IDEA PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

Knowing how to narrow and select ideas from an abundant list is an essential skill of any designer. The idea prioritization matrix functions as a useful activity after a brainstorm to sort and prioritize ideas into four quadrants: quick wins, major projects, fill-ins and time wasters. The matrix is composed of a vertical axis assessing impact and a horizontal axis assessing feasibility with which you plot each idea.

Impact
Relates to the benefits of the outcome and might include increased profits, sales volume, customer satisfaction, improved health outcomes, or any number of other measurements.

Feasibility
What needs to be done to get those outcomes such as funding, equipment, staff, person hours, and more.

Completing the idea prioritization matrix will ensure that you make the most out of the ideas selected as they are likely to be the most high impact and feasible from your options.

OBJECTIVE

The Idea Prioritization Matrix is a practical and simple tool for selecting viable and effective ideas through a critical lens.

WASH-HCD CONNECTION

With a range of possible products, services, campaigns and projects to pursue, it can be difficult to know which ones to select. The Idea Prioritization matrix provides a helpful way to sort and filter ideas for WASH professionals to maximize their impact and efforts.

TIMING

15 minutes

MATERIALS

- WHITEBOARD OR POSTER PAPER
- PENS OR PENCILS
- STICKY NOTES

STEPS

1. **Prepare.** Create a large prioritization matrix on a whiteboard or poster paper.
- Vertical axis = impact (from no impact at the bottom, to the maximum impact at the top)
- Horizontal axis = feasibility (from easy/feasible on the left to infeasible/extremely difficult on the right)

Compile the ideas generated from the brainstorm session and the How Might We activity.

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STEPS

2. **Sort ideas into the appropriate quadrant of the matrix.** First, score ideas based on their impact with 0 for no impact and 10 for maximum impact. Think about the following questions:
   - What effect will this have?
   - Is it the intended impact we want right now?
   - Will the impact be necessary for the future?

Second, score ideas based on feasibility effort with 0 for least feasible to 10 for most feasible. Consider the following questions to help you decide:
   - What will it take to implement this idea?
   - What is the capacity of our team for this right now?
   - What is the cost of this idea?
   - Does this idea currently exist?

3. **Review and select the ideas.** When selecting ideas to develop, focus on the upper left quadrant. These ideas are your "quick win" solutions that are high in feasibility and have high impact. Invest in these ideas as they are relevant, effective, and maximize the efforts of your team.

A. Review the upper right quadrant as well - the "major projects" section. Although these ideas require more effort to implement, they still might still possess value at the present moment or in the future. Assess if they are worth pursuing now or later, and if they are worth the time and cost to execute

B. Worry less about the bottom right quadrant, which are the "fill-ins". These types of ideas can be delegated or dropped, depending on the capacity of your team, because they do not produce remarkable impact.

C. Avoid pursuing ideas in the bottom right quadrant as they are time consuming and produce relatively little impact.

4. **Consider how to evolve quick win ideas.** After filtering the list of ideas, develop the ones from the upper right quadrant. How might you move forward with this idea?

IDEA PRIORITIZATION MATRIX - TEMPLATE

+

10

"quick wins"

"major projects"

IMPACT

"fill ins"

"avoid pursuing"

0

–

0

10

+

–

EFFORT