



LESSON GUIDE 3:

How to Define and Prioritize Your Stakeholders and Determine What Influences Them

This is **Lesson Guide 3** of Paine Publishing's Measurement 101 Curriculum Package. The entire package includes:

- a **Syllabus**,
- a **Reading and Resources List**,
- Six Measurement 101 **Video Lessons**,
- Six Measurement 101 **Lesson Guides** in pdf format to accompany the videos,
- Paine Publishing's **Standards Compliance Curriculum package**
- a subscription to *The Measurement Advisor* newsletter
- access to “**Ask Katie Paine**” monthly online measurement hours

The six Measurement 101 Lessons include:

Lesson 1: **Why Measure?**

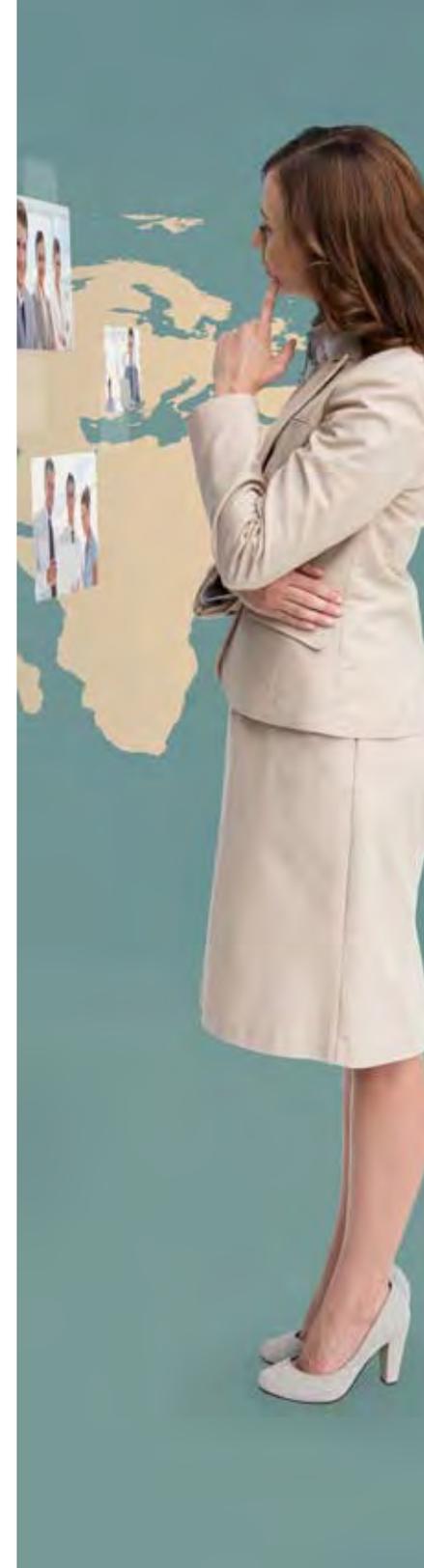
Lesson 2: **How to Set Measurable Goals**

Lesson 3: **How To Define And Prioritize Audiences**

Lesson 4: **How To Define The Right Metrics**

Lesson 5: **How To Select The Right Tools**

Lesson 6: **How to Get Insight From Your Data**





Introduction to Paine Publishing's Measurement 101 Curriculum



Hello! I'm Katie Paine, CEO of Paine Publishing. I've been helping people to design and implement communications measurement programs for more than 25 years. Consider this six-lesson Measurement 101 Curriculum your Personal Navigation System on the road to the perfect measurement program. We take you right through the measurement process—from setting goals to interpreting results.

Welcome to Lesson Guide 3...



How to define and prioritize your stakeholders, and determine what or who influences them.

