



## Time Management Matrix

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### **Purpose**

Although time seems to fly by, we all have the same 24 hours a day. So why is it that some people are able to accomplish so much more than the majority of the population? The objective of the Time Management Matrix is to question whether a certain activity brings you closer to your goals or not. If this is the case, these responsibilities need to be prioritized over those tasks that might demand your time, but do not contribute to your goals. Delay activities that do not contribute any significant output until more important tasks are finished. The following is an explanation of the four quadrants:

### **Resources**

Covey, S.R. (1989). *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Franklin Covey Company

### **Instructions**

#### **Quadrant 1 – Urgent and Important**

Activities in Quadrant 1 can be differentiated into items that could not have been foreseen and those items that could. The latter can be avoided by developing plans and paying close attention to their execution. This quadrant should only contain those activities and responsibilities that require your immediate attention. This space is reserved for the following emergencies and extremely important deadlines, or when a major crisis arises, and you have to postpone other tasks.

- Crises
- Pressing problems
- Projects that are deadline driven
- Emergencies
- Last-minute preparations

#### **Quadrant 2 – Not Urgent, Important**

Items found in Quadrant 2 do not have a high urgency but can play an important role in the future. This quadrant is not only reserved for strategic planning, but also for items related to health, education, exercise, and career. Investing time in these areas might not be urgent at the moment, but in the long run, they are of the greatest importance. Pay close attention to ensure you have scheduled enough time for Quadrant 2 activities and to avoid them from becoming Quadrant 1 items. Doing so will allow you to increase your capability of finishing your tasks in time. Use this space for:

- Planning
- Preparing
- Training
- Exercise, health, and recreation



### **Quadrant 3 – Urgent, Not Important**

Quadrant 3 summarizes items that appear to have a high urgency, but are not at all important. Some of these activities might be entirely ego-driven, without contributing any value. In fact, these activities are obstacles that stand between you and your goals. If possible, try to delegate these items or consider rescheduling them. If another person is causing you to perform Quadrant 3 tasks, it could be appropriate to politely decline their request. If this is not an option, try to avoid being constantly interrupted by appointing timeslots to those that often need your help. This way, you can address all issues at once, without regularly interrupting your concentration. Use this space for:

- Interruptions
- Meetings

### **Quadrant 4 – Not Urgent, Not Important**

Quadrant 4 is used for all activities that do not contribute any value at all—the obvious time wasters. All of these activities are nothing more than distractions; avoid them as much as you can. You should also try to eliminate all items on this list, no matter how entertaining. Use this space for:

- Trivia
- Time wasters
- Surfing the Internet without purpose
- Watching TV for hours

Time Management Matrix Worksheet

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	1	2
Not important	3	4