

# Criteria Weighting Decision-Making

## MEETING ENGAGEMENT TOOL

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### Description

Criteria weighting is a tool to compare proposed alternatives quantitatively. Groups can rate each alternative using criteria that are relevant to a project and ultimately determine which solution best meets those criteria.

### Participants

No limit to the number of people that can rank alternatives.

### Process

1. Establish criteria against which participants will rate the possible solutions. This can be done by a small group of experts, or in a brainstorming session with stakeholders.
2. Assign weights to the criteria by importance. The most important criteria will have the highest weight. This can be done using brainstorming, a subcommittee, multi-voting, or another tool. In this example, "Cost" has the most "weight," so it is the most important criteria. Criteria may have the same weight as another criterion in this example.
3. Give each participant a ballot. Ask participants to score each alternative for one criteria. The best alternative will have the highest score.
4. Once each ballot is turned in, add the scores for each alternative, and multiply that score by the criteria weight.
5. Repeat this process for each criteria.
6. Tally the score for each alternative. The highest score is the chosen solution.
7. Ground-truth the solution with the group.
8. Develop action plans and implement the alternative with the highest total.

## Benefits

- This method gives a quantitative score for the alternatives so there is no question which alternative is the best one according to the people who voted.

## Considerations

- Choose the criteria carefully.
- Ensure that people understand that the best alternative for each criteria has the highest score.
- If the final solution is not what the group thinks is best, the criteria may not be correct.

## Debrief

- Does the answer resonate with the selection you think is best?
- Were the criteria correct?
- Was the most important criterion weighted the highest?
- If you rated something else higher than the winner, would you like to share with the group why it is better?

## Materials Needed

- Weighted Criteria
- Ballots

## References

- “How to Decide with Criteria and Weight: Sources of Insight” at [sourcesofinsight.com/how-to-decide-with-criteria-and-weight](https://sourcesofinsight.com/how-to-decide-with-criteria-and-weight).

## Sample ballot

Options		House A	House B	House C
Criteria	weight	Score each House 1, 2 or 3 with 3 being the best for each criteria Multiply score by weight		
Bedrooms	2			
Schools	1			
Total Score				

**Sample ballot with scores**

Options		House A	House B	House C
Criteria	weight	Score each House 1, 2 or 3 with 3 being the best for each criteria Multiply score by weight to get the total score		
Bedrooms	2	3 $\times 2 = 6$	2 $\times 2 = 4$	1 $\times 2 = 2$
Schools	1	3 $\times 1 = 3$	1 $\times 1 = 1$	2 $\times 1 = 2$
Total Score		9	5	4