

Using a 2x2 Framework

Developing new ideas

When we've generated a large number of ideas, we need a way to identify the *best* ideas.

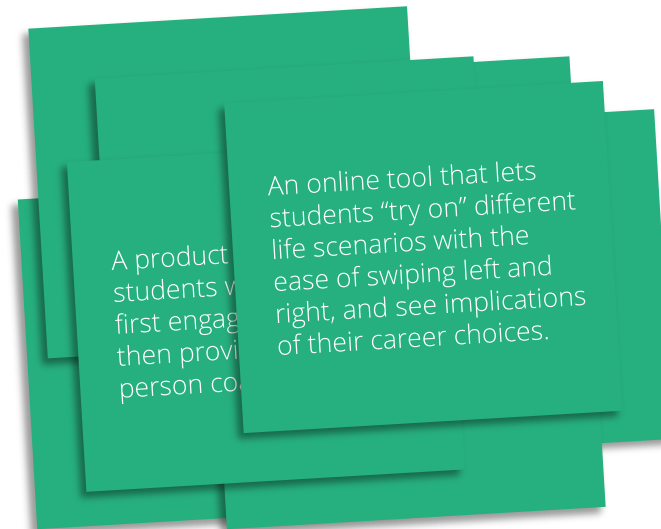
Lateral thinking and creative forms of brainstorming gave us the ability to generate a large quantity of ideas by suspending judgement and coming up with new and unexpected combinations.

Now, we'll work to identify the most promising ideas by evaluating them against set criteria.

Developing new ideas

Methods like Insight Combination and Forced Provocation lead to lots and lots of ideas. That's overwhelming!

Our idea generation methods create lots of ideas; a 2-3 hour brainstorming session can generate hundreds of ideas. This can feel overwhelming, because it's hard to know what to do next. That feeling is normal; we purposefully suspend criticism to do the creative visioning, but now we need to be critical in order to make the data and process manageable.



Developing new ideas

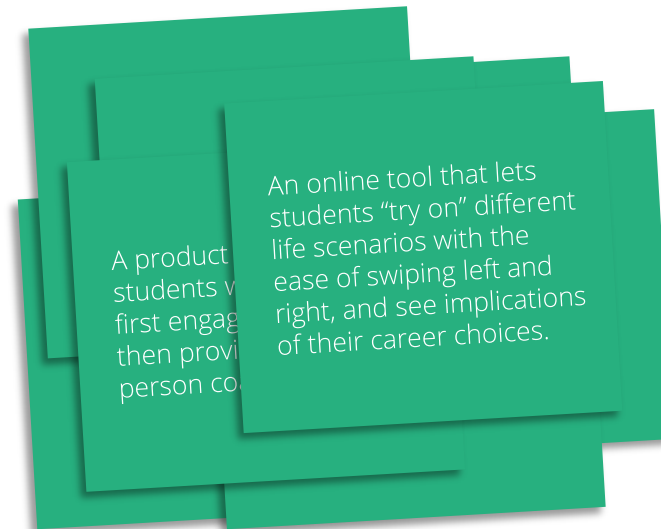
Good ideas are relative, so we need criteria for evaluating good and bad ideas.

Without a set of consistent evaluative principles, any idea can be considered good or bad. We need to establish guardrails to guide us towards “goodness” or “badness.”

If we assume that all of the ideas will help people, we’re left with two main criteria from which to judge:

Cost. How much will it cost to develop an idea, based on the sum of human capital and technology investment? Do we have resources on staff, or do we need to hire them? Will the idea take a long time?

Feasibility. How hard is it to actually build the idea? Is it technically possible to achieve? Does it require third-party infrastructure or partnerships?



A 2x2 evaluative framework

We'll use a 2x2 comparative exercise to judge ideas against this generalized criteria.

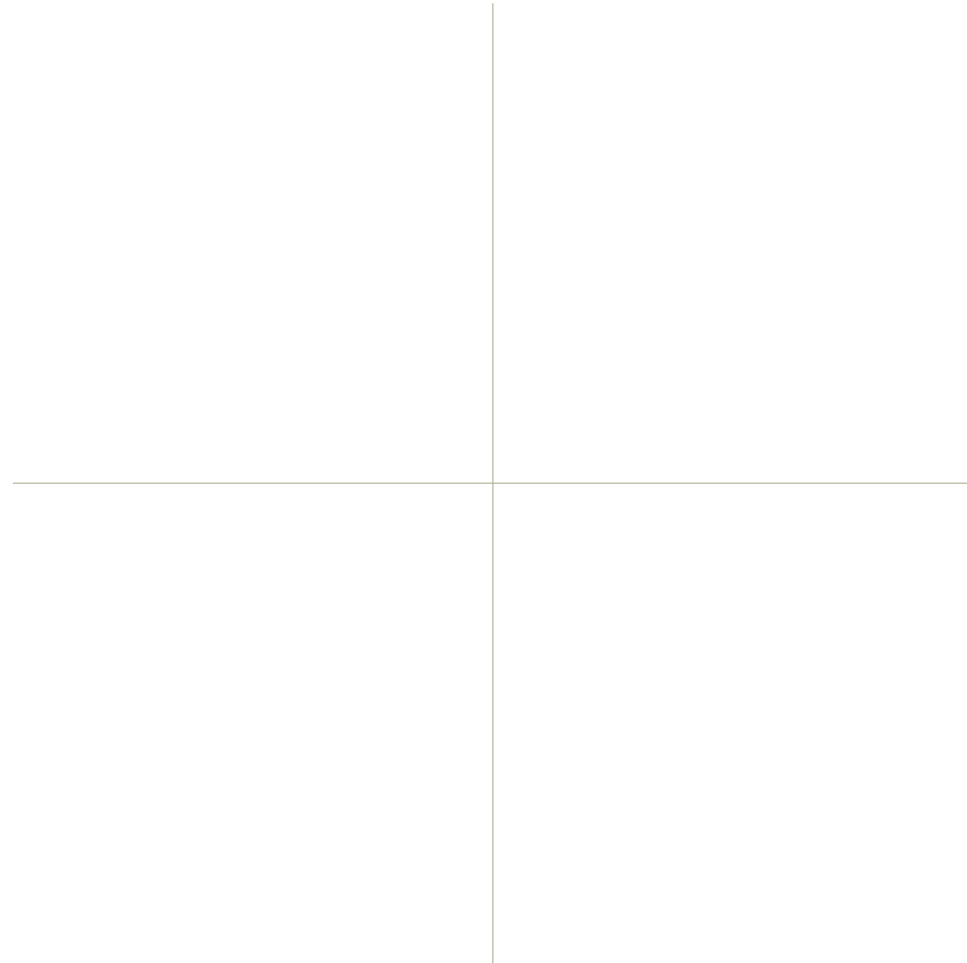
A 2x2 is a simple way of comparing ideas to one-another, while simultaneously comparing them to a set of criteria. A 2x2:

- Forces a rigorous evaluation of ideas
- Acts as a creative activity, forcing the team to expand on each design idea in order to better understand what it means
- Acts as a collaborative exercise, bringing the team together to discuss each idea, as well as the vetting criteria

A 2x2 evaluative framework

First, sketch the 2x2.

First, create a blank 2x2. Use painters tape, and put this on an empty wall; make the grid very large (six feet by six feet).

