planning needs to occur because they have not collectively articulated a desired future that they seek.

Force Field Analysis (FFA) is a tool that can quickly help an organization or in this case the Water Carriers Working Group collectively identify a desired future while highlighting many of the elements it needs to address to achieve that future. During this analysis, appropriate problems and challenges are only identified in the context of achieving that desired future. This tool provides a cursory analysis and does not take the place of an in-depth strategic planning effort.

The FFA template is provided below. It can be used to help the group focus on identifying the different elements during its analysis.





THE ANALYSIS

The framing question we will use when doing this analysis is: **What would it look like if we were able to successfully ensure effective, efficient, and continuous water carrier service throughout the state of Hawaii?**

Desired Future: Initially, the WCWG will brainstorm the key elements of its desired future i.e., an effective, efficient, and continuous water carrier service throughout the State. Almost always, groups work in a vacuum not understanding what they are ultimately trying to collectively accomplish. We need to collectively develop clarity about the desired future we are trying to achieve and this will help each WCWG member understand how their work contributes to achieving that future. When people see their work in the context of what they are trying to collectively achieve, they can identify opportunities to move the group closer to that future. Also, synergy is more possible as members work together to create more efficacy than a single person could create working alone.

Current Reality: Then, the WCWG will brainstorm its current reality. Using a phrase or short sentence, it need to describe what the situation looks like currently.

Worst Case Scenario: Next, the WCWG will brainstorm the worst-case scenario. Using a phrase or short sentence, it needs to describe what the situation will look like if we completely fail to achieve the desired future.

Supporting Forces: The next step involves members identifying things they are doing to move the situation closer to the desired future. Also, this is the time when they can think outside the box about things they can do or opportunities they can take (often with external partners not in the WCWG) to move them closer to their desired future.

Restraining Forces: Finally, the group generates (i.e., brainstorms) a list of things that prevent them from moving their current reality toward their desired future. These are sometimes viewed as problems, challenges, or constraints.

Planning Strategically: If the WCWG has time at this meeting (if not, this part of the analysis will move to the next meeting), it will move to the planning stage of this analysis. That will involve:

- **Desired Future:** From the brainstormed list of the desired future, reduce redundancy (i.e., items that are so similar that they overlap) by clustering like items. Then, select the two or three clusters that really resonate with the group. These are the elements that represent the important core of the group's desired future.
- **Supporting Forces:** From the brainstormed list of the supporting forces, reduce redundancy (i.e., items that are so similar that they overlap) by clustering like items.



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Then, select the one or two clusters that they are already doing that need to be enhanced or strengthened because they can significantly close the gap between the current reality and the desired future. Use the same process to identify the one or two opportunities (with external partners) they need to take that will enhance their ability to achieve their desired future.

- **Restraining Forces:** From the brainstormed list of the restraining forces, reduce redundancy (i.e., items that are so similar that they overlap) by clustering like items. Then, select the one or two clusters to address (e.g., solve) from this list that significantly prevent their organization from achieving its desired future. As a result, problems and challenges are not viewed in a vacuum, but instead are viewed in the context of enabling the group to achieve its desired future.