

Removing the 'None' option from JIRA select lists, or why radio buttons may be better

Say you have an field called `Security Impact`, a select list with possible values **Yes**, **No** and **Unsure**. You want to force users to consciously pick an option, so you mark the field 'Required' in the field configuration. JIRA displays this as:



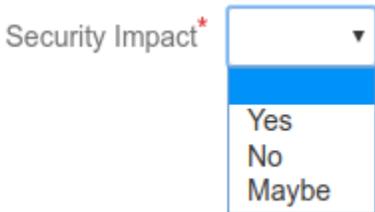
JIRA has added a fake 'None' option at the beginning, meaning "No value has yet been selected".

In most cases the word "None" makes sense (e.g. `Priority: None`), but not here: "None" is identical in meaning to our real option, "No".

How do we make "None" go away? There are 3 options I know of.

Hack JIRA's select list template to replace 'None' with "

In a better world, Atlassian wouldn't have used 'None' to mean "no value has been selected": they would have used a blank line:



You can get exactly this if you don't mind tinkering with JIRA source. Here is the diff:

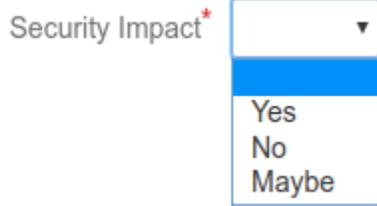
```
diff --git a/atlassian-jira/WEB-INF/classes/templates/plugins/fields/edit/edit-select.vm b/atlassian-jira/WEB-INF/classes/templates/plugins/fields/edit/edit-select.vm
--- a/atlassian-jira/WEB-INF/classes/templates/plugins/fields/edit/edit-select.vm
+++ b/atlassian-jira/WEB-INF/classes/templates/plugins/fields/edit/edit-select.vm
@@ -5,7 +5,7 @@
     <option value="-1">${!$n.getText("common.words.none")}</option>
   #else
     #if ( !$configs.default )
-    <option value="">${!$n.getText("common.words.none")}</option>
+    <option value=""></option>
     #end
   #end
 #foreach ($option in $configs.options)
```

(You can find similar advice at <https://confluence.atlassian.com/jirakb/how-to-remove-none-from-a-select-list-custom-field-144212308.html>, but that KB article removes 'None' altogether, leaving the top option the default, which is wrong)

Don't be tempted to use a JIRA translation plugin to map `common.words.none` to "", as that will break many other uses where 'None' is the correct meaning.

Add a fake whitespace option, and mark it the default

This achieves our blank line, but in a different way:



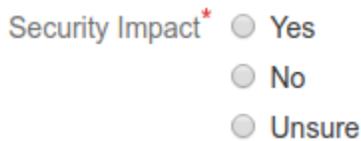
When a select list is marked required, and has a default value, then 'None' disappears (<https://jira.atlassian.com/browse/JRASERVER-3666>). So the idea here is to add a select-list option with value " ", and mark it the default.

This works, but breaks JIRA's enforcement of the field's required'ness. Users can create issues with the default value " " selected.

This problem can be avoided using ScriptRunner Behaviours, setting an error on the field if its value is " ". This works, but Behaviours is bypassed by the REST API and Automation for JIRA.

Use radio buttons instead of a select list

Normally the choice of radio buttons vs. select lists is cosmetic, but not here. When marked required, radio buttons behave correctly, with no option selected by default:



Radio buttons don't have the "something must always be selected" behaviour that HTML select-lists do, so Atlassian didn't have to add a "no value selected" option (and get it wrong).

Conclusion

In order of preference:

- If you use JIRA Cloud, or don't want to maintain a JIRA hack, using radio buttons is the way to go (tip: ScriptRunner has a built-in script to migrate field types).
- If you don't mind maintaining a source hack, fixing the .vm file is the cleanest option.
- If you really have to, a fake blank option can work, as long as you don't mind the extra implementation work, and the limitation of the Behaviours plugin.