

Force Field Analysis; A method for issue resolution and goal attainment

Stephen Treacy M.S.

Force Field Analysis

The theory:

- On the physics side...
- An object is at rest because the balance of forces acting on it are balanced.
 - When forces that will move the object (driving forces) are increased, the object moves.
 - When forces holding the object in place (restraining forces) are taken away or reduced, the object also moves.

Force Field Analysis

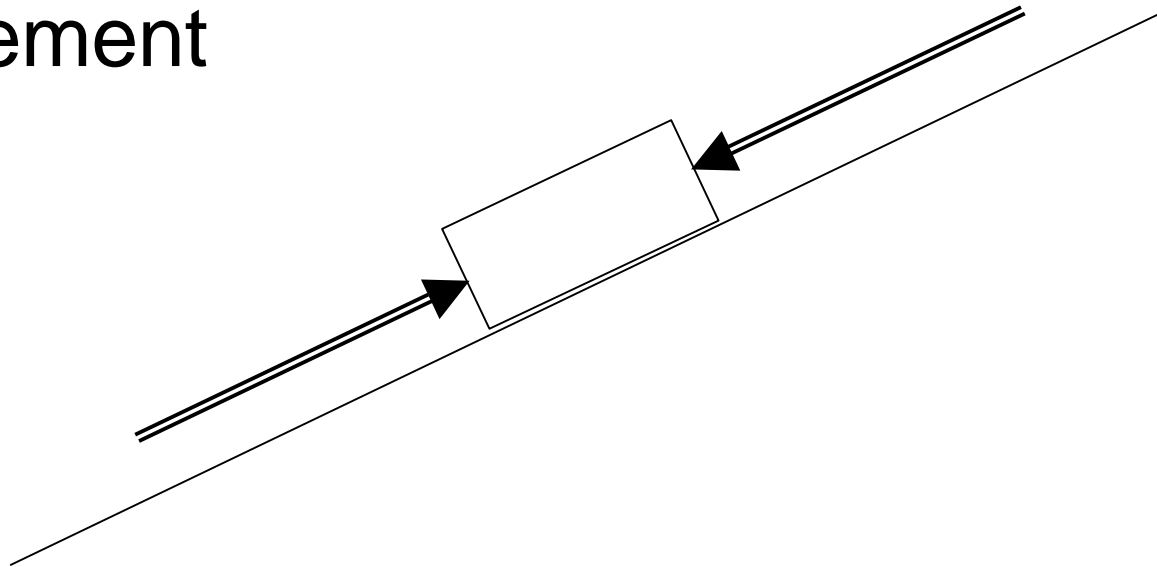
The theory:

- On the physics side ...
- Two ways to create movement:
 - Add driving forces.
 - Remove restraining forces.
- Adding new driving forces may create new restraining forces.
- Removing or reducing restraining forces allows movement to occur with fewer restraining forces created.

Force Field Analysis

The theory:

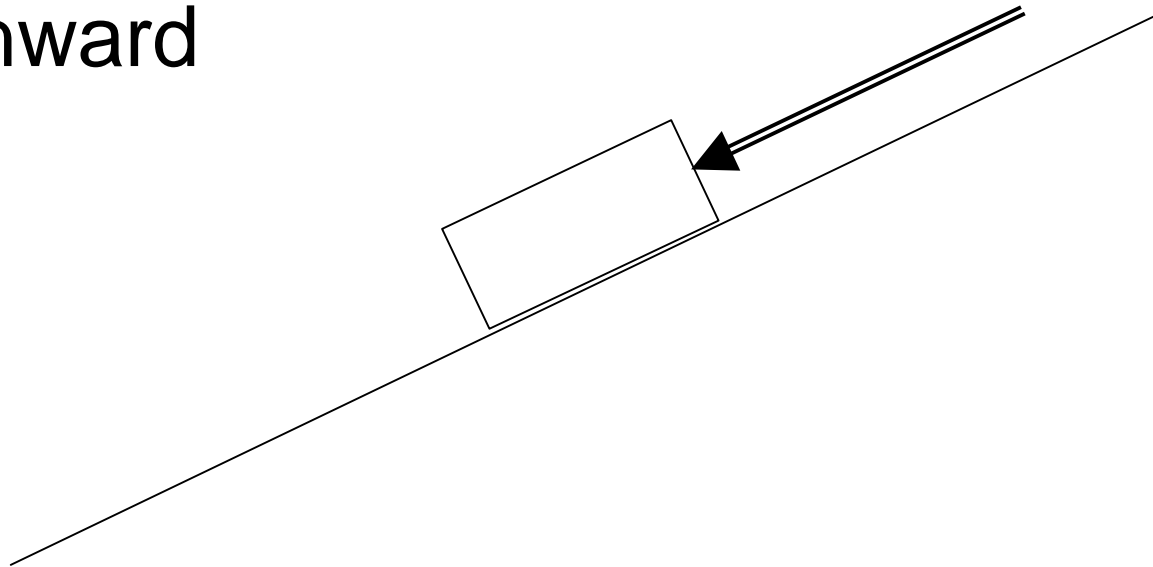
- On the physics side ...
- Example: moving a block up an incline
- With balanced forces, there is no movement



Force Field Analysis

The theory:

