

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 75

The power of voting in a workshop is not the count but the discussion of why you voted in that way ...

Evaluate ideas and options...

"Free and fair discussion will ever be found the firmest friend to truth." Unknown

Criteria >	1. Can achieve in time	2. Political feasibility	3. Keeps up morale	4. Achieves goal	TOTALS	
Ideas >						
A. Seek additional funds from HQ	1	1	4	4	10	
B. Ask Project Mgr to stretch existing funds	4	4	2	4	14	
C. Ask Finance if they have any spare funds	2	1	4	4	11	

How can you make evaluation more powerful?

I ran a flexible thinking workshop recently and once again, people said "the power of discussion" was a key learning point. Why should discussion be so powerful? Let's explore...

In the course I demonstrate the use of the Criteria Matrix technique, one used quite commonly by groups to choose between various options. Above I show a simplified matrix based on the challenge of "How to get more funds for the project?"

The scoring is based on how well the idea matches up to the criteria, in this case:

Excellent = 4; Very good = 3; Good = 2; Poor = 1

Typically the process is:

- Those involved in choosing give a rating for each option or idea against each criterion, e.g. Mary rates idea "C" as Poor against Criteria 1, Zane rates it Excellent and Joe rates it as Excellent too
- The rating is averaged and a score given i.e. $1 + 4 + 4 = 9 / 3 \text{ people} = 3$
- The average rating against each criterion is added to give a total

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- The option with the highest total score is chosen (Option “B” in our example) and we have an objective result

Or do we? Actually what we have is the objective result of a subjective process, or what I call “Subjective objectivity”.

SO

What we really need to understand is why Mary rates idea “C” as Poor in terms of criteria 1 and Joe and Zane rate it as Excellent? So I will ask Mary to explain her reasons and then ask the others their reasons. Often, this reveals information that people were not aware of and so they may change their rating.

If they don’t then you can flag it as an area for further discussion, or to obtain further information. Carrying on regardless may well leave one party walking out of the room with no ownership of the chosen option – have you ever seen that happen?

If you have time and the decision is important then you might discuss all ratings. However, pragmatically I have people discuss only when there is a difference of two in their ratings.

ACTION

Try this approach and see if it works better for you. If you would like instructions on using the matrix, please e mail me at hi@yesand.co.uk.

TO CLOSE

It’s nearly Christmas so I’ll close with a seasonal joke from my son (aged 9). In Australia this week, Santa Claus was seen hopping over houses in his sleigh. Asked why, he explained his sleigh was pulled by his trusty helper, Kangaroodolph. How would you rate that joke?

Have a great festive season and may the next year bring all you wish for.

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