# Impact/Effort Matrix

## What is it?

An Impact/Effort matrix is a very easy-to-use tool to help you to decide which opportunities or ideas to focus on first when you have collected lots of potential solutions to solve a problem (see also **Collaborative Problem-Solving** guidance).

Benefits at a glance….

- Plotting opportunities on an Impact/Effort matrix will help you to see more easily which ones you should prioritise

## When to use it?

When you want to agree and prioritise options in order to come up with an Action plan.

## How to use it?

For each improvement opportunity you have identified, you will need to consider:
***Impact*** **-** how much will the improvement contribute to the benefits you want to achieve and the delivery targets you are proposing?
***Effort*** - how difficult will it be to implement the opportunity? How long will it take and how much resource will be needed?

The answers to these questions will determine which quadrant the opportunity sits in:

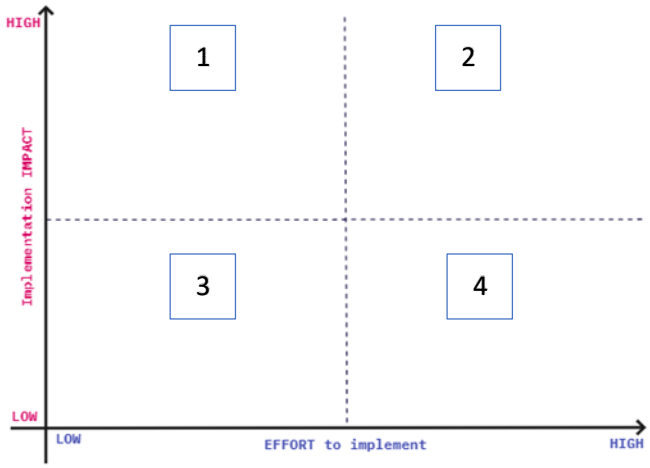


*Figure 1: Impact/Effort matrix template showing the different quadrants*

**Quadrant 1: High Impact/Low Effort**
These are Quick Wins, as they will be able to be implemented fairly quickly and easily and bring good benefits. They will also motivate the team to seek further improvements. Just do them!

**Quadrant 2: High Impact/High Effort**
These are more complex improvements, eg. involving a large number of people or cut across a number of departments or functions. They may be technically difficult to implement or require funding or a significant policy change. However, given the potential benefits you may want to investigate, these as longer-term or strategic improvements.

**Quadrant 3: Low impact/Low Effort**
These may be a lower priority than your Quick Wins but may be ones to move onto afterwards.

**Quadrant 4: Low impact/High Effort**
These are your thankless tasks that it is best to put to one side. There will be plenty of other opportunities to work with before you have to consider if these are ever going to be worth doing.

Having prioritised your ideas, you should use them to create an Action plan - each with an owner and implementation timescale.

## Tips

- Ensure you involve everyone that was involved with brainstorming the ideas and discuss each opportunity in turn.
- If the number of opportunities is overwhelming, focus on the process step that is most in need of improvement.
- Keep your desired Future State at the forefront of your mind when considering impact. How much does each opportunity contribute to that? Use the data you gathered when analysing the current state to help you assess this.