







# Impact-Effort Matrix

An impact-effort matrix is a tool that can help teams decide where to start their improvement work, by assessing the potential value of a specific action, compared to the degree of effort entailed in carrying it out. Impact is the action's possible effect on an LEA's priorities or existing initiatives (e.g., improving student learning experiences and outcomes, or building staff capacity). Effort refers to the resources (e.g., time, funding, opportunity cost) required to implement that action.

The Impact-Effort Matrix consists of four quadrants:

-  **Quick Wins:** Actions that are high impact, low effort
-  **Major Projects:** Actions that are high impact, high effort
-  **Fill-Ins:** Actions that are low impact, low effort
-  **Thankless Tasks:** Actions that are low impact, high effort

Use the following criteria to determine if an effort is low or high impact or effort.

-  **IMPACT:**
  - Evidence:** Is there evidence that this kind of change has made a difference in other contexts?
  - Contribution:** How much would this change contribute to our overall objectives?
-  **EFFORT:**
  - Speed:** How quickly could we do this?
  - Resources:** What resources would it take to implement?
  - Acceptability:** Would this change likely be supported by system stakeholders?

## Instructions

In deciding how to strengthen your special education infrastructure, use the Impact-Effort Matrix to help identify the actions on which your LEA might want to focus first. Place each action identified in the **Action-Planning Table** into a quadrant, based on the perceived level of impact, once it is strongly established, and, also on the amount of effort it will take to instate, establish, or improve it. Your LEA should prioritize the actions in the Quick Wins quadrant first, followed by the actions in the Major Projects quadrant.



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