



**ATLANTA CHALLENGE**

Building extraordinary teams and leaders

# PRIORITY MATRIX

HOW TO RECLAIM YOUR TIME AND  
FOCUS ON WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT.





## PRIMARY & SECONDARY STRESS RESPONSE



**Fight**  
**Flight**  
**Freeze**  
**Fawn**



**Argue / Criticize**  
**Avoid / Play along**  
**Clam-up / Silent**  
**Flatter / Please**



## URGENT VS NOT URGENT

How do you spend your time?

Are you constantly interrupted by others?

Do you seem to move from one crisis to another?

Are you willing to do what you can to take some of your time back?



## URGENT VS NOT URGENT

### BACKGROUND

President Eisenhower used the “*Eisenhower Principle*” to organize his tasks. He is quoted as saying, “*What is important is seldom urgent and what is urgent is seldom important.*”

Stephen Covey made these concepts mainstream, calling it “*The Urgent/Important Matrix*” in his famous book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
HIGH IMPORTANCE	<b>Q1: MUST DO NOW</b> Minor and Major Crises Pressing Problems Deadlines Meetings Projects	<b>Q2: SHOULD DO</b> Preparation Prevention Planning Values Clarification Building Relationships Clarifying priorities Goal Setting Develop new systems Personal development Staff development
LOW IMPORTANCE	<b>Q3: PRESSURE TO DO NOW</b> Needless interruptions Interruptions from Others Unimportant Meetings Unimportant Phone calls Unimportant Mail/Email Other People’s Minor Issues	<b>Q4: SHOULD NOT DO - BUT WANT TO</b> Trivia “Busy” work Some phone calls “Escape” activities Irrelevant mail or email Excessive TV, Internet usage Excessive relaxing/sleeping Self-critical thoughts Gossiping & griping



# URGENT VS NOT URGENT

Use the chart below to list specific examples of your daily tasks in their corresponding quadrant.

Estimate what percentage of your time each day is spent in each quadrant.

Be completely honest with yourself.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
HIGH IMPORTANCE	<b>Q1: MUST DO NOW</b>          <p style="text-align: center;">_____ %</p>	<b>Q2: SHOULD DO</b>          <p style="text-align: center;">_____ %</p>
LOW IMPORTANCE	<b>Q3: PRESSURE TO DO NOW</b>          <p style="text-align: center;">_____ %</p>	<b>Q4: SHOULD NOT DO - BUT WANT TO</b>          <p style="text-align: center;">_____ %</p>



## URGENT VS NOT URGENT

Which quadrant represents where you spend MOST of your time?

How does that feel?

**Q1** - Crises - If you're spending most of your time here, how are you dealing with stress?

**Q2** - Goals & Planning - Congratulations! How could you make sure you stay in this quadrant?

**Q3** - Interruptions - You may need to find ways to say "No" to others.

**Q4** - Distractions - You may need to find ways to say "No" to yourself!

What is the main thing getting in the way of you managing your time better?

Where might you be judging or sabotaging yourself?



## YOUR NOT-TO-DO LIST

This exercise will help you STOP doing things that slow you down or get in the way of you achieving your goals. You probably already have an idea of things you could stop doing. Use this tool as an 'efficiency boost' or complete it monthly to refocus and refine your time management.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1: Write down what you would like to get out of this exercise.

*(eg. be more focused at work, get home earlier, be less stressed, stick to diet)*

2: Keep the worksheet on the following page with you and fill it out throughout the day OR think about a typical day. For each part of the day (morning, afternoon, evening) ask yourself "*Where do I distract myself?*"

The goal is to identify things NOT to do! These are usually activities where you distract or sabotage yourself. To stop doing something, it is helpful to have an alternate activity planned in advance.

The more specific you can be the better. Areas to give serious thought to are your email, internet, phone usage, eating and exercise habits, and goals you never quite seem to achieve.

Try to come up with at least three Not To-Do items to maximize your success.



# URGENT VS NOT URGENT

<b>DISTRACTION</b> (be specific so you are clear on how you distract yourself)	<b>IMPACT</b> (be specific to get the TRUE impact)	<b>NOT-DO LIST</b>	<b>WILL-DO LIST</b>
<i><b>EXAMPLE (More focused at work):</b> I keep stopping to check email &amp; get distracted answering it</i>	<i>I lose focus for about 30 mins EACH time!</i>	<i>Answering each email as it arrives</i>	<i>1) Turn off email pinger 2) Check email at 9am/12pm &amp; 4.30pm</i>
<i><b>EXAMPLE (Stick to diet):</b> I keep working until about 2pm and I am SO hungry that I need food, fast!</i>	<i>I go next door for fast food &amp; don't stick to my diet!</i>	<i>1) Working through lunch! 2) Having 'unhealthy' fast food for lunch</i>	<i>1) Either take lunch OR go to health food store 2) Set alarm to stop for lunch</i>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

*Post this page somewhere obvious (like your fridge or computer) so you can refer to it often.*







# TIME MANAGEMENT

## GET MOTIVATED

How will your life be different if you managed your time more effectively? What's in it for you? List all the benefits to you of managing your time better including at home, in relationships and the workplace!

What COULD you do differently? It's time to do some brainstorming - write all the ideas of things you could do. Note: You don't have to action them - this is a brainstorming exercise for possibilities.

What is the KEY action that would support all the others?

## COMMITMENT

It's time to identify 1-3 specific actions you will commit to. Make sure this action is something you can implement right away - or in the next day or so. Note: Only pick actions you are 100% sure you will complete - and if necessary make the action smaller until you can commit one hundred percent!

Action 1

By When

Action 2

By When

Action 3

By When