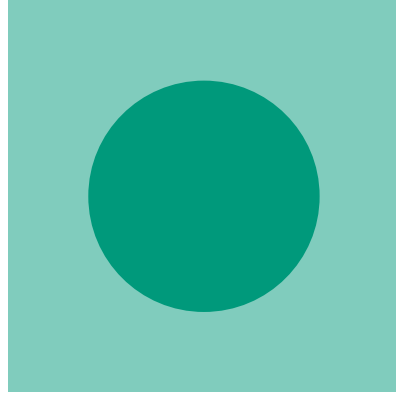
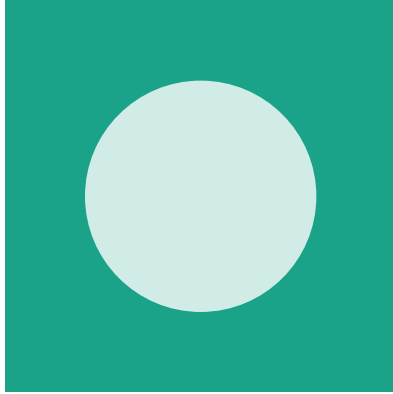




Paired Comparisons





Some comparisons are comparable to comparing apples and oranges' seeds.

MOKOKOMA MOKHONOANA

What's it all about?

Paired comparison is a technique that originates from some of the earliest psychometric tests and has been used by psychologists for many years (Fechner, 1860; Mueller, 1986). It is now a well-developed method for considering a range of different options and it simply involves pairing each item with each of the other items in the set. All you then have to do is make a choice between two items. The result of these paired choices is a set of items, rank-ordered in terms of which items you have chosen more often.

What's it for?

The purpose of paired comparison analysis is to allow you to determine the relative importance of a number of options. It works particularly well when these options are quite different in nature. It is designed to help you set priorities where there are conflicting demands on limited resources.

Using the tool

Follow these steps to do a paired comparison analysis:

1. Print off the attached grid or mark up some flip chart paper
2. List all the options you want to compare and give each a letter
3. Block out those cells where you will be comparing an option with itself or duplicating an option
4. Now in the remaining cells compare the option in the row with an option in the column. Decide which of the two options is more important to you and mark down the letter of that option. Now give it a score from 0 to 3 (with 0 being no difference and 3 being a major difference between the two)

5. Add the total values for each option; you can then convert them into a percentage. This should give you your preferred option/s

What's Next?

List the activities you want to do in the next 12 months. Map them on the comparison grid and determine your priorities. Is this the ranking you expected? What difference might this approach have made if you had used it at the beginning of last year's activities?

Quick tips

- Use paired comparison when your priorities are not clear
- It is particularly useful where you do not have clear data to base your decisions on or the options are very different in nature, like comparing 'apples and pears'
- Use the technique to set priorities where there is disagreement about the use of your resources

References

Fechner, G., T. (1860). *Elemente der Psychophysik*. Leipzig: Breitkopf and Hartel.

Mueller, D., J. (1986). *Measuring Social Attitudes: A handbook for researchers and practitioners*. New York: Teachers College Press.

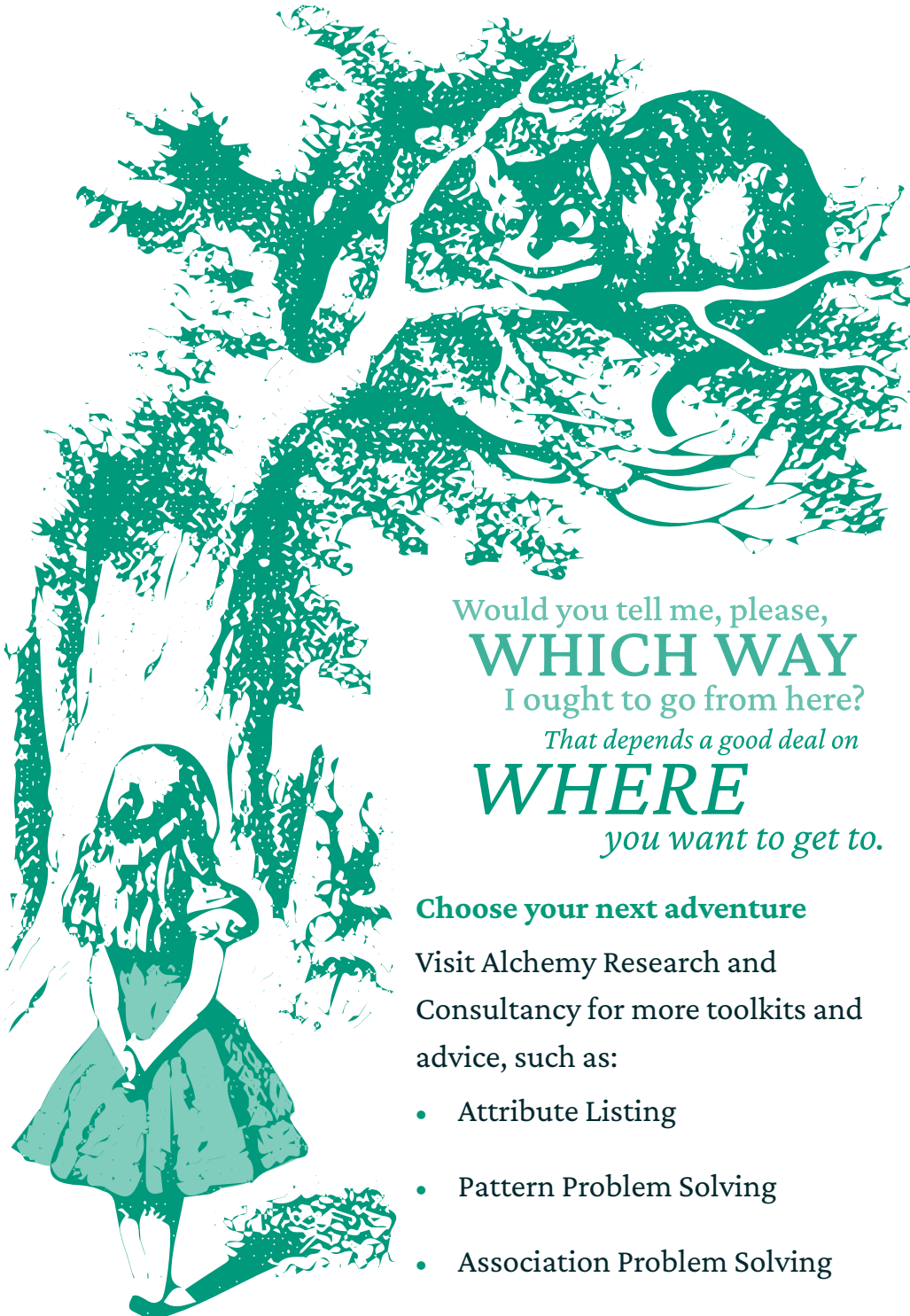
Paired comparison grid

Options	A	B	C	D	E	F
A						
B						
C						
D						
E						
F						

Option	Total	Percentage	Rank
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
Total			



Alchemy was founded to help people navigate change.
We are passionate about organisational learning and
supporting people to understand change in action.



Would you tell me, please,
WHICH WAY
I ought to go from here?
That depends a good deal on
WHERE
you want to get to.

Choose your next adventure

Visit Alchemy Research and
Consultancy for more toolkits and
advice, such as:

- Attribute Listing
- Pattern Problem Solving
- Association Problem Solving