Decision Matrix

Strategy | Adapted decision aid | Portfolio version 1.0

A transparent prioritization aid comparing options across customer value, strategic fit, evidence, business value, feasibility, readiness, and risk.

Problem it solves

Complex product decisions become dominated by intuition, hierarchy, or one-dimensional scoring without exposing assumptions and trade-offs.

When to use it

- Several credible options compete for investment.
- Stakeholders use different decision criteria.
- The rationale must be documented and communicated.
- Evidence confidence differs across options.

When not to use it

- The decision is mandatory or binary with no meaningful alternatives.
- Weights are chosen to manufacture a preferred answer.
- Scores are treated as objective truth.

Inputs

- Decision statement
- Alternative options
- Criteria and definitions
- Weights
- Evidence and confidence
- Constraints and risks

Process

1. Frame decision - Define the choice, decision owner, deadline, and consequences.

2. Identify alternatives - Include realistic options such as defer, stop, or learn more.

3. Define criteria - Select a small set of independent, decision-relevant criteria.

4. Set weights - Make relative importance and rationale explicit.

5. Score with evidence - Record scores, confidence, sources, and disagreement.

6. Test sensitivity - Check whether reasonable weight or score changes alter the ranking.

7. Decide and document - Use the result as input to judgment and record the final rationale.

Decision points

- Are the options genuinely distinct?
- Are criteria overlapping?
- What evidence supports each score?
- How sensitive is the ranking?
- Why might judgment override the numeric result?

Outputs

- Decision matrix
- Evidence notes
- Sensitivity analysis
- Decision record
- Follow-up evidence plan

Success measures

- Decision transparency
- Stakeholder understanding
- Decision turnaround
- Reversal due to hidden assumptions
- Evidence coverage

Portfolio application

I use decision matrices to structure roadmap and solution trade-offs while keeping confidence, risk, and qualitative judgment visible.

Common pitfalls

- False precision.
- Double-counting related criteria.
- Ignoring confidence.
- Choosing weights after seeing scores.
- Letting the matrix replace accountability.

Skills demonstrated

- Prioritization
- Trade-off analysis
- Facilitation

- Evidence evaluation
- Decision communication
- Risk awareness

Interview discussion prompts

- When should a score not determine the decision?
- How do you choose weights?
- How do you expose confidence?
- What alternatives should always be considered?