

W.O.W. FACTOR

Words Of Wisdom for FPS Coaches and Students

CRITERIA & GRID

THE PURPOSE OF CRITERIA

You use criteria all the time to help make decisions. For example, suppose that you are shopping for a bicycle. What are some of the major factors that will help determine which bike you purchase? Cost may be a real factor – Which bicycle costs the least?

Other criteria you may use might include:

- ✓ Which bicycle did Consumer Reports give the highest rating?
- ✓ Which bicycle fits me the best (or is the most comfortable)?
- ✓ Which bicycle has the smoothest ride?
- ✓ Which bicycle has the best warranty?
- ✓ Which bicycle has the best maintenance record?
- ✓ Which bicycle will my parents most approve of?

These and other “yardsticks” can help you make decisions on a variety of issues. In FPS, your criteria are based on your Underlying Problem and are the decision-making process for determining which solution is the best one.



THREE MAIN ELEMENTS OF A CORRECTLY WRITTEN CRITERION

- **IT MUST BE SINGULAR.** You should only have **one** verb or object. A good way to accomplish this is to *never use the word “and” in a criterion.*
- **IT MUST BE A MEASURE OF DEGREE.** This basically means that you must use a superlative.
- **IT MUST BE IN THE DESIRED DIRECTION.** For example, you usually want a solution to cost the least, not the most.

GENERIC, MODIFIED OR ADVANCED?

In addition to scoring your criteria on whether they are correctly written, each criterion is determined to be advanced, modified or generic. What distinguishes each type of criterion?

- **GENERIC** are those that could apply to ANY Underlying Problem. (1 point)
- **MODIFIED** are generic criteria that have added words specific to the Future Scene, like important stakeholders, events or processes. (2 points)
- **ADVANCED** are VERY specific to your Underlying Problem, so much so that they would most likely not apply to other Underlying Problems. (3 points)

Basically, criteria are scored as to how relevant they are to your UP -- the more specifically tailored to your UP, the more relevant they are.



HOW TO GET STARTED

First of all, since criteria relate to your Underlying Problem, it's best to start with that. Base one criterion on your KVP and another on your purpose. For example, consider the following UP:

Political bodies that the AAP works with take a cut of the funds from the AAP in exchange for keeping rogue officials and guerilla forces in check. How might we reduce incidents of corruption related to the operation of the African Panel, so that the AAP will have more funds to help implement solutions for reducing desertification?

- The KVP is “reduce incidents of corruption related to the operation of the AAP”. Therefore, one criterion should be: **Which solution most reduces corruption related to the operation of the AAP?**
- The purpose is “so that the AAP will have more funds to help implement solutions for reducing desertification”. So the second criterion should be: **Which solution provides the AAP with the most funds to implement their solutions?**
- Both of these criteria are advanced.

Second, try to think of other criteria that are extremely specific to your Underlying Problem, the Future Scene, or the research on the topic. For the above UP, “**Which solution will be least likely to upset the political bodies?**” would be very specific. Sometimes an advanced criterion can come from research that happens to relate to your UP. The condition phrase may suggest another. Just remember the true test of an advanced criterion – it is SO specific to your UP that it probably couldn't be applied to other UPs.

Third, try not to rely on generic criteria. Instead, take some applicable generic criteria and modify them by adding specifics from the Future Scene. For example, instead of simply “Which solution will be easiest to implement?” use “**Which solution will be easiest for the AAP to implement?**” Rather than “Which solution will be most acceptable for the people?” use “**Which solution will be most acceptable for the members of the UNCCD?**”

ADDITIONAL TIPS ON FINDING APPROPRIATE CRITERIA

- ✓ Think about the research. Are there specific vocabulary words or sub topics that you might be able to use in criteria?
- ✓ Think about two or three of the solutions you feel are among the best. Ask yourself why those solutions are good ones. If you can answer that question, you may have some ideas for criteria.
- ✓ Ask yourself, “What are the ways we will know if a solution is working?” and “How can we measure the impact that solving the KVP will have on the Future Scene?” The answers may give you some criteria ideas.
- ✓ Try to avoid cost. In the real world, the cost of a solution is always important. However, if you use “Which solution will cost the least?” as one of your five criteria, you will often end up with the cheapest solution, not the one that will solve the problem best. Leave out cost to start. If you want to address ideas for paying for the solution, include them in your Step 6 Action Plan.

GRID PROCEDURES

1. Select your best 8 solutions. List each solution in a three- to six-word phrase on the grid.
2. Look at each criterion separately and rank order the solutions from 1-8 for each one. The solution that best meets that criterion gets an 8; the one that least meets the criterion gets a 1. All other solutions are ranked from 2-7. **IMPORTANT: You may only use each number once for each criterion/column.**
3. When you have ranked solutions for all 5 criteria, total the numbers across. It's best to have more than one person do this to avoid addition errors.
4. The solution with the highest total IS the best solution, and it MUST be the focus of your Action Plan.
5. If you have a tie, you must break it and let your evaluator know how you broke the tie. A good way to break a tie is to think of a 6th criterion and apply it to the tied solutions. You could also recheck your rankings to see if you might want to change any numbers, but be careful – if you change points, be sure you still have 1-8 in that column and that your totals are correct.

MORE DESERTIFICATION CRITERIA EXAMPLES

Consider the three different types of criteria based on the following Underlying Problem:



Because the DSDs are an important part of the Panel's plans for tackling desertification, it is imperative that they operate in a successful and efficient manner. Therefore, how might we optimize the successful use of the DSDs by the Panel, so that the Panel is better equipped to deal with desertification issues in the African region in the year 2040 and beyond?

TYPE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Generic (1 point)	Can be linked or used with <i>any</i> topic or UP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which solution will cost the least? Which solution will last the longest? Which solution is easiest to implement? Which solution can be implemented most quickly? Which solution will be acceptable for the most people?
Modified (2 points)	A generic criterion with added words specific to the Future Scene (e.g., important stakeholders, events or processes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which solution can the <i>AAP</i> implement most quickly? Which solution will cost the least <i>for the UNCCD</i>? Which solution will be most acceptable <i>to the African farmers</i>? Which solution <i>promotes farming in drought-stricken areas of Africa</i> the quickest?
Advanced (3 points)	A criterion that is <i>very specific to the UP, Future Scene, or topic</i> (it would most likely not apply to other U.P.s, Future Scenes, topics) Can be: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Based on the KVP 2. Based on the purpose 3. Be justified with relevant information from the Future Scene 4. Specific to the topic (e.g., applicable research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which solution will best <i>increase the successful use of the DSDs by the Panel</i>? (based on KVP) Which solution will <i>best equip the Panel to deal with desertification issues in the African region</i>? (based on purpose) <i>Since desertification efforts in Africa are imperative to the livelihood of inhabitants</i>, which solution will take the least amount of time to implement? (generic idea logically justified with relevant FS information) Which solution will best <i>restore Africa's desertified land</i>? (very specific to the UP) Which solution will <i>provide the most resilience for the African region's ecosystem</i>? (specific to the topic, based on relevant research)