



## Choosing Ideas

### Sticking Dots

This technique uses a simple procedure to allow members of a small group to vote directly for their idea preferences. The procedure involves giving each group member a fixed number of votes (in the form of self-adhesive, colored dots) and allowing them to allocate the votes in a pre-selected manner, or any manner they desire. The steps for this technique are:

- A list of previously generated ideas is displayed on flip chart sheets or cards that are pinned to a large wallboard.
- Each group member is given a sheet of small, sticking dots corresponding in number to ten percent of the total number of ideas listed on the board. If 50 ideas are listed, then each person is given 5 dots (numbers are only approximate).
- The group members individually evaluate the ideas by sticking the dots next to the ideas they prefer. The dots can be allocated in the way the group prefers. For example, all dots can be placed on one item, only one dot per item, three dots on one idea and 2 on another, and so forth.
- The vote tallies are counted and the ideas receiving the greatest number of votes are selected for further analysis or implementation.

A major advantage of this technique is the direct participation of group members in the selection process. In addition, if each member is given a different color, it makes it easier to conduct a discussion on why people voted the way they did. On the other hand, voting conformity can occur. Another disadvantage would be the use of block voting by members who might wish to force their preferences.

### The Options/Criteria Worksheet

When you have a number of options that you need to match with certain criteria, the Options/Criteria worksheet allows you to select the standards against which to compare your options.

For example, you need to replace your foreman and you need to decide among your current, five employees. You are looking for a foreman that is Loyal, Capable, Respected, Punctual, Honest.

**Procedure:**

After you have selected your options, write them in the first column of the worksheet. Then write the criteria in the blank spaces across the top. You can use as many or as few columns as you need.

Complete the worksheet by going down each column, and, using the rating scale, rate all options against one criterion at a time. Complete the criteria for all options before moving to the next column. Otherwise, if you have a favorite option, it will get a higher score if you go across the worksheet. By going down the columns, you will get more honest ratings.

After filling in all the boxes, total the scores for each option.

| <b>Options/Criteria Worksheet</b> |                 |         |           |          |        |               |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|---------------|
| <u>OPTIONS</u>                    | <u>CRITERIA</u> |         |           |          |        | <u>Totals</u> |
|                                   | Loyal           | Capable | Respected | Punctual | Honest |               |
| 1. Wayne                          | 5               | 4       | 5         | 3        | 5      | 22            |
| 2. Casey                          | 4               | 3       | 5         | 2        | 2      | 16            |
| 3. Rick                           | 3               | 4       | 3         | 3        | 3      | 16            |
| 4. Beth                           | 5               | 3       | 2         | 4        | 4      | 18            |
| 5. T.R.                           | 1               | 5       | 4         | 1        | 3      | 14            |

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|               |        |               |
|---------------|--------|---------------|
| RATING SCALE: | 1=Poor | 4=Very Good   |
|               | 2=Okay | 5=Outstanding |
|               | 3=Good |               |

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**THE OPTIONS/CRITERIA WORKSHEET**

| OPTIONS             | CRITERIA      |  |                      |  |  | Totals |
|---------------------|---------------|--|----------------------|--|--|--------|
|                     |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| 1.                  |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| 2.                  |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| 3.                  |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| 4.                  |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| 5.                  |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| 6.                  |               |  |                      |  |  |        |
| <b>Rating Scale</b> | <b>1=Poor</b> |  | <b>4=Very Good</b>   |  |  |        |
|                     | <b>2=OK</b>   |  | <b>5=Outstanding</b> |  |  |        |
|                     | <b>3=Good</b> |  |                      |  |  |        |

# PRIORITY GRID

When you have a number of options that you want to compare, you can use the Priority Grid. The grid is used to rank options according to their importance.

For example, you have determined that a strategic goal is, “to increase ranch revenues by 10%”. You have identified several options for increasing revenues including: Improve the Quality of Your Major, Existing Product; Reduce Your Livestock Feed Cost; Develop a New Enterprise to Increase Revenue; Evaluate Your Labor Efficiency; and Purchase New Equipment for Speed and Efficiency.

To prioritize the options:

1. Write the options to be weighed in the column labeled “Options”. You are not limited to five options. You may have more or fewer.
2. Work down the first row under the column labeled “Choices”, and decide which is more important, Option A or Option B. Write the letter of your choice in the top left box.
3. Decide which level of importance to give your choice, 1= important; 2=more important; 3=much more important. Write that number in the box.
4. Continue to go down the first row on the left, then down Row B, and so on, until you have filled in all the boxes.
5. When you are finished, find all the boxes marked “A” and total the scores. Write the total on the line under the column labeled “Sum of Scores”. Do the same for all the other options.

## PRIORITY GRID

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| SUM OF<br>SCORES | OPTIONS                      | CHOICES            |
|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 3                | A. Improve Existing Product  | <u>A.</u>          |
| 4                | B. Reduce Feed Costs         | B2 <u>B.</u>       |
| 10               | C. Develop New Enterprise    | C3 C2 <u>C.</u>    |
| 2                | D. Evaluate Labor Efficiency | A2 B1 C2 <u>D.</u> |
| 0                | E. Purchase New Equipment    | A1 B2 C3 D2        |

**Scale:**

1= more important

2= a little more important

3= a lot more important

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My No. 1 Option is    Develop New Enterprise  
 My No. 2 Option is    Reduce Feed Costs  
 My No. 3 Option is    Improve Existing Product  
 My No. 4 Option is    Evaluate Labor Efficiency  
 My No. 5 Option is    Purchase New Equipment

# PRIORITY GRID WORKSHEET

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| SUM OF SCORES | OPTIONS  | CHOICES   |  |  |  |  |
|---------------|----------|---|--|--|--|--|
| _____         | A. _____ | A.  |  |  |  |  |
| _____         | B. _____ | <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> B.   |  |  |  |  |
|               |          |   |  |  |  |  |
| _____         | C. _____ | <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> C.  |  |  |  |  |
|               |          |   |  |  |  |  |
| _____         | D. _____ | <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> D. |  |  |  |  |
|               |          |   |  |  |  |  |
| _____         | E. _____ | <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>    |  |  |  |  |
|               |          |   |  |  |  |  |

**Scale:**  
 1=More Important  
 2=A Little More Important  
 3=A Lot More Important

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**My No. 1 Option** \_\_\_\_\_  
 is

**My No. 2 Option** \_\_\_\_\_  
 is

**My No. 3 Option** \_\_\_\_\_  
 is

**My No. 4 Option** \_\_\_\_\_  
 is

**My No. 5 Option** \_\_\_\_\_  
 is