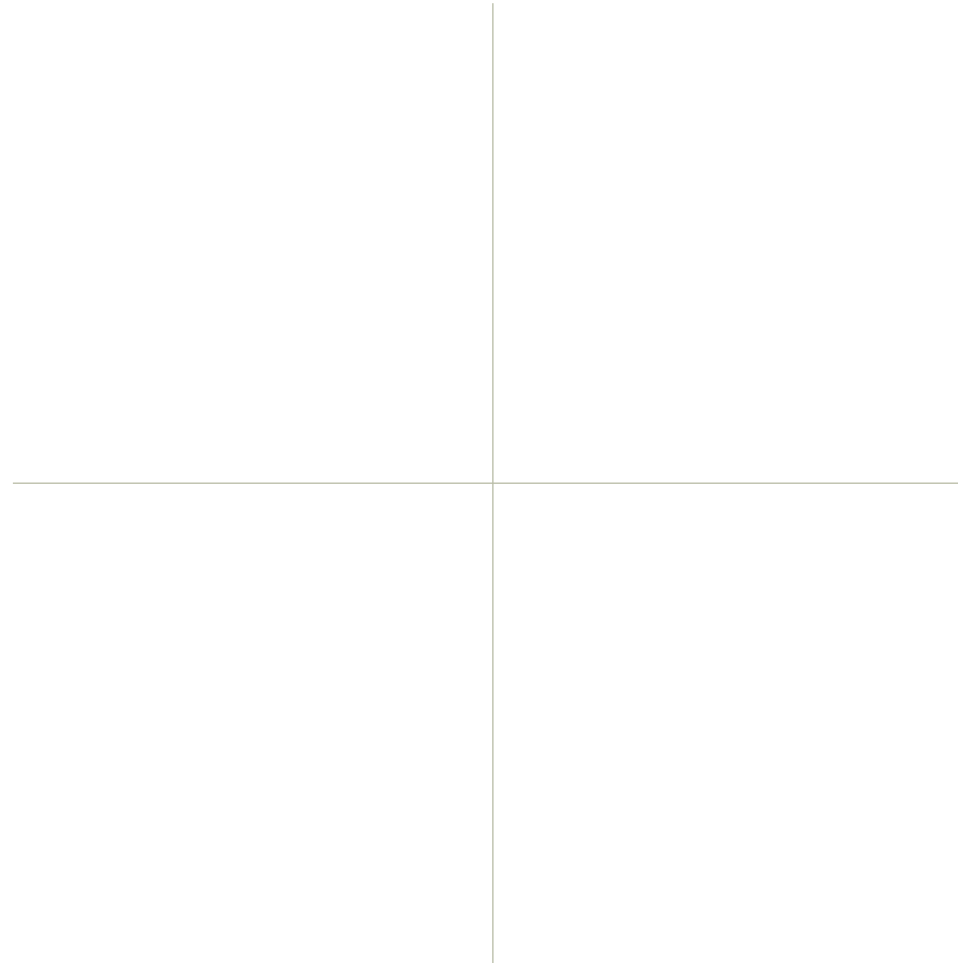


A 2x2 evaluative framework

Add your criteria to each axis.

Create the vertical criteria of Low cost / High cost.

Low cost



High cost

A 2x2 evaluative framework

Add your criteria to each axis.

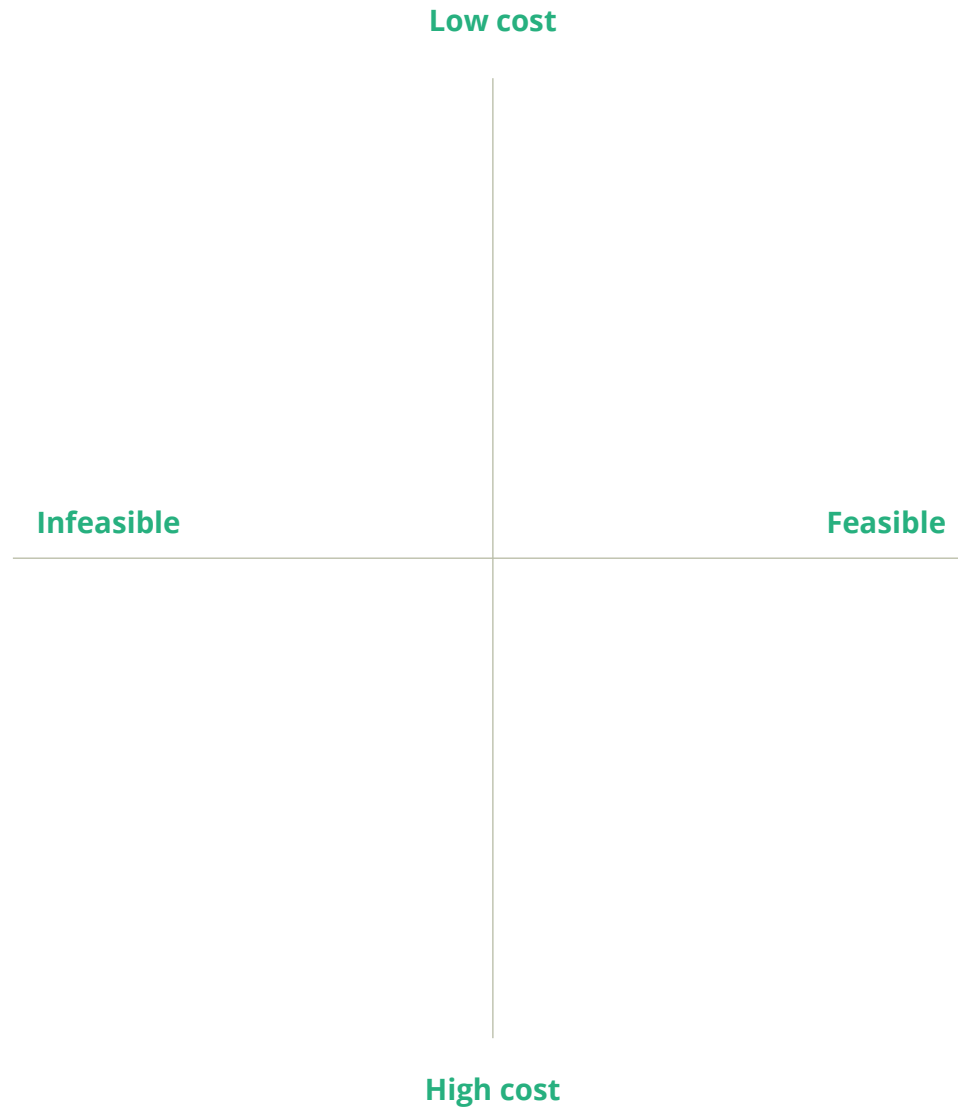
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A 2x2 evaluative framework

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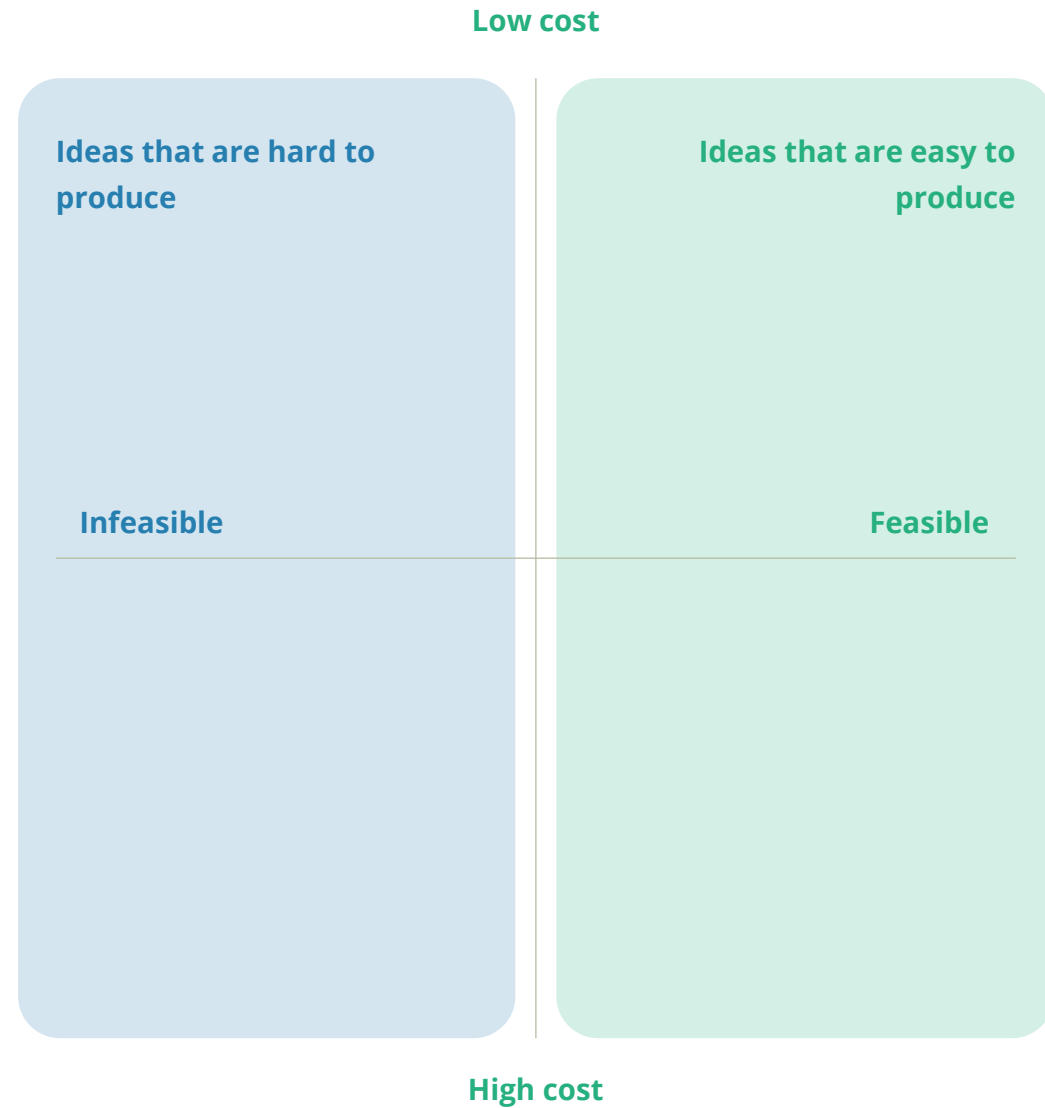
Next, add the horizontal axis of infeasible / feasible.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Add your criteria to each axis.

