



Importance Difficulty Matrix

Design Method . Evaluating

The Importance Difficulty Matrix is a method used to prioritise a set of ideas – whether this be product concepts, strategic actions or personal/team tasks. It works by bringing your ideas together and analysing both their potential value and feasibility. The end result is a diagram that indicates what your priorities should be, allowing you to develop a creative plan of action.

1. Assemble a set of ideas that you wish to prioritise, such as iteration ideas. Ensure each idea is presented on a separate sticky note (digital or physical).
2. On a large sheet of paper (or a digital whiteboard), draw out a 2 axis chart. Label the horizontal axis 'Importance' and the vertical axis 'Difficulty'.
3. Begin by placing ideas onto the chart and ranking them in order of importance. The most important should be placed on the far right and the least important on the far left. If working in teams, discuss each idea before placing it on the chart.
4. Go through each idea and rank them in order of difficulty. The most difficult should be placed at the top and the least difficult should be placed at the bottom. When doing this activity, ensure you only move ideas up and down along the vertical axis.
5. Split the chart into a quad and add the labels Low ROI (top left), Strategic (top right), Quick Wins (bottom left), and No Brainers (bottom right). Then use the labels and quads to help you to set priorities and create an action plan.