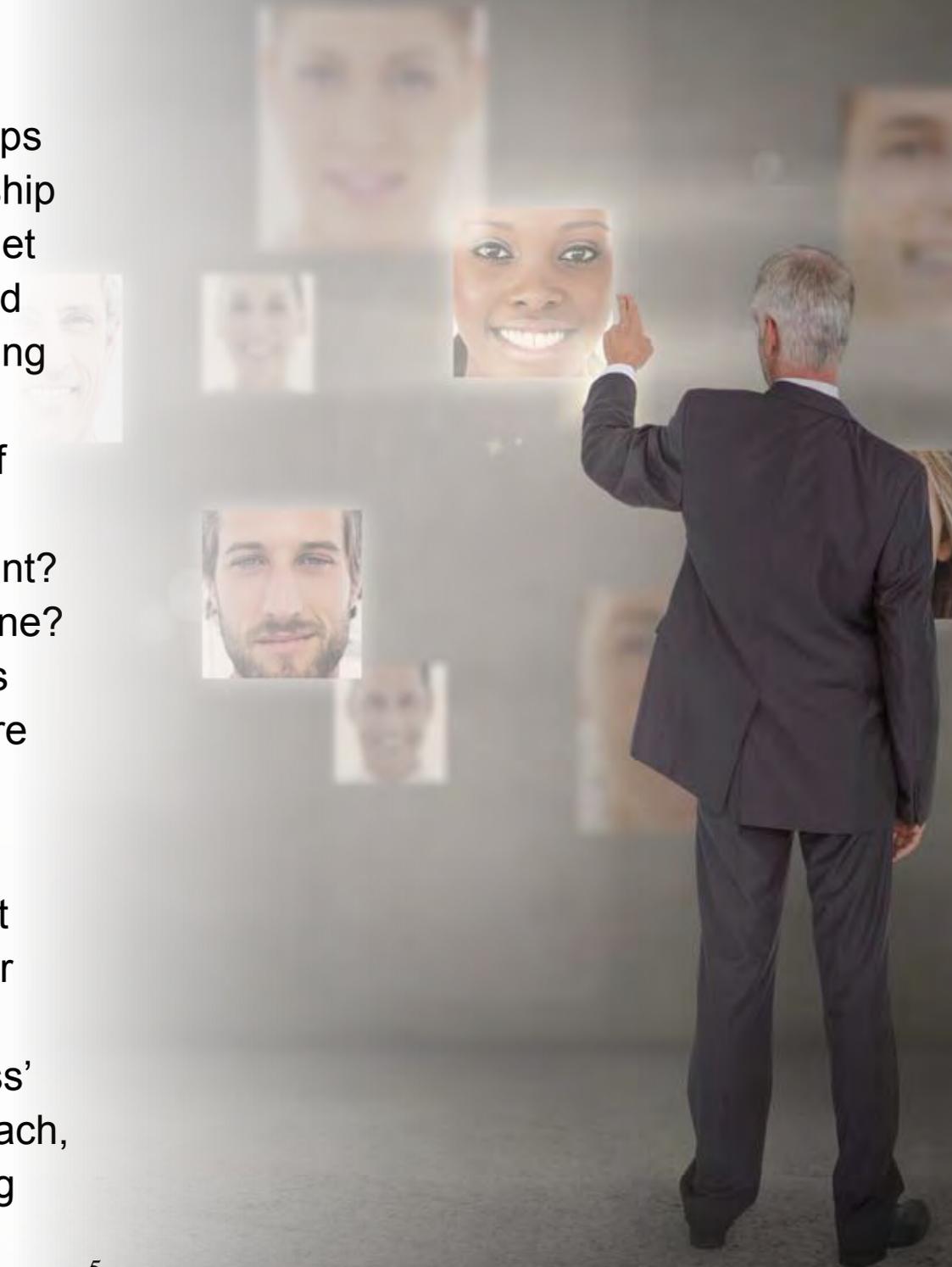
There's never been an organization with enough resources to measure everything or everyone affected by its communications programs. So you need to establish priorities. To do this, start by listing all the stakeholder groups that influence the success or failure of your organization or its mission. There are probably at least a dozen.

Which are the most important?

There are two ways to prioritize this list. One is to think about how having a good relationship with each of those

groups contributes to the success of the organization. For example, a good relationship with local elected officials helps get bills passed or killed. A good relationship with thought leaders or the media helps get your messages out to your publics. A good relationship with your social media following ensures advocacy and a certain level of immunity in the event of a crisis. Which of these impacts is most valuable to you or your organization? Which is least important? Which most directly affects your bottom line? Rank order all the stakeholders and focus your efforts on the top three. To learn more about how to prioritize your stakeholders read [Rawlins, 2014](#).

The second way is to get out the flip chart and colored dots you used in Lesson 2 for setting objectives. List your stakeholders, then call your boss (and, ideally, your boss' boss) into the room. Give them 20 dots each, and ask them to distribute the dots among





the most important stakeholders, most to the most important, fewest to the least important. Use the number of dots to rank order the stakeholders, and concentrate your efforts on the top three.

Where do they get their information?

Now figure out where each of those most important groups go for information: What issues keep them up at night, and who or what do they trust as a source of information? This data may already reside in your customer service, marketing, or market research departments. If it doesn't exist, you may need to conduct a survey to get the answers.

