**Purpose:**

To help select the best alternative from a number of options through the use of a set of appropriate criteria

 **Directions:**

1. Prepare a table as below, with the left hand column listing all of the available options.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Options | Criteria 1 | Weighting | Subtotal | Criteria 2 | Weighting | Subtotal  | Criteria 3 | Weighting | Subtotal | Total |
| **Option A** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Option B** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Option C** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Option D** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Option E** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. The heading for the first column should be the name of a criterion on which you intend to judge the options.
2. The second column should be headed 'weighting'. In this column, provide a weighting for this criteria, to enable the relative importance of the different criteria to be incorporated into the decision making process. The simplest way to do this is to enter '1' for fairly important, '2' for important and '3' for very important.
3. The third column should be headed 'subtotal'. This is used for recording the score multiplied by the weighting.
4. Repeat these three columns as many times as you have criteria on which to judge the options.
5. Work through each option in turn, rating them all against the first criteria. Again, keep the scoring simple, perhaps '1' for very poor, '2' for poor, '3' for neither poor nor good, '4' for good and '5' for very good.
6. Repeat this step for all of the other criteria.
7. Calculate the subtotals by multiplying each score by the appropriate weighting and then add up the totals for each option.
8. The option with the highest score is the one that you should choose.

**Additional Information:**

If several options achieve similar scores, you can either revisit the weightings or the scores, or put together a more in depth decision table, with more detailed criteria.

It is best to prepare decision tables in a spreadsheet as this enables you to change weightings and scores easily and use formulas for totalling.