

Prioritization Matrix

What is it and how can it help me?

When embarking on a quality improvement effort or making a decision, it is sometimes difficult to know where to start. A prioritization matrix is a brainstorming tool that organizes ideas by impact and difficulty.

A prioritization matrix:

- Narrows activities allowing you to get the most important tasks done first
- Provides clear direction when there are multiple solutions to a problem
- Focuses quality improvement efforts when there is little time and limited resources

How to use this tool:

1. Bring together members of your team and identify your desired outcome at the top of the page.
2. Brainstorm ideas or changes that could help you achieve your desired outcome. Rate each idea by level of difficulty and impact, writing each in the corresponding box (level of difficulty vertically, level of impact horizontally).
3. Once all ideas are on paper, identify the ones that are simple yet high impact.
These may be the best place to start (though you can start with whichever strategies work best for you).

Examples:

Two examples of how to use this tool appear below: One for Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) programs and the other for family planning projects. Review the example below that best aligns with the setting in which you work.

TPP PROGRAM EXAMPLE

Desired outcome: Increase recruitment and retention of youth and families

Strategies for achieving the desired outcome:

Difficult	<p>Compel community stakeholders (e.g., school board, public) to view education on positive youth development as a worthwhile investment</p> <p>Select and implement a different effective program that is more relevant to community needs</p> <p>Recruit and hire more facilitators (so facilitators have more bandwidth to engage participants)</p>	<p>Increase implementation partner's capacity to retain youth</p> <p>Create referral network for medical services</p> <p>Increase awareness of the program by developing a robust communication campaign</p>
Simple	<p>Encourage youth to recruit peers (e.g., offer recruitment incentives)</p> <p>Make it easier for parents to be involved (e.g., offer sessions during non-work hours and virtually)</p> <p>Make sessions more fun and engaging</p> <p>Better prepare facilitators to meet youth needs (e.g., provide training on supportive services available)</p>	<p>Provide training for facilitators on recruitment and retention best practices</p> <p>Provide incentives for participants to continue with the program (e.g., resumé support, fun activities, gift cards)</p> <p>Continuously solicit youth feedback on program and materials</p>

FAMILY PLANNING PROJECT EXAMPLE

Desired outcome: Increase access to contraception

Strategies for achieving the desired outcome:

Difficult	Change public attitudes about contraception Reduce stigma Reduce misinformation Increase awareness of contraceptive methods	Make all methods free to all Change scope of practice laws
Simple	Promote availability of contraceptive services at the clinic (e.g., through social media) Make educational materials more informative and easier to understand	Expand availability of telehealth appointments Offer online appointment scheduling Provide transportation to the clinic Assess reproductive goals of all clients, regardless of reason for visit to the clinic
	Low Impact	High Impact

Prioritization Matrix

Fill out your own desired outcome and potential strategies for achieving this outcome in the prioritization matrix below.

Desired outcome:

Strategies for achieving the desired outcome:

Difficult		
Simple		
	Low Impact	High Impact