

Using your values/ success criteria to assess options

This tool helps you to make decisions and cut through when things are going round in your head.

First work out what's important

Before using it, you will need a list of your values and/or success criteria (see our resource 'Your values matter – how to work them out and live them'). A simple way to do this is to list all the things that matter to you in making a decision and then rank them.

Key steps

- Use post-it notes to brainstorm your responses to 'what's important to you in life?' 'what's important to you in making this decision?'
- Put 1 idea on each post-it note
- Ranking them using paired comparison – take 2. Look at them both. Decide which one is most important.
- Place that one in front of you at the top and the next one under it.
- Take another – compare it with the first one and the second one in turn. Place it where it belongs (if it's the most important place it at the top and move the others down)
- Continue until you have placed all of them. You may want to write your list out or take a photo.

Tip: You may want to create 2 lists – just adapt this to suit what works for you.

- 1) Things that are important to you in life (your values)
- 2) Things that are criteria in making this decision

How to assess your options against your values and success criteria

In my experience it helps to get the thoughts out of our heads and on to a piece of paper and sometimes seeing things expressed in numbers can bring clarity. I suggest:

- Asking someone else to hold the paper, ask the questions and fill it in for you (so that you can focus on the option in mind).
- Decide on a rating scale – e.g. 1-10 (high is good!)
- Decide whether you want to add any additional weighting to your factors
- The other person asks you to rate each option based on the extent to which it satisfies this criterion (e.g. on a scale of 1-10 how well does this option satisfy your need for growth and learning?)
- You can then add additional weighting to any factors which are particularly important to you and multiply the score (so if you added 50% a score of 8 would become 12)
- Finally add up the totals – it helps to display this somewhere for a few days (perhaps on your wardrobe) to allow it to brew. Often this allows the distinctions between the options to become clearer and the key issues emerge.

