

The BRIDGEs Rapid Planning Method

Teams use this process to quickly analyze a situation and create a prioritized plan for taking action. The framework is specifically designed to reveal the cause of the problem, study and analyze the complex context, weigh all risks and opportunities, and develop an optimal decision, new product, or strategy.



Purpose:

To analyze a problem, design a situation, and plan solution steps for it.

Intended Outcomes:

- A prioritized plan for next steps
- Clarity about the situation and the relative priorities
- Agreement to the plan

Preparation

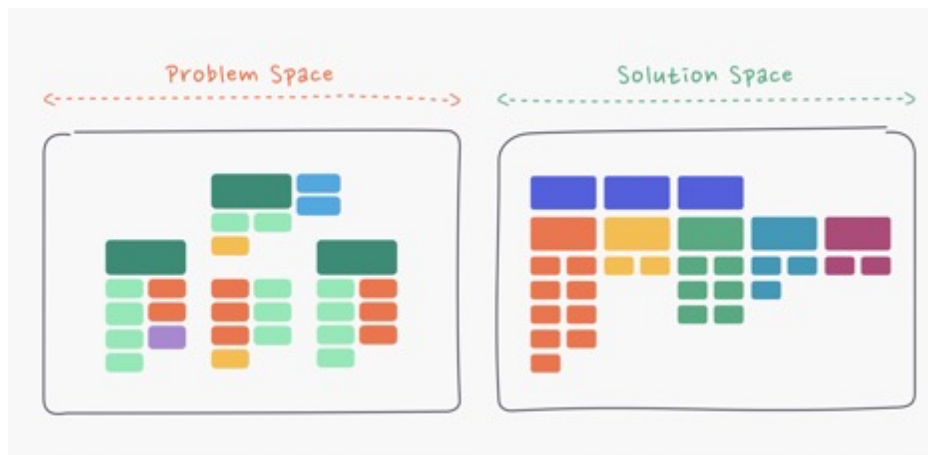
Begin by assembling the materials you'll use during the session.

Physical tools	Virtual tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whiteboard, or a table (basically any surface);• Set of colored stickers (green, red, yellow, violet, blue, additional colors);• Pens or markers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Miro, Figma, Mural or any other virtual whiteboard.

If using a virtual board, you'll need to create cards in advance. See this free [Figma library](#) that already has the necessary set of all elements.

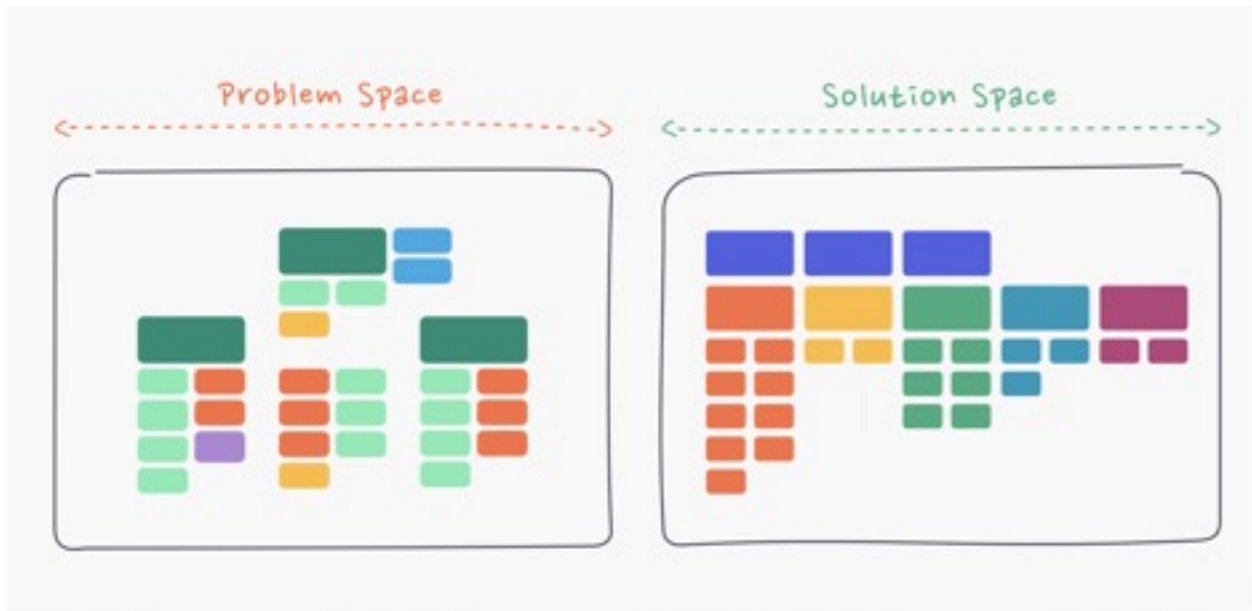
Board Setup

For the session, you'll need to divide a surface (whiteboard, table, etc.) into two halves. These would be your **Problem Space** and **Solution Space**.



The framework suggests using colored cards or stickers for **Subject(s)**, **Solution variations**, and **descriptors** to visualize the context. This way, it's much easier to perceive complex multi-level data.

Every element has a specific shape and color that distinguishes this element from all the rest. Thus, Subject is a big green card. Solution variations are dark blue. Descriptor cards are smaller. Benefits are green, Issues are red, Risks are yellow, Domain knowledge is violet, and Goals are blue.



During a BRIDGEs session, you'll need to prioritize the context elements. There are many tools for that. You can opt for the one you are more familiar with. Teams at Railsware prefer the **MoSCoW prioritization method** that defines Must-haves, Should-haves, Could-haves, and Won't-haves.