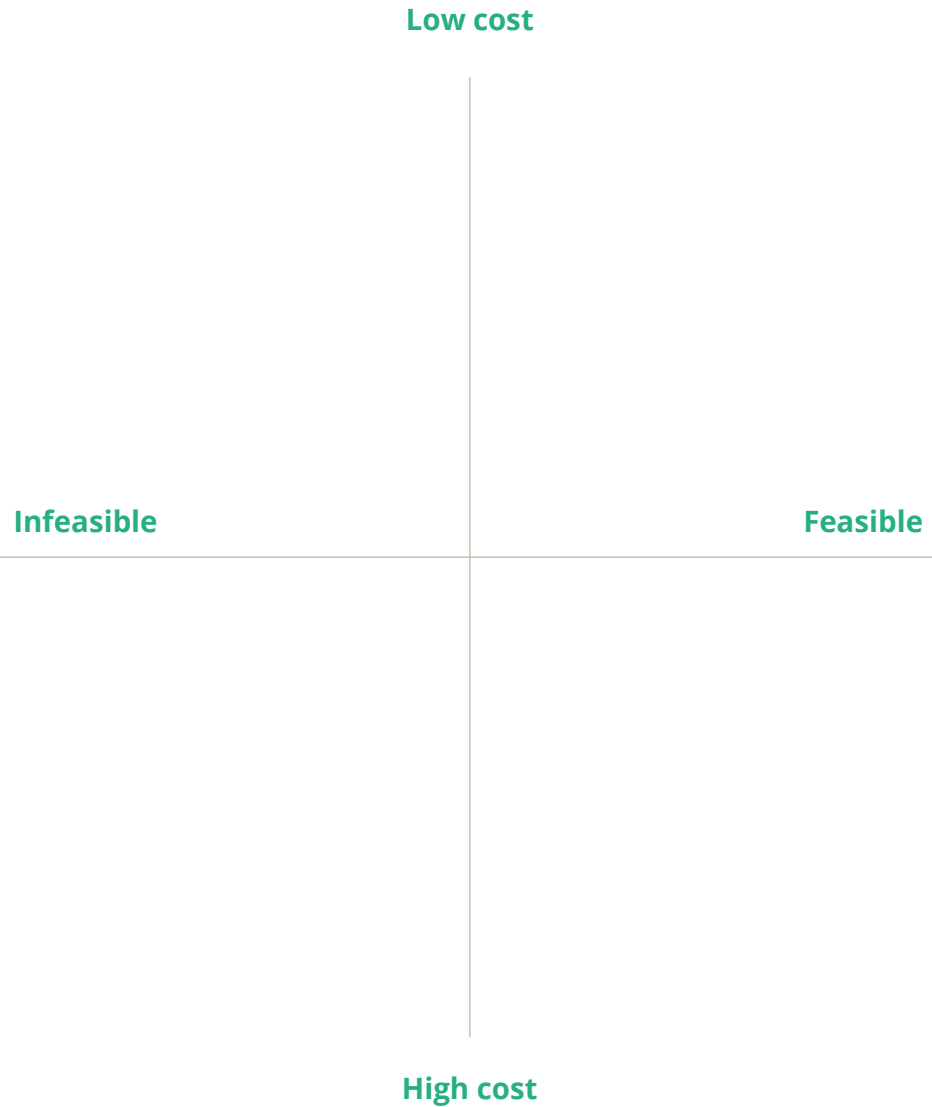
Next, add the horizontal axis of infeasible / feasible.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Collect your design ideas.

You can use written scenarios, sketches, vignettes, or just glimpses of ideas. We'll use the green notes that we developed previously during Insight Combination.



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A tool that helps students connect with alumni in order to get feedback on sch

An online tool that lets students "try on" different life scenarios with the ease of swiping left and right, and see implications of their career choices.

that connects with mentors, ing online and ding offline, in-aching.

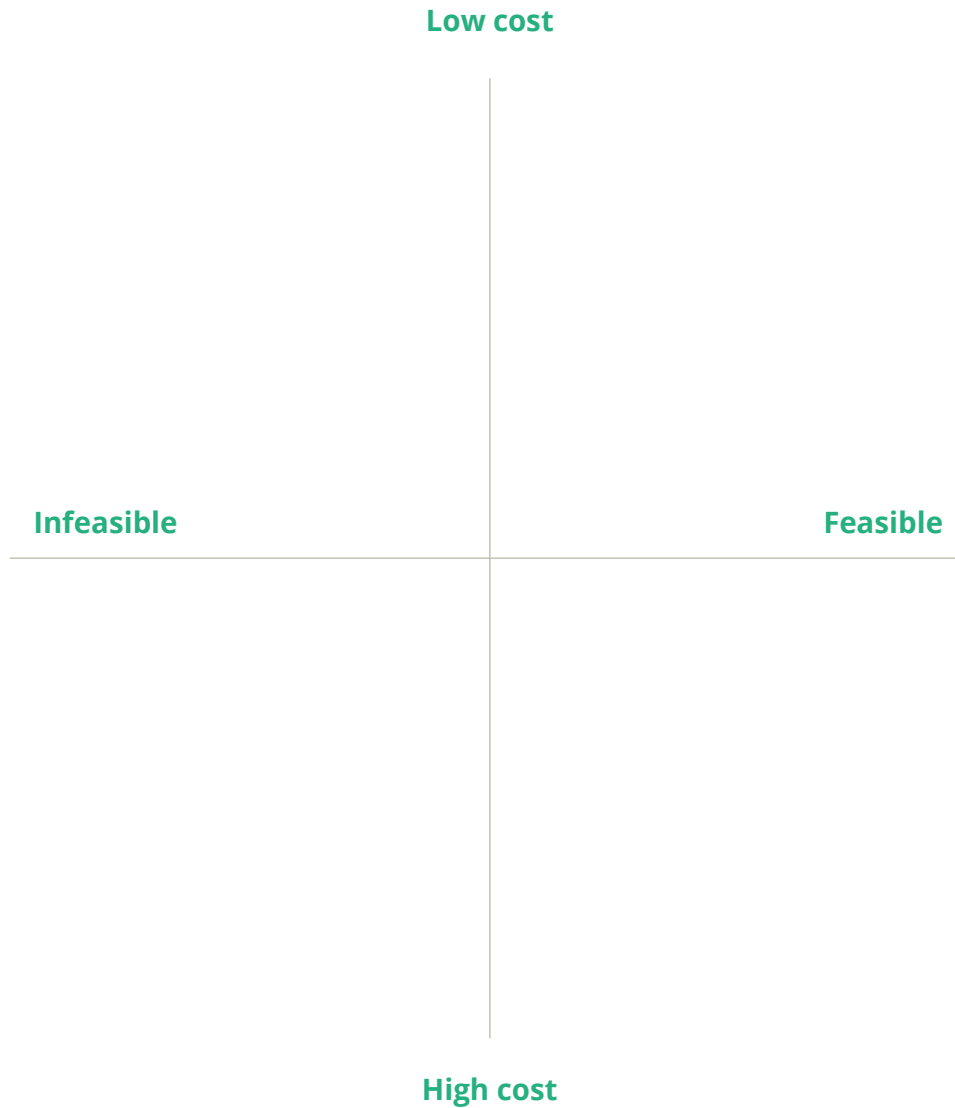
A 2x2 evaluative framework

Evaluate the ideas, one by one.

