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# An investigation into how role play impacts stakeholder relations in large corporate organisations

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## ABSTRACT

This research was necessitated by a deep desire to equip myself and my peers with knowledge on how best to engage stakeholders when traditional communication methods prove to have limitations. At its core, this study sought to explore how role playing as a technique of applied drama could positively impact stakeholder relationships.

This research was a narrative enquiry, comparing accounts from EnviroServ Waste Management (Pty) Limited and Lonmin. The research explored what happens to stakeholder relations when role playing is used rather than when an organisation, in this case Lonmin, opts for alternative means of stakeholder engagement.

Three narrative reports from stakeholders of both organisations were analysed, where it was evident that role play allows for a collaborative approach between diverse stakeholders with varying interests. Analysis of the data revealed that community forums afford participants an opportunity to hear, listen and likely understand that there are multiple ways of perceiving and approaching the same situation. Data further showed that stakeholders are more willing to come up with solutions when they feel included. Additionally, further exploration of the data indicated that it is at times necessary to go against the status quo, and for organisations to try new approaches in order to achieve their objectives.

Based on these findings, it was concluded that large corporate organisations should have an open door policy and consider community forums which utilise role play. Its accommodation within community forums are tangible in the long run, and positively impact on both the bottom line and reputation of the company.



**Key words:**

Stakeholder, Role play, Community forum, Communication, Stakeholder Engagement Strategy