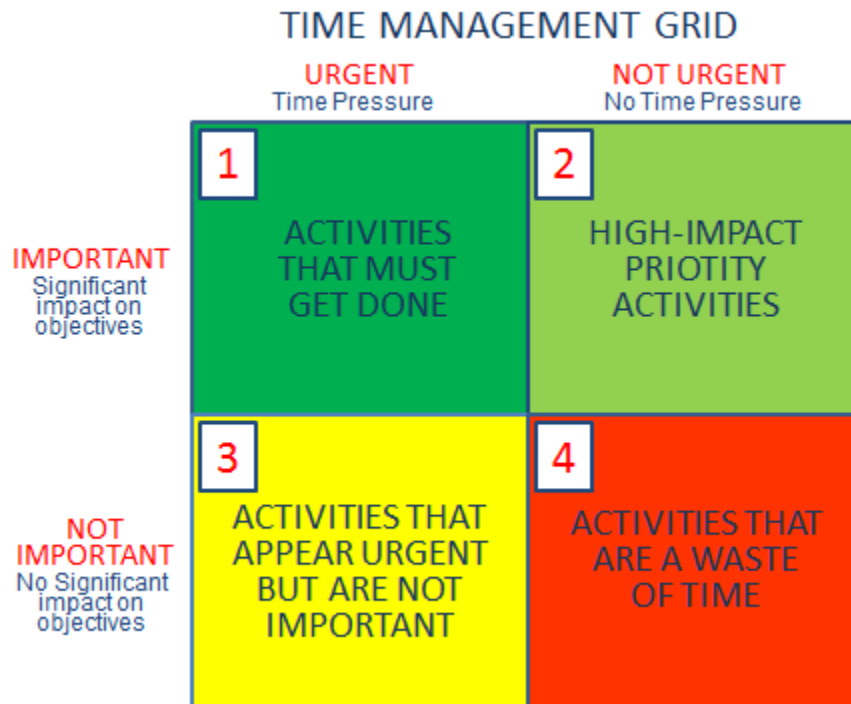


TIME MANAGEMENT GRID

The following Time Management Grid which is believed to have been developed by Dwight Eisenhower, was popularized by Stephen Covey in his popular book *First Things First*. It can serve as a highly effective guide for time planning and scheduling.



This Time Management grid consists of four quadrants formed by plotting two concepts: “Important vs. Not Important” (vertical axis) against “Urgent vs. Not Urgent” (horizontal axis). The actions you undertake on a daily basis are either *important* in that they contribute to your mission-vision, values, objectives and high-priority goals or they are *not important*. Furthermore, the actions you take are either *urgent*—there is implication of immediate time pressure or they are *not urgent*—there is no immediate time pressure. Consequently, everything we do in life falls into one of the four categories represented by quadrants 1 through 4.

Quadrant 1.

Activities that fall into quadrant 1 are both important and urgent. These are activities that simply *must get done*. Often they represent emergency situations. Perhaps a major client has an important need that must be handled immediately, or something unexpected happens in your personal life that takes priority over everything else. With Quadrant 1 activities you simply don’t have the option of putting it off.

Quadrant 2.

Quadrant 2 consists of activities that are important but are not immediately urgent. Virtually everything that improves the quality of your work and life falls into quadrant 2. These include activities that pertain to developing relationships, your personal development, seizing new opportunities, developing and empowering others, problem prevention, preparation and planning, and *constructive* recreation and diversion fall into quadrant 2. These activities represent your priorities, and it is on these activities on which you should be focusing most of the time. These are the activities that you should be efficiently scheduling into your daily routine.

Quadrant 3.

Quadrant 3 activities are those that may appear important simply because they present themselves as being urgent. Activities such as responding to emails and telephone calls, attending meetings and responding to the requests of others may be urgent, but they may not contribute to your personal development or advancing your mission/vision or important work and/or personal goals. Quadrant 3 activities can be challenging to handle. Such activities should be avoided or minimized as much as possible, and if participation in them is necessary, your involvement should at least be put off to a time that does not detract from the truly important activities that you have scheduled. Quadrant 3 activities can often be prevented from happening altogether by devoting greater attention to the preparation and planning activities that comprise Quadrant 2.

Quadrant 4.

Activities categorized into Quadrant 4 are those that are neither important nor urgent. They are time wasters that provide little if any return on the time you invest in them. Quadrant 4 activities are little more than seductive distractions such as daydreaming, worrying or aimlessly surfing the web, which only serve to steal away valuable and irreplaceable time that you should be devoting to Quadrant 2. Quadrant 4 activities are time and effectiveness killers that should be vigorously avoided. In other words quadrant 4 should be empty!