Select a note, and compare it to the set criteria. Is it low cost, or high cost? Is it feasible, or infeasible?



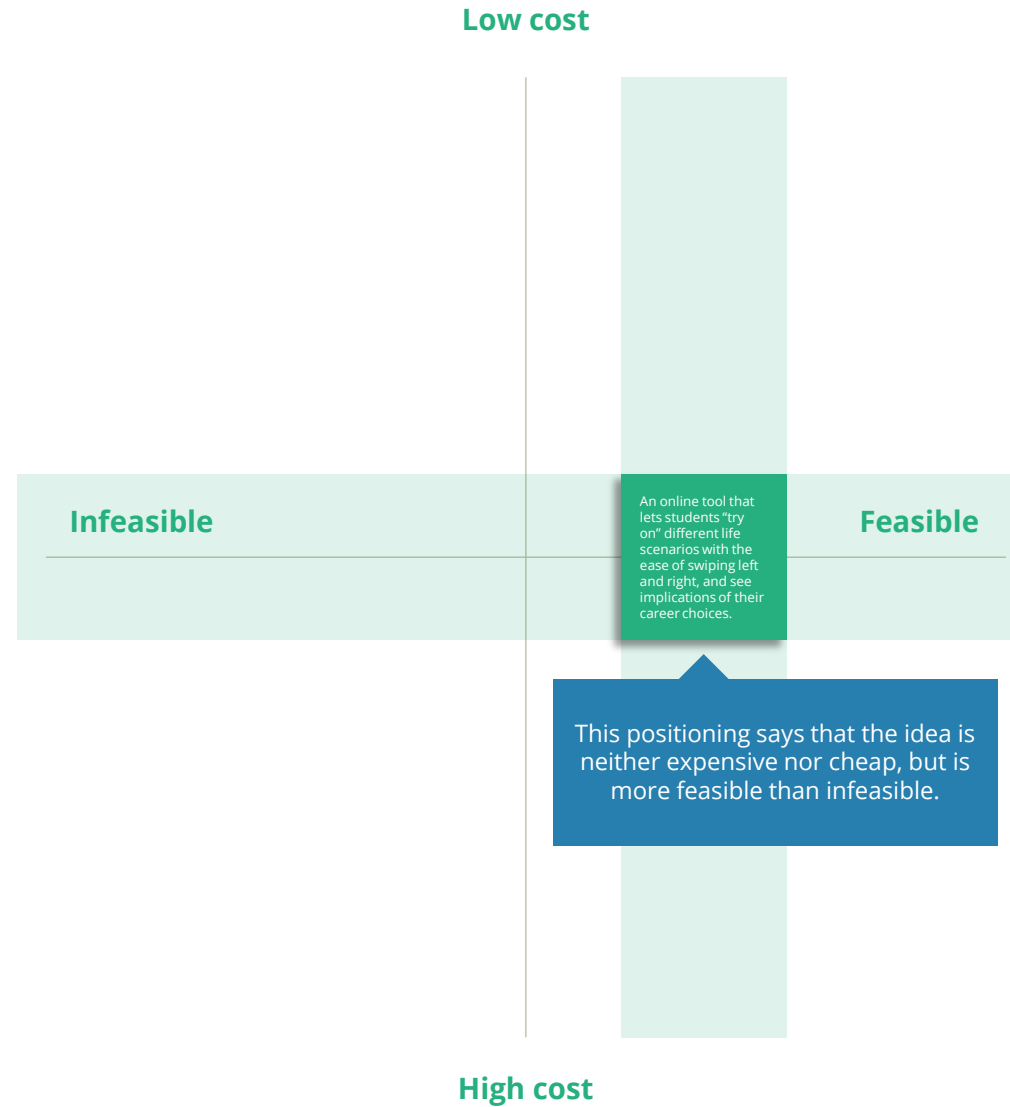
An online tool that lets students “try on” different life scenarios with the ease of swiping left and right, and see implications of their career choices.