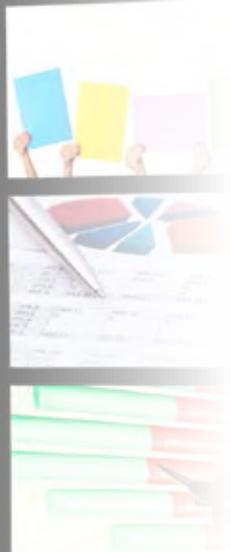
Once you have the data, create and fill in a chart that looks something like this:

Audience	What is the benefit of a good relationship?	What keeps them up at night?	Who or what are their trusted sources of information?	Who or what influences those sources?	What do they think now?	What do we want them to think (our message & positioning)?
CEOs						
VPs of Marketing						
Employees						
Community						
Elected Officials						
Others						

From this chart you can begin to identify the key influencers.

What is influence?

First, we should explain a bit about what influence is, and what it isn't. People are influenced by other people, and some people wield greater influence than others. So marketers and business communicators have been targeting so-called "influencers" or "influentials" for decades. But there is wide variation in what people mean by "influencers"



or group of people who possess greater than average potential to influence due to attributes such as frequency of communication, personal persuasiveness or size of and centrality to a social network, among others. Key Influencers interact with others and those they influence are “Influences:”

Influence is frequently confused with popularity.

If someone has lots of followers on Twitter, they do not necessarily have influence over the audience you are trying to reach. Justin Bieber has lots of followers, but he’s probably not going to influence anyone to change his or her social media measurement system.

The WOMMA has specified that a person or group can only be influential if it has *all* of the following characteristics:

1. **Reach** – Some number of followers or connections.

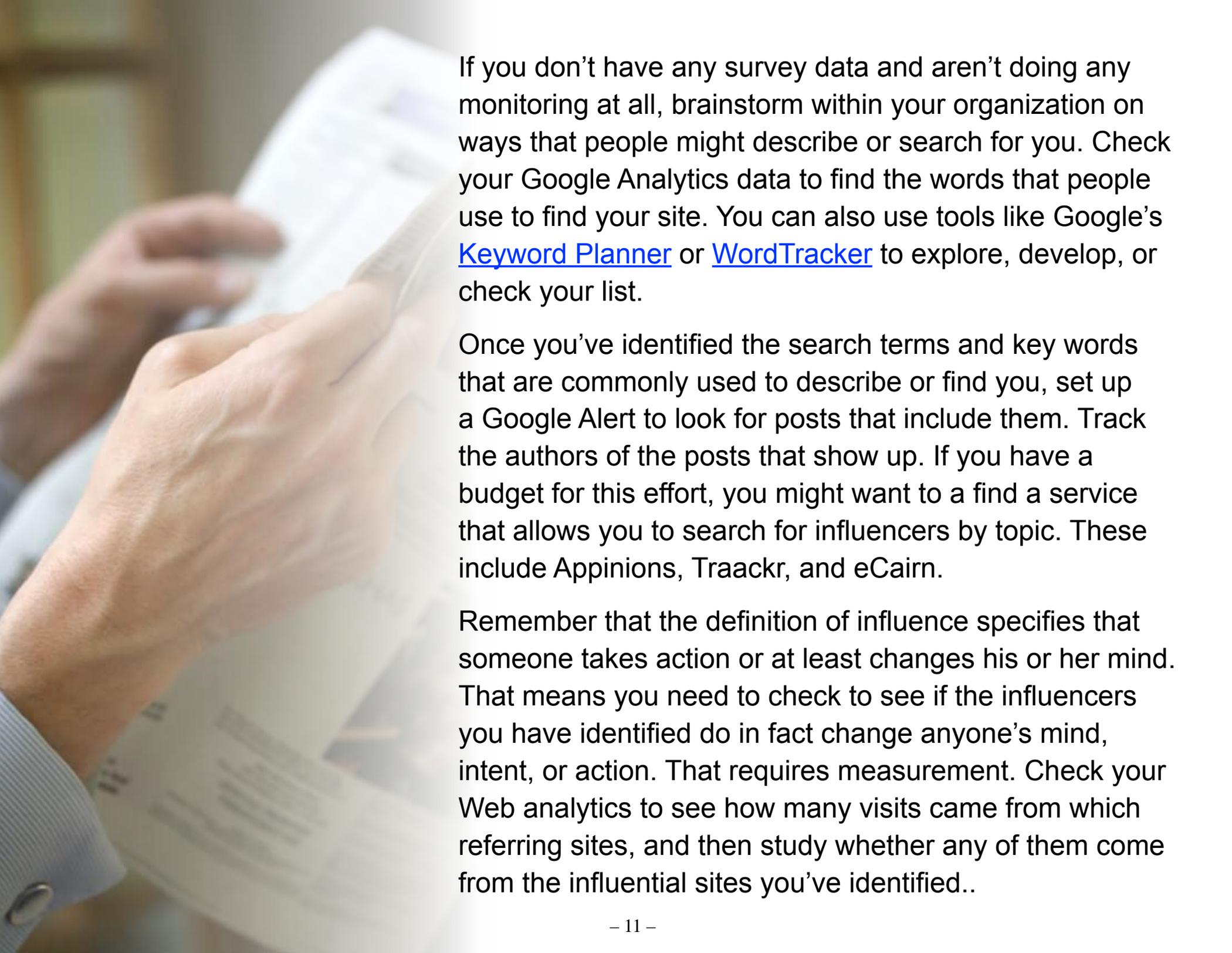
2. **Relevance** – Expresses him or herself about topics that are relevant to your brand or organization.