Process overview

The BRIDGEs framework consists of four steps. These are Problem description, Prioritization, Solution variations, and Solution breakdown.

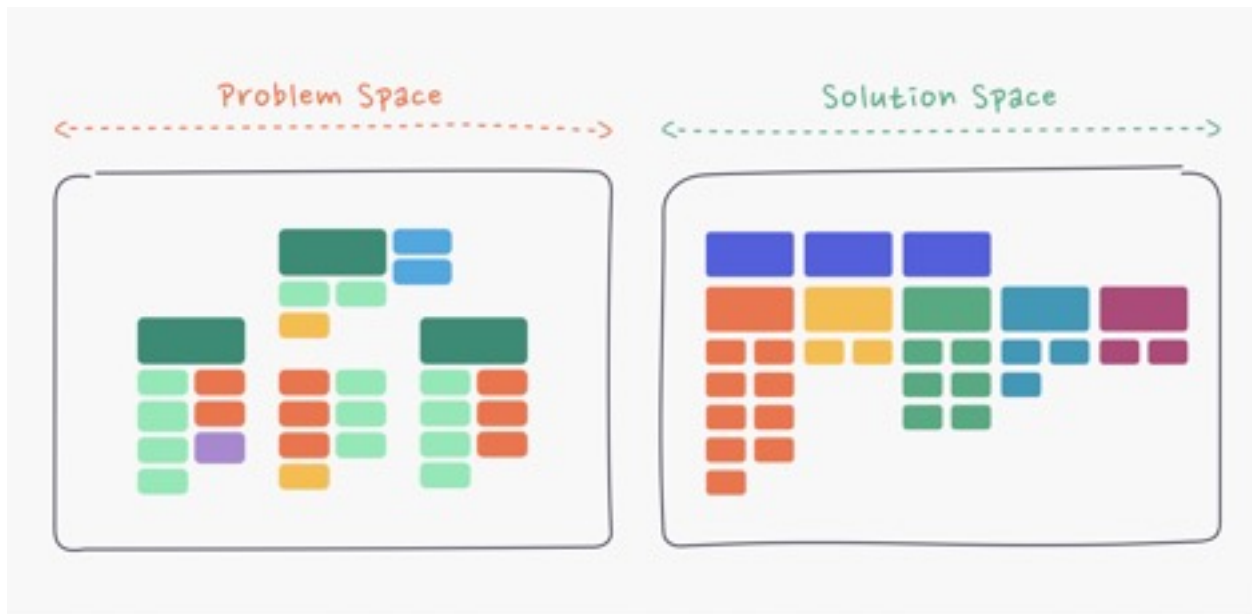
Step 1: Problem description

Although it's a problem description phase, the BRIDGEs framework suggests first starting with the Subject(s) definition. A Subject is basically anything that benefits from problem-solving or new solution development. It can be a person, role, institution, operation, etc.

When the Subject(s) is defined, move on to the descriptors. Brainstorm alone, or with your team, that includes subject-matter experts, and add Subject's descriptors to the Problem Space. Make sure the main Goal is tightly connected with the main Subject.

Step 2: Prioritization

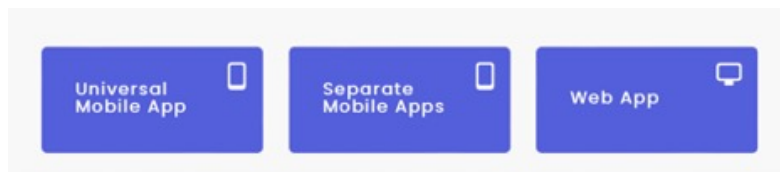
When the descriptors are on the board, prioritize them using the MoSCoW prioritization technique or any other approach you prefer. The prioritization doesn't depend on the descriptor type. An Issue can have a higher priority than a Benefit or vice versa.



This exercise helps you focus on what matters more and can significantly influence the vision of the future solution or decision.

Step 3: Solution Variations

This step takes place on the Solution Space, where you list probable high-level solutions to a problem. These Solution variations have to potentially close the most critical needs from the Problem space.



At this point, you can treat each Solution variation as a Subject and define their Benefits, Risks, Issues, and Domain knowledge to assess each option. Such deconstruction lets you assess each variation and find out which option is easier to implement, which has hidden complications, and which can offer some unpredictable advantages.

Step 4: Solution Breakdown

If you're creating a complex multidimensional solution, its decomposition becomes essential. At this step, you need to break down the solution you're opting for into smaller chunks, like epics and tasks.

Use new colors for each epic and nested tasks. Regularly go back to the Problem space to match the high-priority descriptors with the corresponding epics and tasks. It will help you not to lose any critical aspects.

Prioritize epics and tasks using the MoSCoW technique to see the tasks that matter the most for the future solution.

Now, you have the solution in front of you. It's time to make a plan for its implementation. Rearrange the epic cards into a development roadmap.



Resources

Check the links below to find out more about the BRIDGEs framework and get the maximum benefit of the tool:

- BRIDGEs video explanation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEwDerwS8TI>
- BRIDGEs process description in detail: <https://railsware.com/bridges-framework/process/>
- How to prepare for the BRIDGEs session: <https://railsware.com/bridges-framework/how-to-prepare/>
- Bridges tips and best practices: <https://railsware.com/bridges-framework/best-practices/>
- BRIDGEs Uber example: <https://railsware.com/bridges-framework/uber-case-study/>
- MoSCoW: <https://railsware.com/blog/moscow-prioritization/>