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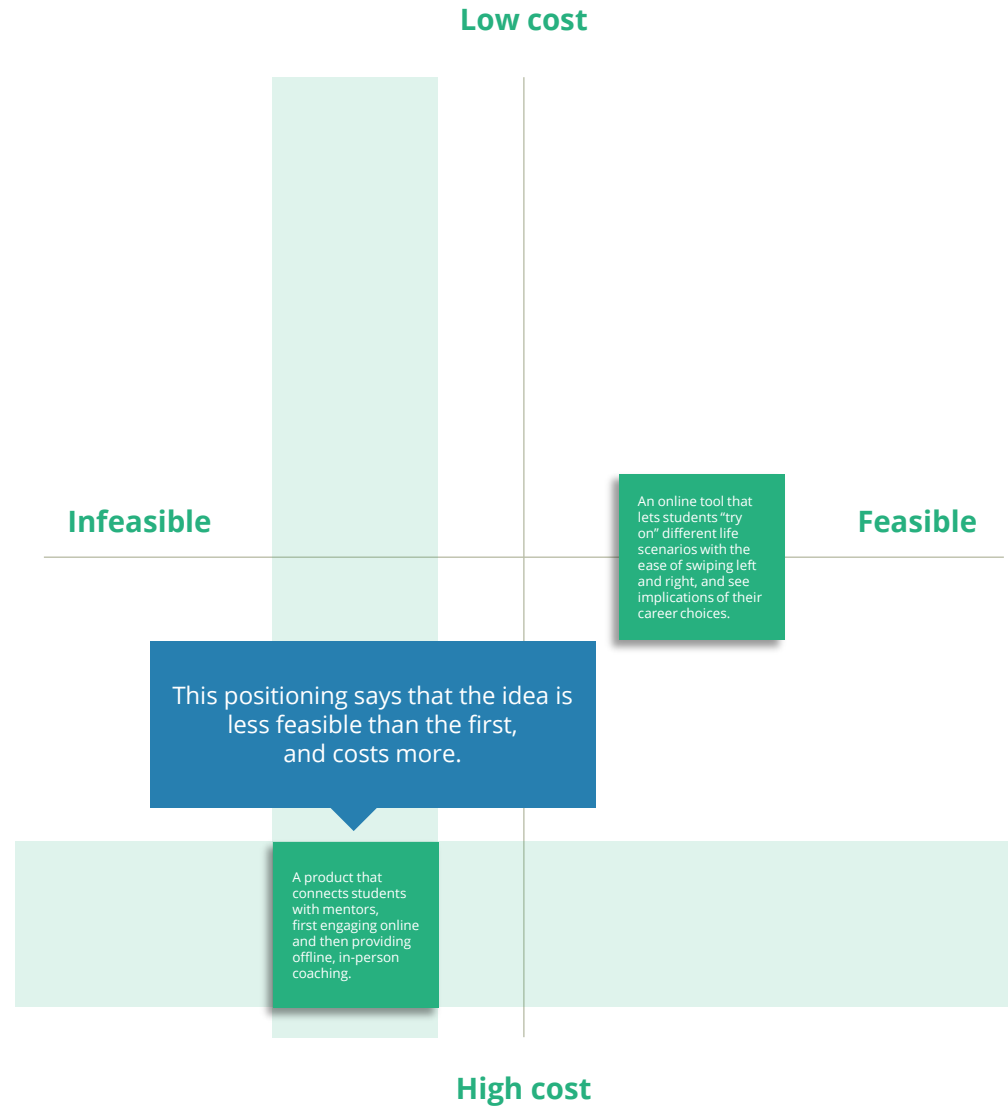
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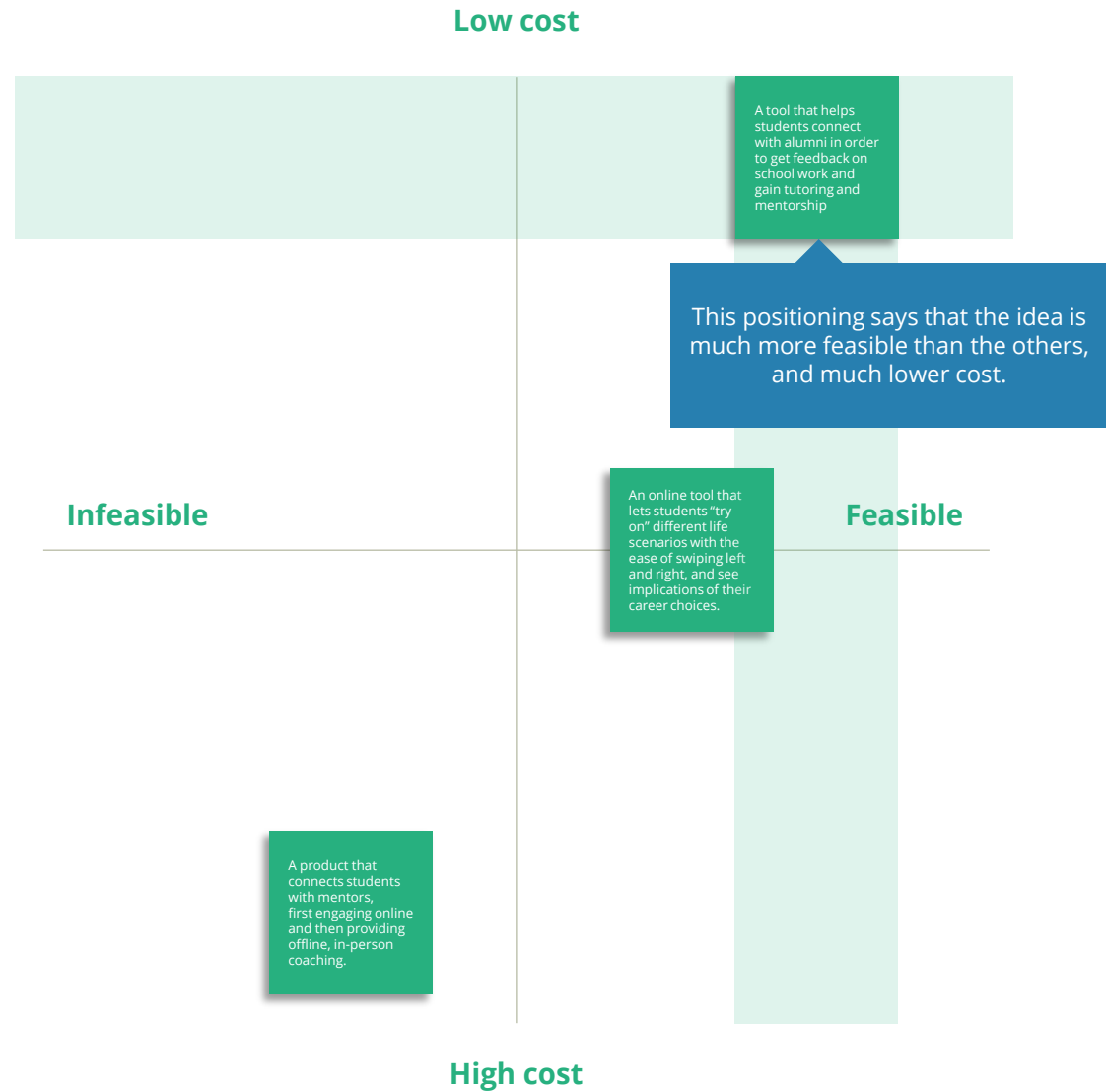
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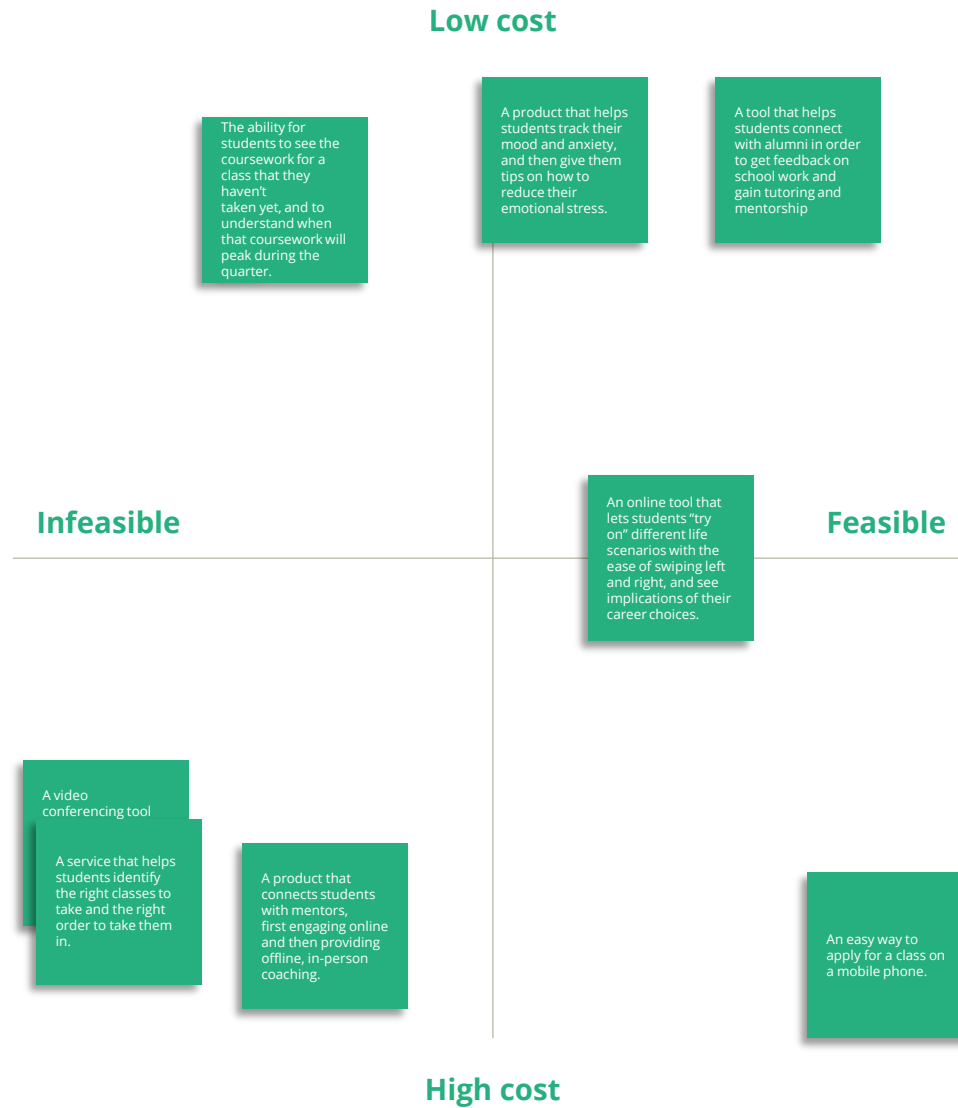
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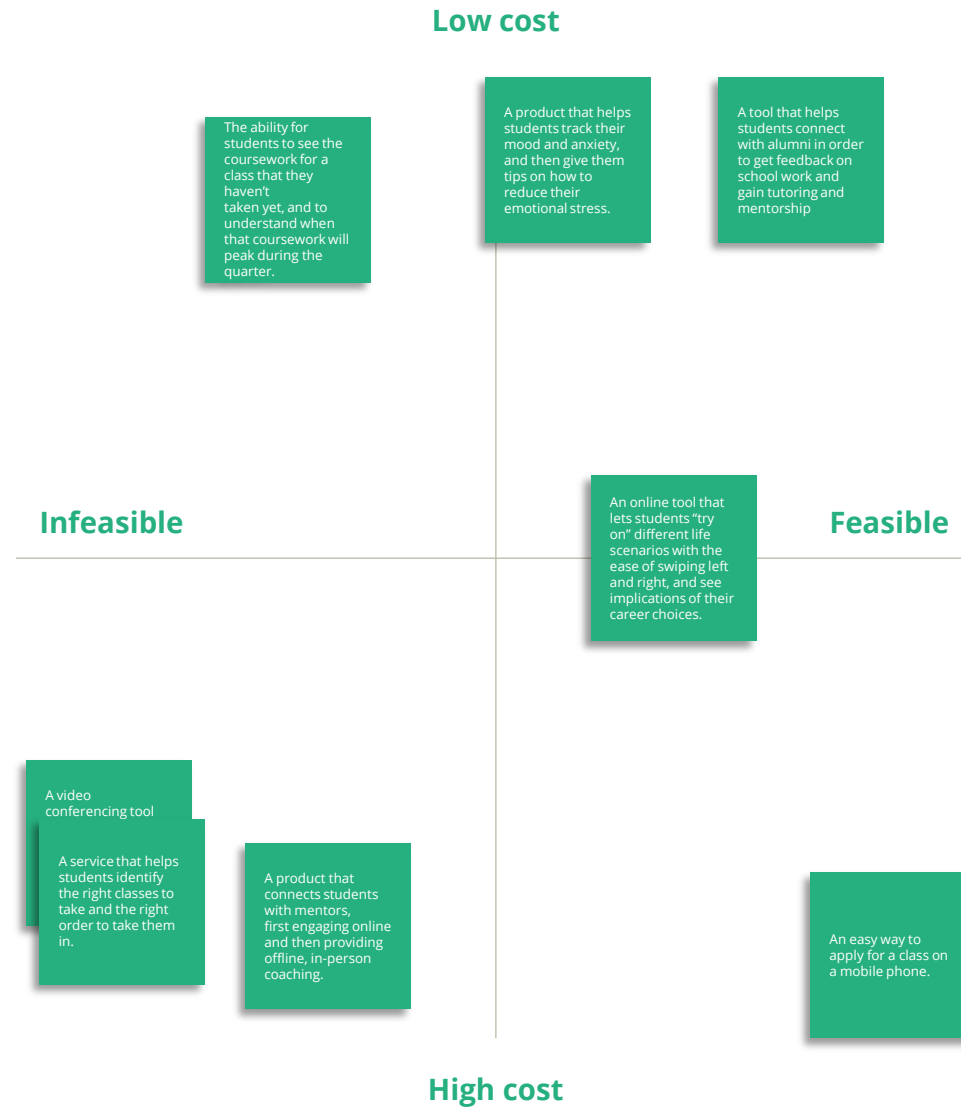
Add the remainder of the notes.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Each quadrant implies a different strategy.

