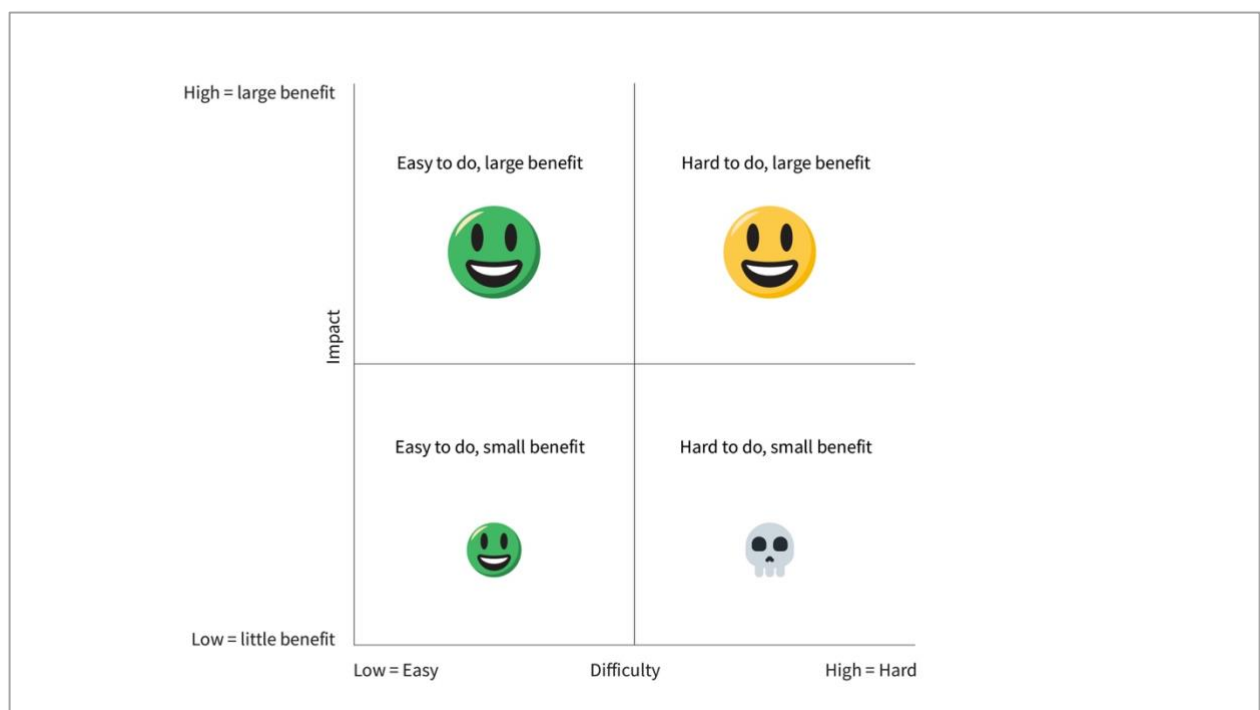


## What Is a PICK Chart?

The PICK chart is a tool we can use to prioritize and select the options based on their impact and how easy they are to do. The PICK chart gets its name from the fact that we group our ideas into four categories that we label P, I, C, and K. These letters each stand for a word. P is for Possible, I stands for Implement, C is for Challenge, and K is for Kill.



As you might guess, these four categories represent different degrees from “let’s do this” to “let’s definitely not do this.” PICK charts are useful when we need to prioritize our ideas and identify quick wins.

## The Steps to Creating a PICK Chart

There are five steps to creating and using a PICK chart. But before we start, we’ll need to have a list of ideas, strategies, or options for action. We’ll use these to evaluate priority and create our chart. It’s important to keep in mind that we don’t use the PICK chart directly to come up with ideas. We use it to organize the ideas after we’ve come up with them.

This is important so that we keep an open mind when we're generating ideas by not immediately ranking them. If we think "that is definitely doable" or "that will never work" at the brainstorming stage, we introduce bias and limit our thinking.

### **Step #1: Drawing the Chart**

Once we have a list of ideas or proposed actions, the first step is to draw a simple two-by-two chart with an X and Y-axis. The vertical, or Y-axis, represents the impact or benefit from this idea. We label the bottom corner "low impact" and the top of the chart "high impact."

The horizontal or X-axis represents difficulty in taking the action or putting the idea into practice. We label the value at the bottom corner of the chart as "low difficulty" and the value at the far-right edge of the chart as "high difficulty."

