

Options Comparison Worksheet

A structured approach to comparing your alternatives

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How to use this worksheet

This worksheet helps you compare up to four options against a set of criteria that matter to you. It is most useful once you have identified your options (Generate Options) and are weighing them against each other (Compare Options). Use it alongside Step 4 (Weigh the Options) of the Decision Cycle questions.

Scoring guide: rate each option 1-5 for each criterion (1 = very poor, 5 = excellent). Multiply each score by the criterion weight to get a weighted score. Total the weighted scores for each option. The highest total among the options that meet every must-have is your Front-Runner - but always check it against your instinct.

PART 1 Options

List up to four options you are comparing. Include the option of doing nothing if it is available.

Option	Brief description
Option A	
Option B	
Option C	
Option D	

PART 2 Success Criteria and Weights

Carry forward the success criteria you set in Step 1, with the priority you gave them, and mark any that are must-haves. Assign each a weight from 1 (low importance) to 5 (critical). Include how well each option keeps your choices open if circumstances change.

Success criterion (from Step 1)	Must-have?	Weight (1-5)	Notes

PART 3 Scoring Matrix

First, check each option against your must-haves and drop any option that fails one. Then copy your criteria from Part 2 into the Criterion column. Score each option 1-5 for each criterion. Multiply the score by the weight and enter the result in the option column (e.g. a score of 4 with weight 3 = 12). Add the columns.

Criterion	Wt	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Total weighted score					

PART 4 Front-Runner

The option with the highest total, among those that meet every must-have, is your Front-Runner. Use the questions below before confirming it.

Which option has the highest score? Does this match your instinct?

If your instinct points to a different option, what does it know that the scores do not capture?

What would need to be true for the Front-Runner to be the wrong choice?

What is the strongest alternative, and what would make you switch to it?

Your Front-Runner (the option you carry forward to Step 5: Assess the Risks)

Source: the Decision Cycle looks for a front-runner that meets your criteria, rather than a perfect answer, following Simon, H. A. (1955). A behavioral model of rational choice. Quarterly Journal of Economics, 69(1), 99-118.