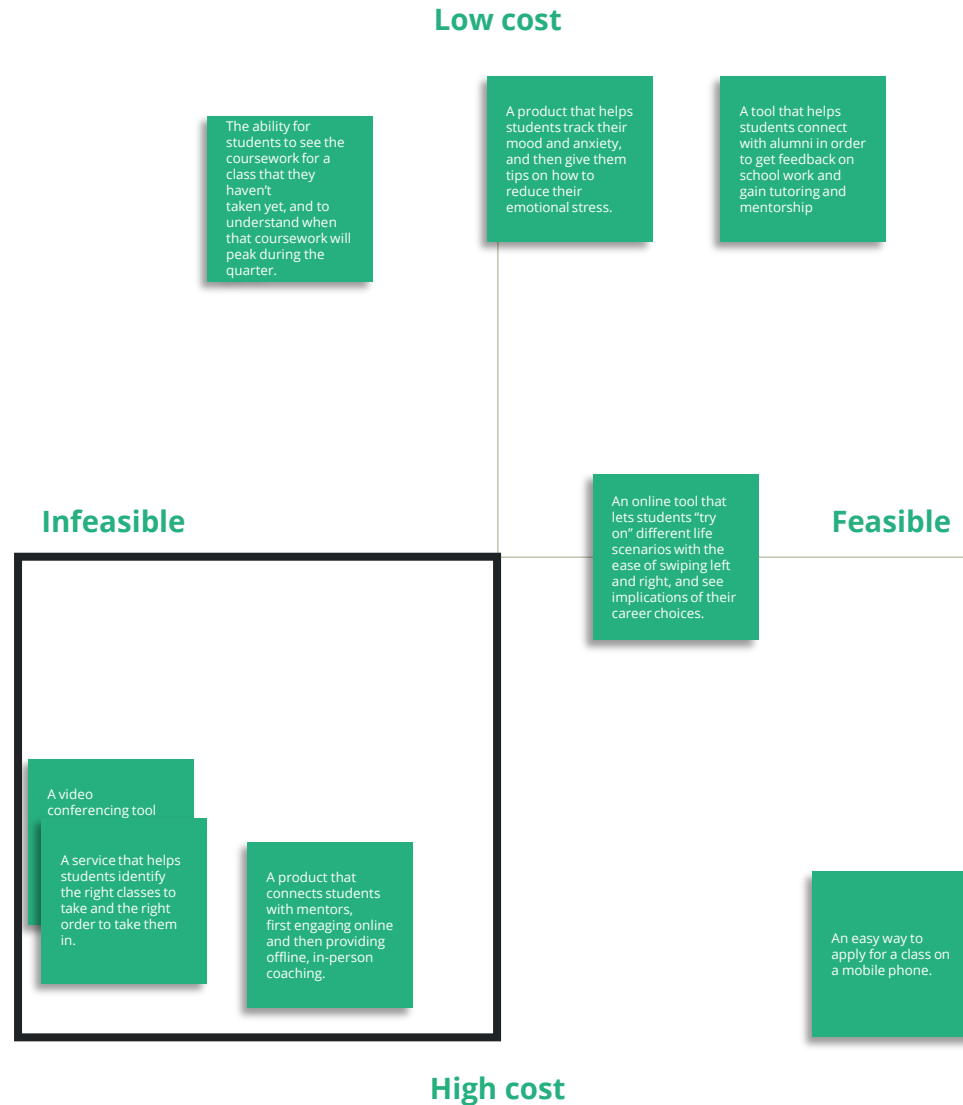
Examine each of the four quadrants. Each represents a unique way of thinking about bringing products to market.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Each quadrant implies a different strategy.