Then we divide this chart into four quadrants by drawing horizontal and vertical lines down the middle. Each of the four quadrants represents a pair of values. The first quadrant is the one on the bottom left, representing the "low difficulty, low impact" ideas. These ideas are those we can easily do, but whose benefit may be small.

Next there are the "low difficulty, high impact" ideas. These are also easy to do but have a greater benefit, so we want to prioritize these higher.

For the third category we will stay in the "high impact" row but slide to the right into the "high difficulty" column. These are more challenging but offer a higher return for our effort so we should seriously consider them. Finally, we drop down the "high difficulty" column to the "low impact" row. These are the ideas that are both difficult and have limited payback and should be removed from consideration at this time.

Next, we label each of these boxes Possible, Implement, Challenge, and Kill or just the letters P, I, C, and K if you prefer, as a reminder of what each quadrant represents.

### **Step #2: Organizing the Ideas**

Now we can take the second step, which is to organize our ideas by placing them in the box with the appropriate category. We do this by arranging post-its on a flip chart or a wall as we discuss which ideas have the better return for their effort.

### Step #3: Creating Priority Zones

Once we have put all of our ideas into the box corresponding to the P, I, C, and K categories, we still need a way to prioritize them. The third step is to draw diagonal lines to create priority zones. The general rule is to have between three and five priority zones in a PICK chart.

We start from the bottom left to the top right of the chart. As we can see, the items on the left side of the diagonal line include the Implement, Possible, and Challenge categories while the right side includes the Kill, Challenge, and Possible ideas.

We divide the chart into two equal halves, the “action zone” and “ideas zone.” We’ll want to prioritize and plan to do the items on the action list. We will keep a record of the items in the ideas zone but not pursue them at this time.

We still need to prioritize and sequence our ideas. Clearly, we want to do the easiest actions with the highest impact first. We draw another diagonal line across the top left of the Implement box, about one-fourth of the way in. These are the easiest and highest impact ideas and should be done first.

We draw another line down the middle of the Implement box from the bottom left to the top right corner. This second section represents our priority #2 actions. The items in priority #1 and #2 should be all in the Implement category. In other words, they are low difficulty, high impact quick wins.

Unlike priority #1 and #2 which are easy to determine, priority #3 actions require a bit of thought. We draw a third line halfway between the last line and the bottom right corner of the Implement box. The items in this section are our priority #3 items. These are a combination of a few remaining Implement ideas, with the best of the Possible and Challenge ideas.

The best idea in the P or Possible category may have a lower impact than the remaining Implement ideas, but it may be much easier to do. In that case, we may wish to prioritize a Possible item before an Implement item. This helps us to get a win, build confidence, and keep positive momentum.

In a similar way, there may be a Challenge item that is slightly more difficult than a remaining idea in the Implement category but offers a more attractive return on our effort, so it may rank higher within your priority #3. Finally, drawing this third line creates a fourth section between this line and the diagonal line through the PICK chart. These are priority #4 items.

They are a combination of lower impact ideas from the Implement category with some of the better ideas from the Possible and Challenge categories.

Again, in general, we will want to work on the Implement category ideas first, then the Possible, then the Challenge. However, we should use our good judgment to change the sequence of items within priority #4 as necessary. Priority #5, or the lowest priority action items, covers half of the chart. They are a combination of Kill, Challenge, and Possible ideas.

We should take a few minutes to confirm that this section includes only the lowest impact ideas from the Possible category, the most difficult or complex Challenge category ideas, and that Kill items are truly both difficult and low impact. It's possible that we may never get to some of these actions in priority #5. However, it's a good idea to keep a record of these items.

### **Step #4: Determining Priority**

In the fourth step, we use the zones created by our diagonal lines to put all ideas into their priority category. In general, the most important thing is to correctly identify items that should be priority number one and number two. These are the ones we want to do first.

### **Step #5: Taking Action**

In step five, we take our high impact, easy items, or quick wins, and put them into action. In some cases, we may have a large number of quick wins that are of a similar priority. When this is the case, we can create another PICK chart with only the quick wins to compare them against each other. Or we can use a Multi-Voting technique to select a few.

As we take action on our ideas and practice continuous improvement, we often develop new skills, learn about our process, and find that ideas we thought were challenging or impossible in the past are easier to do. Also, an idea that we thought was low impact could become higher impact, with changes in circumstances, market conditions, customer needs, technological advances, and so forth. When we revisit priority #5 ideas, we can sometimes find hidden gems, or hints for future brainstorming activities to develop these ideas further.