

Priority matrix

Which ideas should you pick out to test first?

Why use a priority matrix?

On creating a driver diagram (see step five), teams can sometimes feel uncertain about where to begin and what to test first. The priority matrix is a visual tool to help improvement teams decide which change ideas to test first and how and where to focus their energies. As well as supporting the planning of improvement work, it can also help to communicate why a particular change idea has been chosen to test ahead of others.

The boxes in a matrix

A template of the priority matrix is on the next page. The four boxes indicate the priority of each task.

As well as exploring the impact and effort for each change idea, teams should also consider which ideas require a PDSA approach and which can just be implemented without the need for testing. On the priority matrix they could denote this with a 'T' for 'Test' and 'I' for 'Implement'.

1. Quick wins These should be done first. They require little effort (little time/input from people) and have a high impact.	2. Major projects These should be done next. They require more effort (many people working together on this task for many weeks/months) and will have a high impact.
3. Fill-ins These should be done last (if at all). They require little effort and have an anticipated low impact.	4. Thankless tasks These should not be done at all. They require high effort and have an anticipated low impact.

Based on The Eisenhower Matrix (1953)

Prioritising ideas to test out

Which ideas should you pick to test out first? Write or type in the template below.

