

The Time Management Matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	I. ACTIVITIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crises • Pressing problems • Deadline-driven projects 	II. ACTIVITIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention, PC activities • Relationship building • Recognizing new opportunities • Planning, recreation
Not Important	III. ACTIVITIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions, some calls • Some mail, some reports • Some meetings • Proximate, pressing matters • Popular activities 	IV. ACTIVITIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trivia, busy work • Some mail • Some phone calls • Time wasters • Pleasant Activities

According to Stephen Covey, "Two factors that define an activity are 'urgent' and 'important.'" **Urgent** activities demand our immediate attention: for example, a ringing phone is difficult for many of us to ignore. **Important** activities are result-oriented. These contribute to our mission and our highest-priority goals.

Effective people, says Covey, stay out of Quadrants III and IV because these activities may be urgent or not, but they are not important. It's better to spend most of our time in Quadrant II because effective people are opportunity-minded, not problem-minded, and most of our opportunities come from activities in Quadrant II.

Questions/Tasks for you:

1. What activities comprise the bulk of your day?
2. In what quadrant can these activities be placed?
3. To shrink Q. I down to size requires thinking proactively: preventing potential crises, building relationships, feeding opportunities and starving problems. What can you do to minimize your time in Q. I?