



Working with Groups:

Decision-Making Matrix

When a group has been discussing an issue for some time and is having difficulty in making a decision, this technique often helps bring clarity to the discussion by identifying and stating the group’s “must haves” vs. “wants.”

Instructions:

1. Identify the problem or issue.
2. Draw a large grid on a white board or a large piece of paper using the example on the left.
3. List criteria you want to use to evaluate alternative solutions on the left side. Some of the criteria will be “musts,” and some will be “wants.”
4. List possible alternative solutions across the top of the page.
5. Place an “X” where you feel alternatives and criteria match.
6. Which alternative received the most matches under “musts”? That is likely to be the group’s preferred alternative.

Reference: University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Family Community Leadership Handbook, (2004).

Alternative Solutions

Criteria to evaluate alternatives					
MUSTS					
WANTS					

Source: *Working with Groups: Generating Ideas, Making Decisions, and Enhancing Communication*, by Phyllis I. Schoenholz and Cheryl A. Burkhart-Kriesel, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, EC478, 2008, The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture. Adapted with permission.