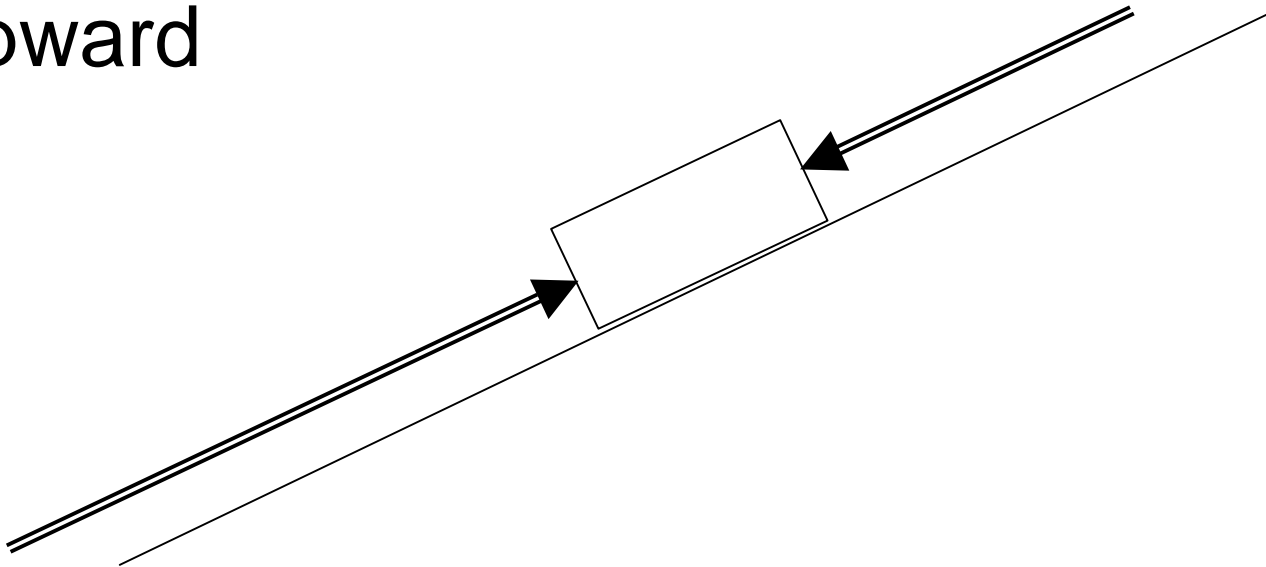
- On the physics side ...
- Example: moving a block up an incline
- Unbalanced forces cause movement downward



Force Field Analysis

The theory:

- On the physics side ...
- Example: moving a block up an incline
- Unbalanced forces cause movement upward



Force Field Analysis

The theory:

- On the human side ...
- An issue is not resolved or a goal is not attained because the forces against issue resolution or goal attainment are balanced. A status quo exists.

Force Field Analysis

The theory:

- On the human side ...
- An issue is resolved or a goal is achieved by increasing or creating new activities to help (driving forces) and/or by removing barriers (restraining forces) that get in the way.

Force Field Analysis

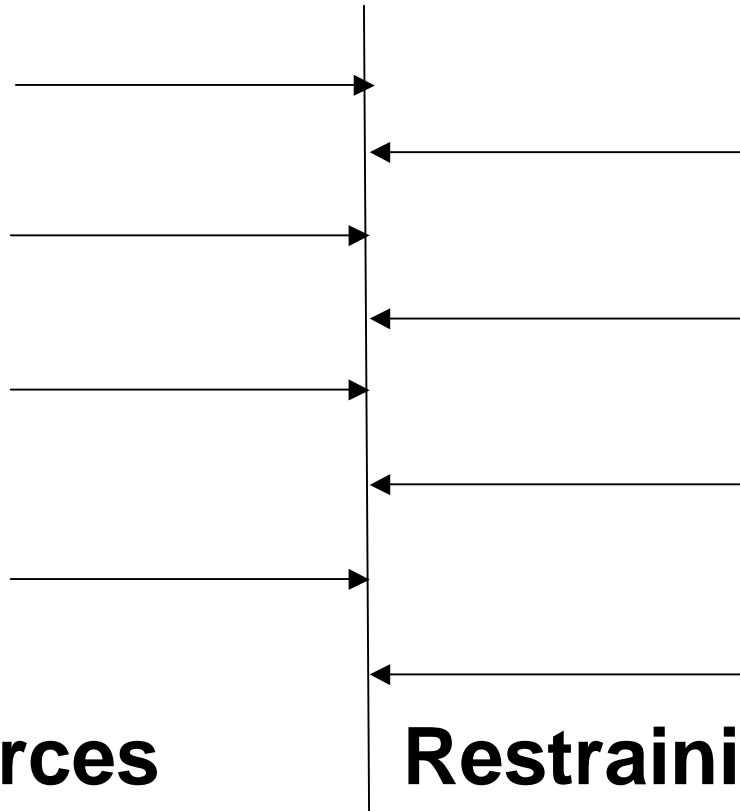
The theory:

- On the human side ...
- Examples:
 - Improving your health
 - Finishing college

Force Field Analysis

Status-quo

Goal



Driving forces

Restraining forces

Force Field Analysis

The methodology in general

- **Steps**
- Draw the field.
- Identify the goal, draw the status-quo.
- Draw and create driving forces.
- Draw and create restraining forces.
- Select restraining forces to remove or reduce.
- Brainstorm actions that remove or reduce those forces. Create a list.
- Prioritize the list of actions, select one, and create an action plan.