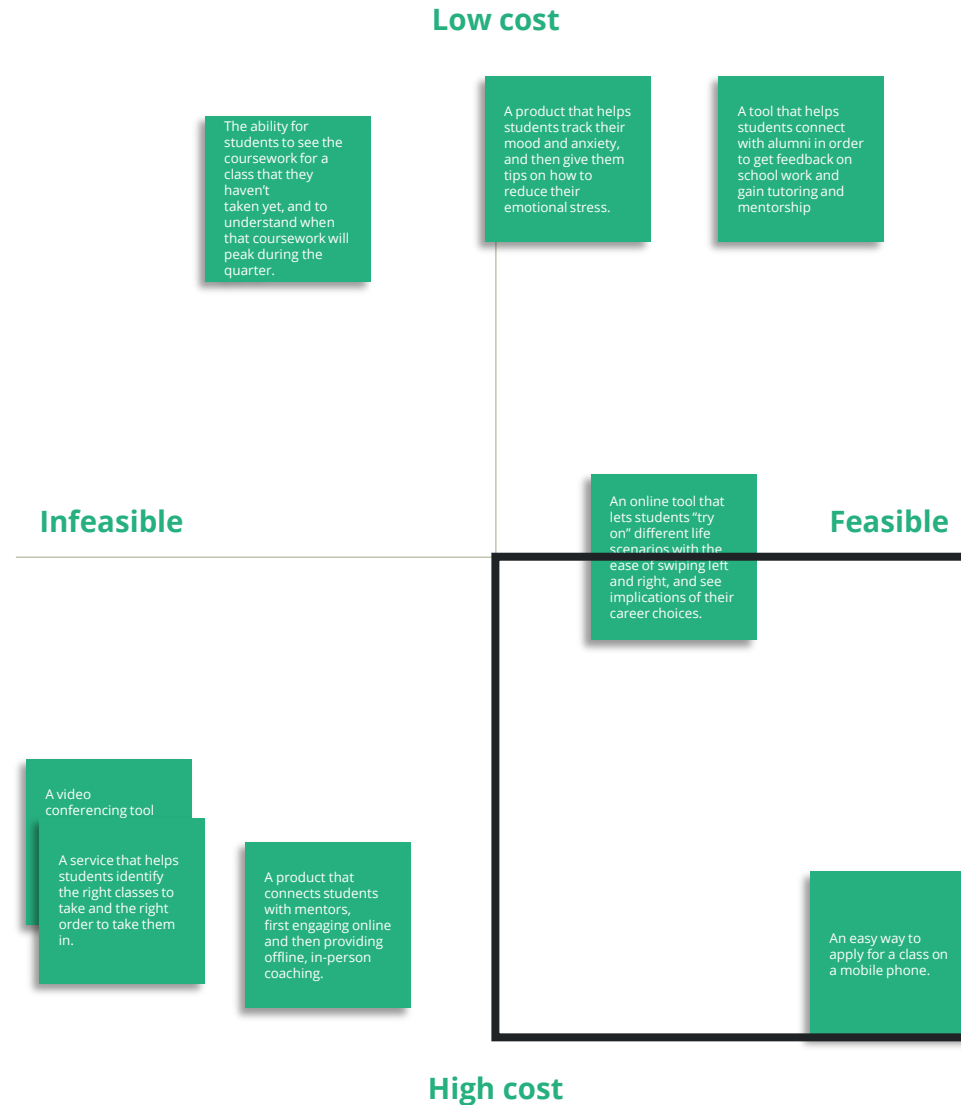
Ideas in the “Infeasible” and “High Cost” quadrant will be difficult to make and expensive, and that means that the team needs to be prepared for a long, hard slog. These ideas may still be valuable, but will set the team on a long and difficult road.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Each quadrant implies a different strategy.

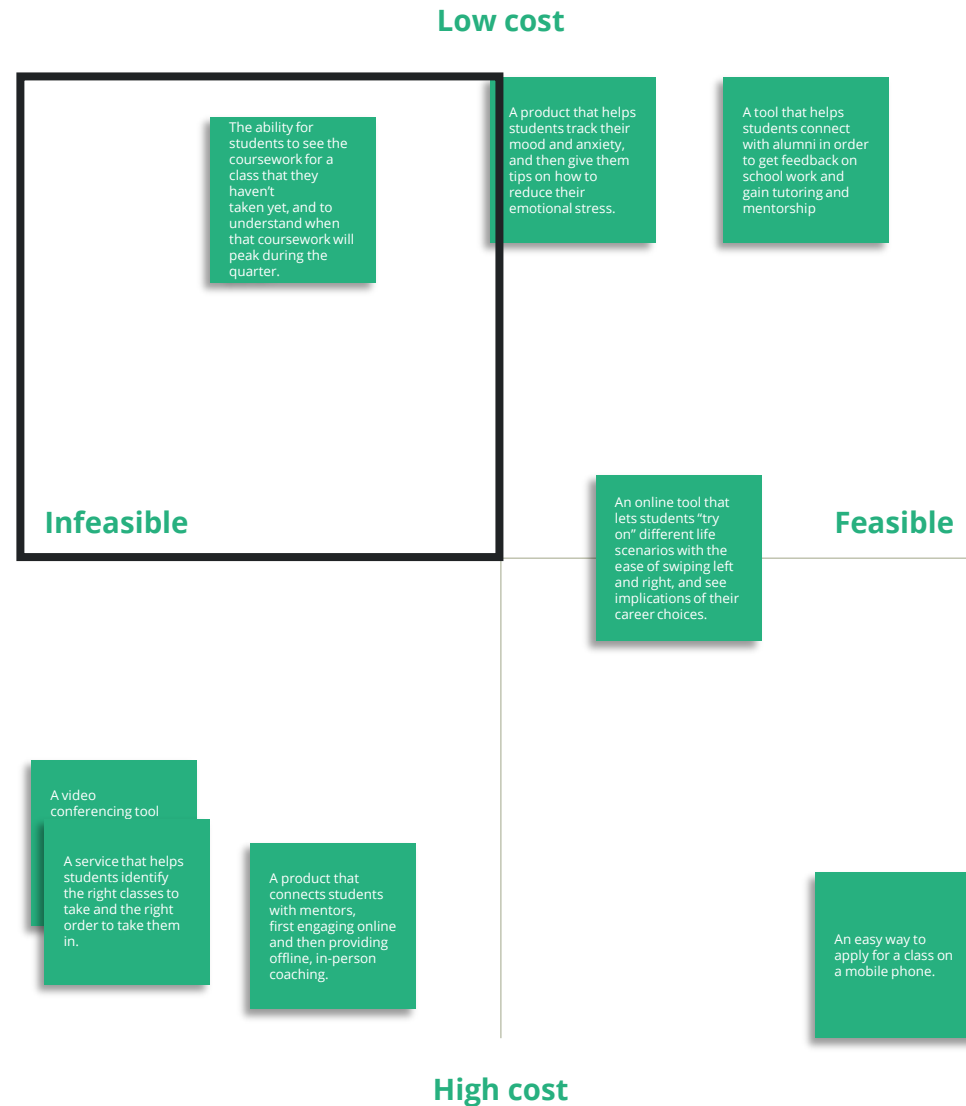
Ideas in the “Feasible” and “High Cost” quadrant will be easy to make, but will be expensive. These ideas require large investment, and that means that the team needs to be prepared to evaluate (and potentially defund) other initiatives in order to produce these.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Each quadrant implies a different strategy.

