

IPM (idea prioritization matrix)

Field of application	#Idea selection #Idea prioritization
Resume / Brief description	<p>When working in an innovation process, the selection of the best ideas is a stage as important as the generation one.</p> <p>Once a good amount of ideas has been generated, using the IPM Matrix is an easy and effective way to select the most suitable of them, to take to the next phase. It's a good tool to use after a first screening action has been applied to the first bulk of ideas generated in an ideation process. The semi-finalist ideas can be placed in this matrix by rating both their potential impact and their viability. Although the variables assigned to the two axis have been proved to be very useful, they can be changed according to the specific needs and conditions of the situation.</p> <p>The visual nature of the tool makes it easy to evaluate the convenience of adopting one idea or another.</p> <p>Category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Analysis• Product design• Service design• Process design
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entrepreneurs• I&D teams• Innovation teams• Students• Community
Objectives	The main objective of IPM is to facilitate the process of selecting the best ideas to execute.
Requirements	<p>Material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flipchart• Markers• Large stickers• IPM format on a digital board (Google Jamboard, Microsoft Board, Miró or other) <p>Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40 to 60 minutes
Implementation - Overview	<p>The main steps are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pre-select the ideas to take to the matrix2. Define the evaluation criteria (the two variables to be assigned to the axis)3. Draw the matrix.4. Rate the ideas following the two selected criteria and place them accordingly into the matrix5. Analyze the final result



Implementation - Guidelines

1. Pre-select the ideas to take to the matrix. This means to apply a tool to reduce the quantity of ideas to evaluate to between 6 and 15. This applies when an intense ideation phase has been conducted and we have a big amount of ideas (in some cases more than 100).

The pre-selection of ideas can be done by:

- Identifying and combining very similar ideas
- Conducting a more open screening action. It can be voting or, better yet, to apply a tool that preserves ideas not so popular but with possible high potential (The WakeUpBrain toolbox is a good source of this kind of tool).

2. Define the evaluation criteria.

The IPM uses two axis to classify ideas. The facilitator must assign a criteria (variable to measure) to each. Usually, this two criteria or variables are:

- Idea potential. This means: How well the idea solves the problem? What good consequences will this idea bring to us? How does this idea fit our specific situation?
- Viability. This means: How easy is to execute the idea? How much effort will require to take it to reality and get those promised results?

3. Draw the matrix.

Using the selected variables, it's time to draw the matrix and name each axis. In a big and physical session, the axis can be drawn in a board or marked in a wall using masking tape. For the digital version, a digital board (Google Jamboard, Microsoft board, Miro or other) can work well.

4. Rate the ideas following the two selected criteria and place them accordingly into the matrix

To do this, take an idea and ask the team how well this idea rates on the first criteria. For example, if the objective of the innovation process is "To find ways to better protect our product during transportation" we have to evaluate how well each proposed solution gets this objective. The more the idea accomplishes the objective, the higher in the corresponding axis the idea will be placed. If the idea is: "To use metal boxes instead of cardboard ones", the team must decide how well this kind of box protects the product during transportation and put the idea far from the center in accordance.

Then the idea must be rated in the second criteria. The idea will advance in the direction of the second axis according to how well accomplished in this variable. If the second criteria is "viability", the idea will advance proportionally to the ease of execution. This movement means that the idea will travel inside the matrix and finish in one of the four quadrants.

A good tip is to first find the extreme ideas. This means to find the idea rating the higher in each criteria. Then place those ideas on the extreme of each axis. This will make the evaluations process easier for the rest of the ideas.

If you are working over the wall, you can use paper cards or Post-its to place and arrange the ideas onto the matrix. The same logic applies if you are using a virtual board. If you are working in a personal format, you can number the ideas and place just the number on the matrix as you don't have too much space.

5. Analyze the final result.

At first glance, the better ideas will be those who rated the among the best on both criteria. These ideas must be taken into account as, probably, are really good solutions. Nevertheless, ideas getting particularly high qualification on just one of the axis, could receive a second thought. You can ask the team: "This idea has an incredible high potential but is very difficult to execute. Is there any way to execute it in a easier way?" This action stretches a little more the creativity of the team and can provide a new insight on how to rescue a promising solution.



<p>Example of application:</p>	<p>During a program designed to help entrepreneurs to reinforce their business model, each company did an ideation work that produced a good amount of ideas. The IPM matrix was included in the delivered material to let the participants to classify and prioritize their ideas. The booklet provided a table to write down the pre-selected ideas including just the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Idea number - Title - Short description <p>The vertical axis was named "Strategic impact" and the horizontal one "Easiness". The first one meaning how well the idea gets the desired results and the second one meaning how easy it was to execute the idea from the entrepreneur perspective.</p> <p>Once the participant filled the table, was asked to invite other collaborators to discuss and assign values to each idea. The corresponding number of each idea was placed on the matrix accordingly the qualifications obtained on each criteria.</p> <p>An extra time was dedicated to an activity named "Rescue team". This activity invited participants to look at the ideas placed on other quadrants difference to the right-upper one and find one that could be moved to it modifying that idea in some way. This activity let the participants avoid the elimination of an idea that they liked very much, but was difficult to execute or had low strategic impact.</p> <p>The IPM was one of the most useful and intuitive tools used in this program</p>
<p>Templates, Graphics for download</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MATRIZ MEPI</p>
<p>Additional format/references</p>	<p>https://belowthesurface.dk/toolbox/2020/4/10/idea-evaluation-matrix http://www.creativeeducationfoundation.org/facilitation_tool/evaluation-matrix/</p>

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