Opportunity Comparison Matrix

UCSF Office of Career and Professional Development
Student Academic Affairs

Criteria	Weight † (1-10)	Opportunity 1		Opportunity 2		Opportunity 3	
		Score (1-3) ‡	Weighted Score	Score (1-3) ‡	Weighted Score	Score (1-3) ‡	Weighted Score
Totals							

† 1 is least important and 10 is most important   ‡ 3 is your top choice, can enter the same score for multiple options if desired

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How to use this tool

This tool is designed to help students and postdocs compare different opportunities (such as job offers or internship possibilities). To use the Matrix:

1. Choose several criteria that are important to you in your decision.
2. Give each criterion a weight that describes how important it is to you (1 = unimportant; 10 = extremely important).
3. Score each opportunity on each of your criteria (1 = this opportunity does not meet this criterion; 3 = this opportunity completely meets this criterion).
4. The Matrix will give each opportunity a total score based on the information you provided (Adobe Acrobat required for fill-in and automatic calculations).

The final score is not meant to definitively indicate the choice you should make. Rather, you can use it as a "gut check" to help you build confidence in your decision, shape discussions with mentors or loved ones, or identify places where you need to do further research on some aspect of an opportunity.

Good luck!

Suggested activities and reflection questions

a.   Was it difficult to identify criteria that are important to you in making this decision? If so, consider taking a values assessment. What would have to be true about an opportunity, to make it a great fit for you? What less-obvious, but still-relevant criteria might you have forgotten to include? Brainstorm three additional criteria and assign each of them a weight.

b.   Did you feel you had enough information to score each opportunity on each of your criteria? If not, you may find it helpful to do more research, for example by conducting informational interviews. Who might be able to provide you with more information? Brainstorm three questions you still have about your opportunities, and consider who might be able to answer those questions.

c.   What was your emotional reaction when you saw the final score for each opportunity? Did the scores confirm or challenge your instincts about which opportunity is best? If you still feel uncertain about your decision, consider making an appointment with a career counselor. Brainstorm three trusted people with whom you could discuss your results.

Completed Example Matrix

Below is an example of how 'Christina,' a fourth-year grad student exploring careers in the business of science, used the matrix to compare three different summer internship opportunities.

I realized I wasn't sure what I meant by "well," so decided to define it as "at least equivalent to my graduate stipend."

I realized I wasn't sure whether this is true of any of these opportunities. Something I need to check on - maybe informational interviews, or emailing the internship coordinator?

I didn't realize this was so important to me until I assigned it a weight. But I don't want to commit to an internship unless I know who my manager will be.

This internship is in-person on the East Coast. I might still be willing to do it if it were a great opportunity.

I didn't realize until I checked the website that this internship only pays $1000 for the whole summer!

| | | Opportunity 1 | | Opportunity 2 | | Opportunity 3 | |
| | | VC Fellowship (Remote) | | Business Development Internship (Bay Area) | | Consulting Program (East Coast) | |
Criteria	Weight † (1–10)	Score (1–3) ‡	Weighted Score	Score (1–3) ‡	Weighted Score	Score (1–3) ‡	Weighted Score
In-person in the Bay Area or remote	10	3	30	3	30	1	10
Family-friendly hours (ends by 6 pm)	7	1	7	2	14	3	21
Pays well	4	3	12	2	8	1	4
Leads to full-time job opportunities	5	2	10	2	10	2	10
I'll have a good mentor/supervisor	9	1	9	3	27	2	18
			0		0		0
			0		0		0
			0		0		0
			0		0		0
			0		0		0
Totals			68		89		63

† 1 is least important and 10 is most important   ‡ 3 is your top choice, can enter the same score for multiple options if desired

This number surprised me! I thought that this internship would be the best, because it's the most 'prestigious' and the biggest name, but this is helping me see that it might not be the best fit.

I had thought this internship would be 'just OK,' but the fact that I know the supervisor and am excited to work with her, and I know that the hours will be decent, are both huge factors in its favor! The pay isn't amazing, but it will equal my graduate stipend.

I had thought this would be a good option because my friend did this internship and had a good experience. But he has family on the East Coast, and doesn't have any children, so I guess those factors weren't negatives for him.

This matrix is based on the Kepner-Tregoe Decision Analysis methodology developed by Charles H. Kepner and Benjamin B. Tregoe in the 1960s.