



WEIGHTED PROS AND CONS WORKSHEET

Step 1: Write down the question you want to answer, the problem statement. The problem must have only two solutions, an either or dilemma. Example: Should we rent an apartment or buy a house?

Problem Statement - _____

Step 2: Set a period of time (10, 20, 30 minutes) and then list all the pros (the positives) and all the cons (the negatives) for one side of the argument, e.g. should we buy a house?

Pros	Weight	Cons	Weight
Sum:			

Step 3: Now with all the pros and cons listed, go back through each one and write down a value from one (1) to ten (10). A one means the pro/con is really not important at all while a ten indicates the pro/con is extremely important.

Step 4: Add up each column. Whichever sum is larger provides the answer to the problem statement.

Example:

Problem Statement - Should we buy a house or rent an apartment?

10 minutes: Should we buy a house?

Pros	Weight	Cons	Weight
Investment that could go up in value		Could go down in value	
Not throwing money away on rent		30 year commitment	
Can decorate, customize, paint the walls		Maintenance costs, if something breaks we have to fix it	
More privacy, no shared walls, can host parties			
Can have pets			
Backyard			

Now we go through and weight each pro and each con.

Pros	Weight	Cons	Weight
Investment that could go up in value	3	Could go down in value	4
Not throwing money away on rent	6	30 year commitment	10
Can decorate, customize, paint the walls	3	Maintenance costs, if something breaks we have to fix it	3
More privacy, no shared walls, can host parties	2		
Can have pets	8		
Backyard	2		
Sum:	24		17

In the example the answer is clearly to buy a house over renting an apartment. And while as outsiders we may question how much weight is given to "can have pets", the weight given to any one item is solely up to the solution seeker. In this example the solution seeker appears to be an animal lover.