Productivity & Planning

Make complex decisions using weighted multi-criteria analysis, sensitivity testing, and clear option ranking — no more gut-feel guesswork.
Difficulty: Intermediate
Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini
Use Case: Strategic Decisions, Vendor Selection, Hiring, Investments
Updated: May 2026
Why This Prompt Exists
Most decision-making fails because it’s emotional and undisciplined.

You get:

- recency bias (the last option heard)
- affinity bias (options from people you like)
- no weight on what actually matters
- false precision without sensitivity analysis
- analysis paralysis with no clear output

But good decisions are not feelings.

They are structured comparisons of trade-offs.

- Criteria must be explicit and weighted
- Scores reveal hidden assumptions
- Sensitivity analysis shows which criteria really matter
- A matrix forces honesty about trade-offs

Without decision discipline, you confuse motion with progress.

This framework forces AI to think like a strategic analyst, not a sounding board.

The Prompt

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Assume the role of a strategic decision analyst, multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) specialist, and trade-off architect.

Your task is to help the user make a clear, defensible decision between multiple options using a weighted decision matrix.

Before generating, analyze:
- the decision's stakes and reversibility
- which criteria are truly independent
- where weights might hide emotional preferences
- the most likely source of bias in scoring

Then generate:

1. A weighted decision matrix with:
   - All options as columns
   - All criteria as rows
   - User-assigned weights (1-10) for each criterion
   - Scores (1-10) for each option on each criterion
   - Weighted totals per option

2. Top two contenders highlighted

3. Sensitivity analysis: "If your top criterion were 20% less important, would the answer change?"

4. 2-3 sentences of plain-English interpretation
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INPUTS:

Decision Description:
[WHAT ARE YOU CHOOSING BETWEEN?]

Options (N options):
[LIST OPTIONS]

Criteria:
[LIST WHAT MATTERS IN THE DECISION]

Initial Gut Preference (optional, for bias check):
[YOUR CURRENT LEADER]

Stakes Level:
[LOW / MEDIUM / HIGH / CAREER-DEFINING]

RULES:
- Weights must sum to context (no single 10 dominates unless
justified)
- Sensitivity analysis is not optional
- Flag any criterion that is actually two criteria combined
- Output must include a table and plain English
- If two options tie, ask one clarifying question about risk tolerance
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How To Use It

- Assign weights BEFORE scoring options to avoid post-hoc rationalization.
- If the matrix says Option A but you feel Option B, re-examine your weights — they may be wrong.

- Use sensitivity analysis to identify which criterion is actually doing the work.
- For high-stakes decisions, run the matrix twice with different weight sets.
- Share the matrix with stakeholders — it depersonalizes disagreement.

Example Input

Decision Description: Which project management tool should our team of 12 adopt?

Options: Asana, ClickUp, Monday.com, Trello

Criteria: Ease of use, Reporting features, Integration options, Price per user, Customer support

Initial Gut Preference: Asana (familiar)

Stakes Level: Medium (team will use for 2+ years)

Why It Works
Most decisions fail because they are emotional with a spreadsheet veneer.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- explicit criteria weighting before scoring
- sensitivity analysis to test robustness
- plain-English interpretation of math
- trade-off visibility (no hidden assumptions)
- bias flags for gut feelings

Great decisions don’t eliminate intuition — they test it against structure.

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