MODERN WORKING

Practices to create value in the modern working environment.

Prioritisation is one of the most impactful workshop patterns. Normal collaboration applies in that it should be a facilitated event with holistic attendees appropriate for your prioritisation level. It should also be a regular event, with an appropriate cadence for the level of work. Location can be in person or remote, and effective collaboration tools should be used accordingly (analog or digital whiteboard).

PRIORITISATION SESSION

Facilitating an Impactful Session

1 Decide the Level
Work should only be prioritised alongside like-sized work. Decide what level you will be prioritising, and stick to that.

2 Show All of the Work
Put all of the work to be considered for prioritisation on the wall (digital whiteboard if remote) with a card for each work item.

3 Decide the Criteria
Decide what criteria you will use to decide what is higher or lower. The criteria can be anything the group deems valuable. This is critical as it is the basis for every conversation to follow.

4 Apply a Mechanism
Depending on the number of items, apply MoSCoW (Must, Should, Could, Won't) first, and then Stacked List to each of the MoSCoW values. Continue to refer back to the criteria for each decision. At the end of the mechanic, there should be a single, stacked list.

5 Look at the Shape of the List
Once there is a single, stacked list, give attendees a moment to take a look at the list and think through what it means to them and the organisation.

6 Iterate
After reflecting, ask the group what should change, again, based on the criteria. Iterate through changes to the list until the group is happy, or you are out of time.

Follow the Rules

- There can only be one number one
- The loudest voice does not win
- Everyone in the room has a say
- It is critical to align to criteria
- Priority is not sequence
- If in doubt, refer to the first rule

Pro Tips:

The true value in prioritising is in the shared understanding it generates for why something is a priority. These steps are designed to generate that; as such, each step is quite important, as are the rules. These can be published for the attendees beforehand, so they are prepared.

- Some examples of criteria other than dollars are risk reduction, maintaining compliance, and customer satisfaction.
- There are many mechanics, and you can experiment to find the ones that work best. MoSCoW and Stacked List are our go-to's.
- Encourage quick decisions for the first cut with the mechanic—you can always go back and iterate.
- Do not let "this has to be done first" influence priority (priority is not sequence)