

# Prioritisation in Not for Profit Environments

## The Impact Matrix™ from 4-consulting

In the private sector, priorities are set based on specific notions. These are often framed within the answer to a few simple questions, such as:

1. What will generate most profit for the shareholders?
2. What will provide the best long/short term return for the company/investor/stakeholder?
3. How will this benefit the individual or manager or company the most?

In the public and not for profit sectors, the decisions regarding prioritisation are based upon less obvious cornerstones. In these instances, profit is not the currency, but service or satisfaction of the overall raison d'être is usually the governing factor.

To add a further dimension, these organisations are often involved in a wide diversity of projects, which can make it very difficult to compare one with the next or like with like. It therefore becomes very difficult to identify those activities that have the most strategic value.

4-consulting has developed a tool to help clients to review their activities and projects more effectively and to assist them to prioritise these where necessary. This tool has allowed the organisation to justify these projects to their Board, and in some instances, to justify why they are not undertaking certain activities. To do this, it has been necessary to look at the more fundamental purpose underpinning the organisation itself.

By reviewing the impact of the project upon the underpinning objectives of the organisation, a strategic score can be calculated for each project. These scores can be very simple, or a more rigorous approach can provide more robust results. In the process, the basic metrics of the organisation can be reviewed and assessed against the overall activities of the organisation. This often gives useful insight into the true value of the metrics to the organisation.

This strategic score can initially be viewed in isolation. However, they can be put into greater context by being plotted against an estimated cost for the activity or project. Once all of the projects are plotted, it is possible to identify those which:

- ✓ will deliver quick wins (against overall objectives)
- ✓ should be ranked further
- ✓ can be justified as “end of year spend” and
- ✓ those which should be re-assessed.

Based upon a robust mathematical model, this tool is flexible enough to work for all types of organisation, as long as they have some indication of their strategic objectives. More robust information can be modelled if the organisation is able to provide effective metrics for their objectives, as these can provide further insight into the strategic value of the activities and projects.



After a rapid-fire few hours of facilitated discussion, your organisation will benefit from:

- a quick and effective comparison of unlike projects
- a transparent decision making process
- a highly visible presentation of the value of your major activities and projects
- a shared appreciation of the strategic value of each project
- benchmarking of existing projects
- prioritisation of future activities
- highlighting of areas where more investment might leverage a higher strategic return

For more information about how the **Impact Matrix™** could be used to focus your organisation, please email [Ralph.Leishman@4-consulting.com](mailto:Ralph.Leishman@4-consulting.com).