3. **Frequency** – Expresses him or herself frequently about those relevant topics.

How do I identify my organization's influencers?

The first step in locating your influencers is to check the data you already have. If you've ever done a survey or are about to do one, see if you can find out or ask your stakeholders where and who they go for information. What reliable sources do they turn to?

If you are already monitoring your media coverage or social conversations, examine the previous three months of coverage and identify anyone who has mentioned you more than three times. Someone who is writing about you more than once a month probably has influence on your stakeholders.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a white document. The person is wearing a light blue shirt. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office setting. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

If you don't have any survey data and aren't doing any monitoring at all, brainstorm within your organization on ways that people might describe or search for you. Check your Google Analytics data to find the words that people use to find your site. You can also use tools like Google's [Keyword Planner](#) or [WordTracker](#) to explore, develop, or check your list.

Once you've identified the search terms and key words that are commonly used to describe or find you, set up a Google Alert to look for posts that include them. Track the authors of the posts that show up. If you have a budget for this effort, you might want to find a service that allows you to search for influencers by topic. These include Appinions, Traackr, and eCairn.

Remember that the definition of influence specifies that someone takes action or at least changes his or her mind. That means you need to check to see if the influencers you have identified do in fact change anyone's mind, intent, or action. That requires measurement. Check your Web analytics to see how many visits came from which referring sites, and then study whether any of them come from the influential sites you've identified..

Who are my most important influencers?

To winnow down your list to the most important, rate your influencers according to the following four criteria:

1. **Frequency:** How often do they write about you?
2. **Relevance:** Do they write about topics that are relevant to your mission or stakeholders? Are they producing content that is interesting?
3. **Resonance:** Do stakeholders find the content interesting enough to forward, share, like, or retweet?
4. **Trust:** Do stakeholders actually trust the information that these influencers are putting out there?

What about tools like Klout? Can I use them to measure influence?

No. Services like Klout are misleading because they claim to measure influence, but they primarily measure social media activity or popularity. No existing automated service can accurately tell you who or what influences your stakeholders.

Lesson 3 Study Questions

1. Who are the audiences for your messages? Can you rank them in order of importance?
2. Who are your stakeholders' influencers? List them in rank order of importance. Next to each one, list someone or something that influences those influencers
3. What keywords are most associated with your cause or organization?
4. Once you've identified influencers, what will you ask them to do for your organization?
5. Given your organization's goals, how important is it to track its influence?

Lesson 3 Suggested Readings

Chapters 3 and 8: Paine, K.D. (2011). *Measure what matters: Online tools for understanding customers, social media, engagement, and key relationships*. Wiley, 2011.

http://www.amazon.com/Measure-What-Matters-Understanding-Relationships/dp/0470920106/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1397600758&sr=1-1&keywords=Paine+Measure+What+Matters

Chapter 12: Kanter, B. & Paine, K.D. (2012). *Measuring the networked nonprofit: using data to change the world*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

http://www.amazon.com/Measuring-Networked-Nonprofit-Using-Change/dp/1118137604/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1397600656&sr=1-1&keywords=kanter+and+paine

Rawlins, B. L., (2006). *Prioritizing stakeholders for public relations*. Gainesville, FL: Institute for Public Relations.

http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2006_Stakeholders_1.pdf

What is Paine Publishing?

Paine Publishing is an educational publishing company that helps organizations establish effective, meaningful communications measurement programs that are in compliance with industry standards.

- We publish [*The Measurement Advisor*](#), the newsletter for professional communicators who want data and information to continuously improve their measurement programs and bring standards into their organization.
- We offer measurement education packages that include specific case studies, white papers, presentations, and checklists, on the following topics:
 - [Best Practices and Measurement Standards Compliance](#)
 - [Travel and Tourism Best Practices and Standards Compliance](#)

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