

Time Management Matrix (with acknowledgement to Steven Covey)

You can divide your activity into either URGENT or IMPORTANT. The following diagram and explanation should help:

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Quadrant I	Quadrant II
Not Important	Quadrant III	Quadrant IV

Quadrant I. *Both urgent and important*

This quadrant deals with significant results that require *immediate* attention. They are usually crises or problems. We all have some Quadrant I activities this quadrant consumes many people. They are crisis managers, problem minded people, deadline driven producers. If you perpetually focus on this Quadrant, it gets bigger and bigger and dominates you (*and others around you*). The effect is to put out fires and suffer burnout and stress.

Quadrant II. *Not urgent but important*

This is the heart of effective personal management dealing with things that are not urgent but important. This quadrant covers all the things we know we need to do but somehow seldom get round to doing because they are not urgent. It is the project you know you must start and really deliver – the one that will make a real difference.

Quadrant III. *Not important but urgent*

Many people who spend their time in this quadrant react to things that are urgent assuming they are important. But, the urgency of these matters *is often based on the priorities and*

expectations of others. In other words, other people set the agenda - people are reactive rather than pro active

Quadrant IV. *Not important and not urgent*

Many people feel comfortable operating in this area. But, working here for long periods of time means they are not making any contribution to the organisation. The individual who spends a lot of time in this quadrant will say they are "efficient". Efficiency relates to 'inputs' (or activity) - we should be concerned with outputs, or *effectiveness*. Someone who spends much time in this quadrant will not be effective as they are too busy doing unimportant work.

NOTE : **Effective** people spend very little time in Quadrants III. and IV. because urgent or not, they are *not* important.