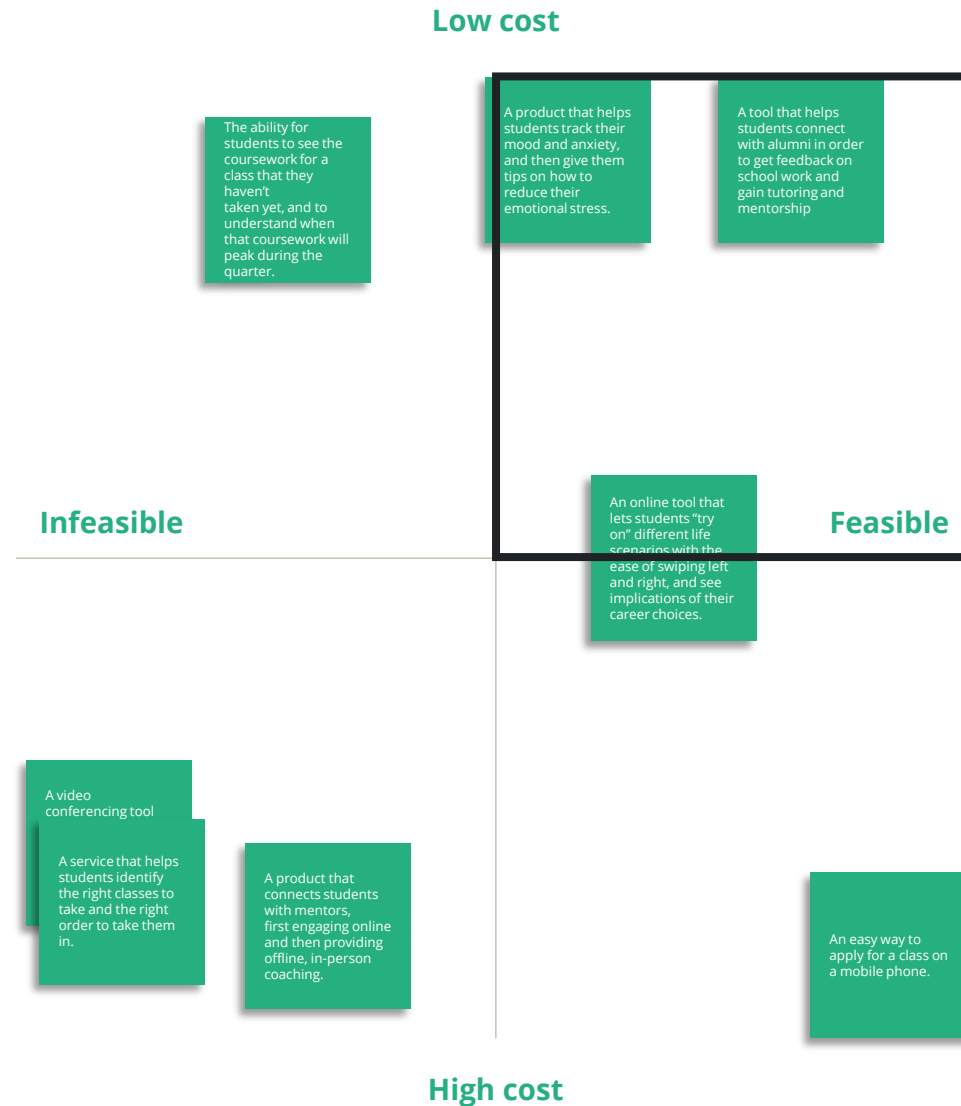
Ideas in the “Infeasible” and “Low Cost” quadrant will be hard to make, but will be cheap. These ideas may be worth the investment because they are inexpensive, but the team should understand that the difficulty in producing them may wear emotionally on the group.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Each quadrant implies a different strategy.

Ideas in the “Feasible” and “Low Cost” quadrant are the easiest to make and the least expensive, and these should be considered as some of the most important ideas to pursue.



A 2x2 evaluative framework

How it looks in action:



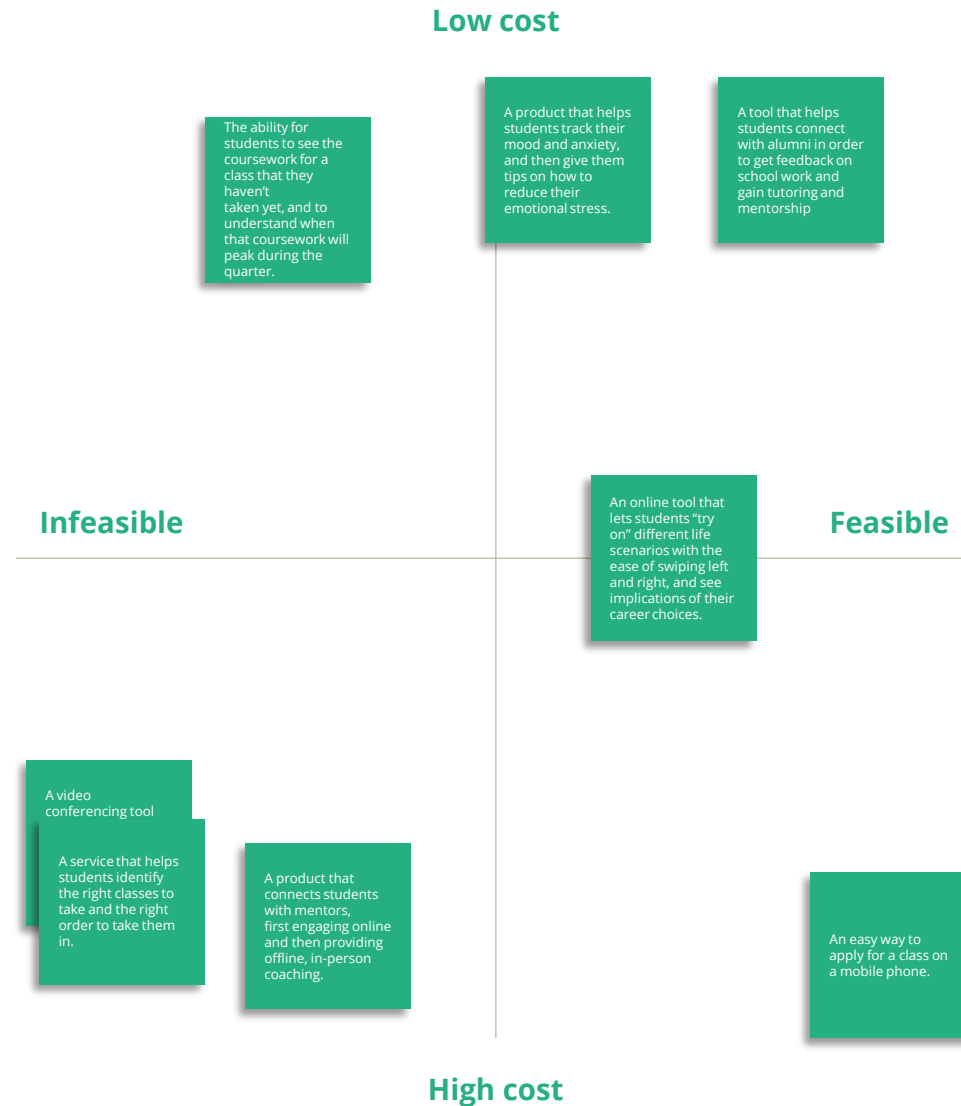
A 2x2 evaluative framework

When all of the ideas are on the grid, reflect on the “best” ones.

Examine each of the ideas that have been considered the “best” (often the least expensive and the most feasible).

Explore these questions:

- Are these ideas in line with your corporate strategy?
- Do they make sense, given your understanding of the competitive landscape?
- Would they energize the team and support your product and service portfolio?



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Now, stack rank the ideas.

A stack rank forces a prioritization where no ideas can be equal. This means that the team:

- Has alignment around what each idea is and why it is valuable
- Has discussed each idea in enough detail as to make a prioritization order
- Has made decision about every single idea, forcing a commitment of priority



A 2x2 evaluative framework

Finally, develop user goal statements for the highest-ranked idea.

Select the most important (or highest-ranked) idea, and identify what goals a user will have as they use that tool.

A goal is an end-state: it describes what someone hopes to achieve by using a particular new product or service.

A goal statement describes value: it indicates the benefits of an innovation.

A tool that helps students connect with alumni in order to get feedback on school work and gain tutoring and mentorship

User goals:

A student wants to get help with their school work

A student wants to gain confidence in their choices

A student wants a supportive mentor

An alumni wants to give back to their university

An alumni wants to act as a mentor

A 2x2 evaluative framework

Generate the 2x2 as a team.

Generating the 2x2 in a group will lead to a more thoughtful and considered arrangement of notes. Working in a group:

Ensures alignment, as the team was present for, participated in, and has ownership over the process

Forces conversation around each idea to make sure that everyone understands what it is and what it does

Encourages the group to constantly refine their view of what expensive means, and what feasible means

A 2x2 evaluative framework

Summary

A lateral thinking exercise (like insight combination) generates a large amount of new ideas. In order to provoke new ideas, we temporarily suspended disbelief and tempered negative critique.

Now, we'll reintroduce judgement in order to determine which ideas have potential and which are too costly or infeasible to pursue.

A 2x2 is a form of evaluative downselection, giving us a formal, methodical and rigorous way to move from bluesky concepts to practical innovations.

Creating the 2x2 is a collaborative effort that helps reinforce alignment around a particular idea. The 2x2 acts as "subjective objective" criteria: once the team agrees on the method and the axis, the tool becomes a way to add rigor to an otherwise subjective process.

Thank you!

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