PUBLIC POLICY

**PUBLIC POLICY-MAKING AS A PROCESS:**

**Policy making steps**

Step 1. Problem Identification: Getting Government to See the Problem

A problem is a situation that produces a human need, deprivation, or dissatisfaction for which relief is sought, such as pollution, inflation, crime, poverty, etc. However, only those needs and wants that are articulated by people demanding action become problems eligible for public policy solutions. Government must perceive that a problem exists. Public problems are different from private problems in either the numbers of people affected, the numbers of people directly or indirectly involved, and the amount of resources and type of required for the solution. Most problems, however, have been around for some time, so the policy process takes place within the context of past and existing experience with each problem.

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| Problem ID | Agenda | Formulation | Adoption | Implementation | Evaluation |
| What is the problem? | Where is  the problem  presented? | What are the  proposed  solutions? | What is done  about the  problem? | How does govt.  do what it  decides to do? | Did it  work? |

Step 2. Agenda: Getting Government to Consider the Problem

            The policy agenda is comprise of items which receive serious attention from official policy-makers. Only a small number of needs and wants ever attain a place on the policy agenda of an executive, legislative, or judicial branch of government. Generally it depends on the power, status, membership and other resources of the persons or group who are adversely affected by the problem. A crisis event, a mass movement, or an influential leader may get an item on the policy agenda.

Step 3. Policy Formulation: Getting Government to Consider Solutions

            Courses of action for dealing with public problems must be developed that will be acceptable to official policy-makers. Proposals may be put forward by a chief executive, a legislator, an administrative agency, interest groups, think tanks, individual citizens, etc. Proposals must have a chance of being adopted to be considered.

Step 4. Policy Adoption: Getting Government to Adopt a Solution

            In order for a policy to be adopted, a majority coalition that supports the alternative must be constructed. This depends on the official actors involved, as well as their beliefs, intentions, etc. Adoption will be influenced by basic cultural values such as democracy, freedom, humanitarianism, and material success. Values are guides for evaluating the desirability of goals or action.

Step 5. Policy Implementation: Getting Government to Apply the Solution to the Problem

            The law, rule, or order that results from the adoption stage can be called a public policy. Without implementation there is virtually no effect, but the act of implementation may change the nature of the policy itself. Public administrators are the primary implementors of public policy. Administrative agencies often have considerable latitude in the implementation of public policy; however, Congress has oversight responsibility and the courts have the opportunity to exercise judicial review

Step 6. Policy Evaluation: Did It Work?

            What was the policy content? What was the output, the outcome, the impact? Did it work? To what degree were the objectives of the policy met? To what extent was the problem solved?

WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS DO?

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| Coerce | Persuade | Educate | Strengthen | Rewards |
| Prohibit, compel  Criminalize  Jail  Cease & desist | Register  License, certify  Report  Tax  Investigate  Mediate | Exhort  Educate  Standards  Study, inform  Publicize  Manage  Coordinate | Grants, loans  Equal Protection  Reduce risk  Transfer payments  In-kind benefits | Hire & pay  Contract  Guarantee profit |