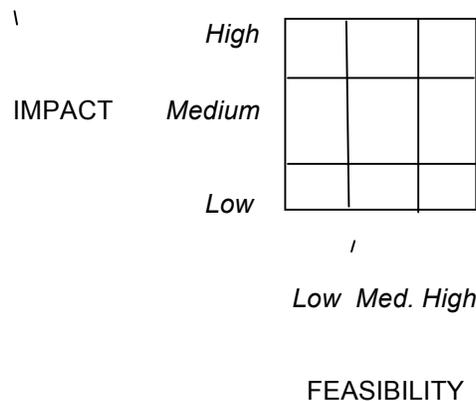


Impact/Feasibility Assessment

Directions

The Impact-Feasibility Grid is a tool that can be very helpful in leading a group through a decision-making process about possible projects or other issues. First lead the group in a brainstorm of a list of possible action steps. Record each on the flip chart and ask a group member to, simultaneously, record each idea on an individual sticky note, using a fat marker and abbreviating as necessary.

Draw a large box filling up one page of flip chart paper. Draw two vertical lines and two horizontal lines inside it, so that it is divided into nine equal-sized boxes, making a grid.



Label the left side of the box “Impact” and mark the bottom square “low” , the middle “medium” and the top “high.” Label the bottom axis of the box “Feasibility” Mark the left square “low,” the middle “medium” and the right square “high.” Use the sticky notes you just generated, and guide the participants in deciding which of the nine boxes each belongs in.

For each project, ask:

What will be the *impact* of the project? In other words, how much will it matter? Consider a wide range of benefits.

What is the *feasibility* of the project? In other words, How possible is it in our situation? Consider a wide range of factors such as financial, human, etc.

The purpose of completing this grid is to make the group's thinking visible. After completing it, encourage the group to stand back and look it, questioning their assumptions and moving any sticky notes in light of the new thinking. Questions you might pose to the group include:

- Now that we've put all the possible ideas up there and you can see them in comparison to each other, are there any that you think should be moved?

- Are there ways that we could change or combine any of these ideas that would move them to a more positive position on the grid?
- Are any of these especially time sensitive, or are there other factors we should consider?

End by selecting the top three ideas, based on those that will have the highest impact and are the most possible to accomplish.

This Technique in Action

I use this technique regularly in local community Vision-to-Action forums and in a multitude of other settings, from staff meetings to personal decision-making. I have found that it is an excellent way to gather ideas and evaluate them systematically, while minimizing the power of individual personalities in swaying the decision. I usually allow an hour and 20-30 minutes for this exercise, but I have been able to accomplish it in less time on occasion. Participants continually comment on how surprised they are at their group's success at moving from a bunch of vague concepts to a prioritized list of three options within such a short time.