

Important-Urgent Quadrant

Urgent

Not Urgent

Important

I. Activities

- Crises
- Pressing Problems
- Deadline-driven Projects
- Putting out fires

Your Role

- Manage these tasks only
- Delegate, delegate, delegate

II. Activities

- Prevention
- Principle centered activities
- Relationship building
- ID'ing new opportunities
- Planning

Your Role

- Make this your main focus
- Increase your time here

Not Important

III. Activities

- Interruptions: some calls, mail, reports or meetings
- Emergencies that are not your problem
- Busy work

Your Role

- Avoid!
- Minimize investment here

IV. Activities

- Time wasters (stuff you do to avoid other tasks)
- Some mail & phone calls
- Pleasant or entertaining activities

Your Role

- Limit time here
- Use to minimize stress

- Living and working in Q1 leads to stress, crises management and burnout.
- Those in Q3 may think they're in Q1 because they believe urgent = important.
- If you complete Q3 tasks regularly because they're someone else's priority, you'll have a short-term focus and end up feeling victimized or out of control.
- Effective people stay out of Q3 & Q4 and shrink Q1 by spending more time in Q2.
- Q2 takes discipline but leads to vision, perspective, balance, control and fewer crises.