TEMPLATE 15 · PRIORITISATION

2x2 Prioritisation Matrix

Score value and effort against agreed criteria, plot the results, and make the hard calls the chart makes visible.

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VALUE ↑

HIGH VALUE · HIGH EFFORT
Big bets
Worth doing, but not all at once. Phase them, fund the first stage and set a review gate.

HIGH VALUE · LOW EFFORT
Quick wins
Do these now. Then check: are they really low effort, or just underestimated?

LOW VALUE · HIGH EFFORT
Money pits
Stop or don't start. Find the sponsor and agree the exit.

LOW VALUE · LOW EFFORT
Fill-ins
Batch, delegate or automate. Never let them crowd out the big bets.

← EFFORT (HIGH TO LOW)

HOW TO RUN IT

01 **Agree the criteria first**, before anyone sees the list. Use the defaults on the right or adapt them.

02 **Score alone, then together.** Each person scores value and effort 1–5. Discuss gaps of two points or more.

03 **Plot the averages** on the matrix. Write the number, not the name, to keep it legible.

04 **Decide by quadrant**, and record a decision for every item: do, phase, delegate or stop.

05 **Check capacity.** Total the effort of everything marked "do". If it exceeds what you have, cut again.

COMMON TRAPS

- **Everything lands top-right.** Force a spread: no more than a third of items can be quick wins.
- **Effort is underestimated.** Compare it with similar past work, not with the plan.
- **The loudest voice scores.** Score privately first, every time.

DEFAULT SCORING CRITERIA · SCORE EACH 1–5

CRITERION	1 · LOW	3	5 · HIGH
VALUE			
V1 Strategic fit Moves a stated priority	Unrelated to our priorities	Supports one priority	Essential to a top priority
V2 Financial impact Revenue, margin or cost	Negligible	Noticeable in a unit's results	Material at group level
V3 Customer or risk Experience or exposure	No one would notice	Some customers benefit	Fixes a major pain or risk
EFFORT			
E1 Cost Cash and external spend	Within existing budgets	Needs approval	Needs a major business case
E2 Time To first real benefit	Under a month	One to two quarters	Over a year
E3 Complexity Teams, systems, dependencies	One team, no dependencies	Several teams	Cross-organisation, new capability

OTHER USEFUL AXES

Impact × Confidence
For innovation bets, where evidence matters more than effort.

Attractiveness × Ability to win
For choosing markets or segments.

Importance × Urgency
For leadership agendas and personal workload.

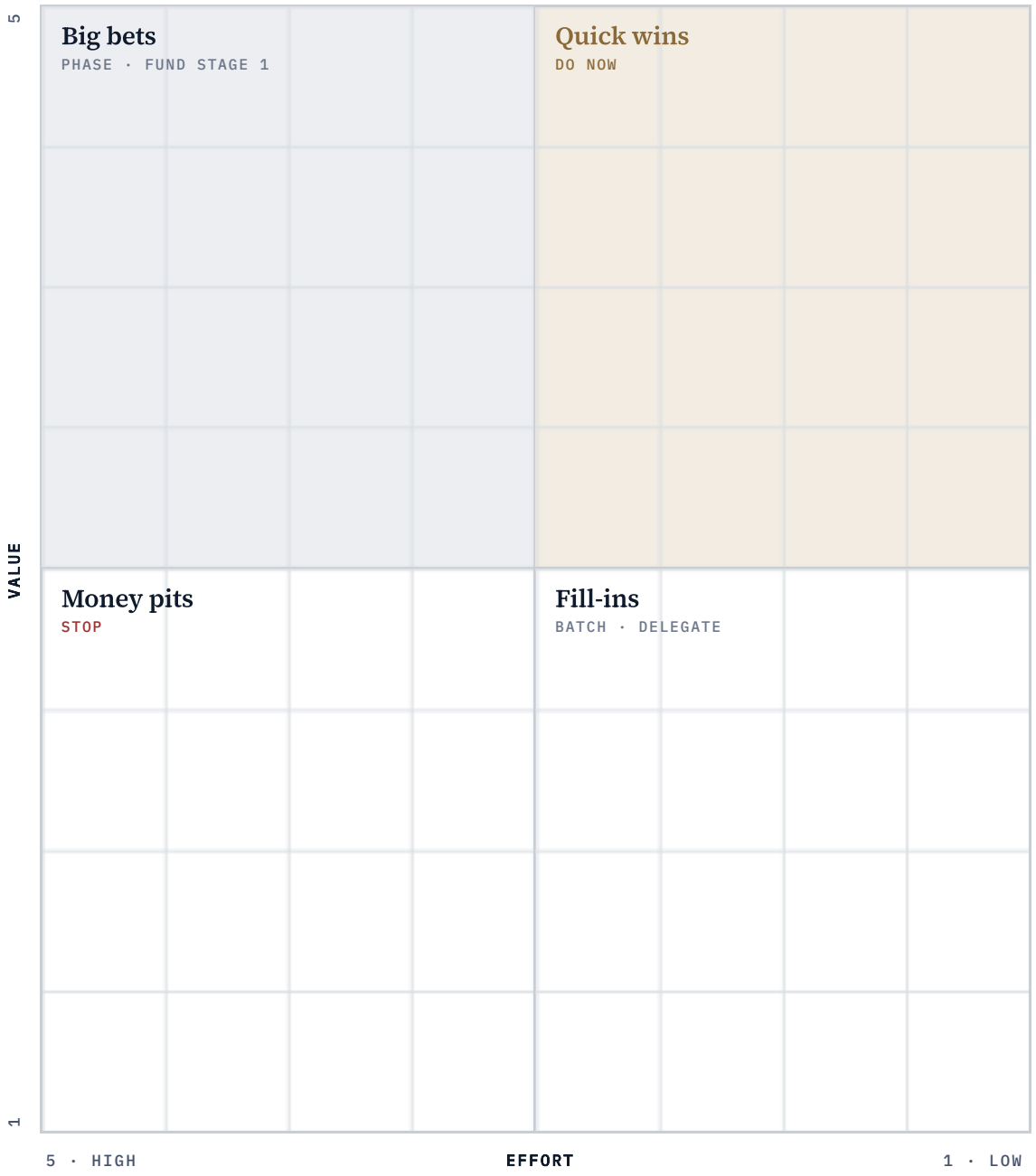
Risk × Likelihood
For a risk register that drives action.

Prioritisation matrix

PORTFOLIO / DECISION

DATE

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#	ITEM	V1	V2	V3	VALUE	E1	E2	E3	EFFORT	DECISION
01										
02										
03										
04										
05										
06										
07										
08										
09										
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Value = average of V1–V3. Effort = average of E1–E3. Decision: Do, Phase, Delegate or Stop.