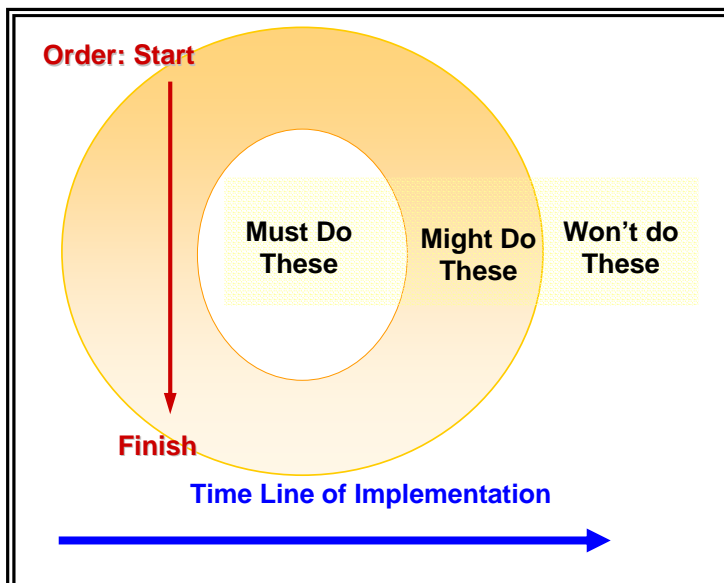


# Donut Priorities

**What** This is a technique for prioritizing potential actions and strategies from a large list.

**When** It is used when the number of possibilities are difficult to uncover the most important ones for action or for the order of action/implementation. A real key to this is that the group doesn't have to argue the validity of every item. They respect the importance of everything on the wall, even those that won't make the first cut and are open to the possibility of managing the amount of work as the group moves forward.

- How**
1. **Draw A Donut:** Post 2 to 4 Flipchart Sheets on the wall and draw a large donut in the center as shown below.
  2. **Explain the Process:** The Center of the Donut means "there's no point in doing anything at all if we can't do these." The area outside the donut means "we can't/won't do these at this time", perhaps because of sequencing issues (prerequisites), budget, feasibility... The donut itself means "these are all be great things to do if and when we can."
  3. **Make up Post-Its for All items:** Make a post-it note for each item up for consideration, and put all of the post-its on the donut itself.
  4. **Open Discussion:** Start the discussion by selecting an item and asking in which position it belongs, Inside, On, or Outside the donut? If an item is to be placed in the center of the donut test it by asking, "Do we HAVE to do it right now?" If not, move it out of the center. Continue discussion until all items have been placed.
  5. **Organize Priorities:** Starting with the center of the donut, organize each group by the order that they should be implemented in. have the group place them in a rough timeline. Group less critical items into logical units of work, and describe/name each of the subsequent groupings. They will also likely identify a number of items that are relatively cheap and easy and might as well be done with the first round --- but they should remain as "second tier" items, with the understanding that we want to do everything in the second tier, but we can delay any of those for time, budget, or any other issues.



6. **Determine Scope of initial implementation:** Discuss and set the initial implementation timeline. The group should leave the session with a first phase and a sense of what the next phases will be based around. They should expect to repeat the exercise periodically, because things change.

*Similar to a High-Low Activity (Best Practices in Facilitation, David Sibbet, the Grove Consultants International, page 103)*