

Eisenhower Matrix

Quadrant I: Important and Urgent

These are the tasks that demand immediate attention—crises, urgent problems, or deadlines. Often, these tasks were originally important but not urgent (Quadrant II) until they were repeatedly delayed.

Although emergencies will always arise, the goal is to reduce the number of urgent tasks by prioritizing Quadrant II activities before they become last-minute problems.

Examples of Quadrant I tasks:

- ✓ Meeting an imminent deadline
- ✓ Handling an unexpected work crisis
- ✓ Responding to critical client issues
- ✓ Completing urgent financial matters

Best Practice: Act immediately with full focus, avoid multitasking, plan ahead to prevent urgency, and break large urgent tasks into manageable steps.

Quadrant II: Important but Not Urgent

These tasks help achieve long-term goals but do not require immediate action. If neglected, they eventually move into Quadrant I, leading to stress and poor work quality.

The key to productivity is dedicating more time to Quadrant II tasks—breaking them down over time instead of rushing them at the last minute.

Examples of Quadrant II tasks:

- ✓ Studying for an exam week in advance
- ✓ Strategic planning and career development
- ✓ Exercise and self-care activities
- ✓ Learning new skills or personal growth

Best Practice: Always handle Quadrant I tasks first, then shift focus to Quadrant II to prevent unnecessary urgency.

Quadrant III: Not Important but Urgent

These tasks demand immediate attention but do not contribute to personal or professional goals. Often, they are external interruptions that consume time without adding value.

While not necessarily bad, these tasks need to be balanced with Quadrants I and II to prevent productivity loss. The solution? Set boundaries and politely decline tasks that do not align with priorities.

Examples of Quadrant III tasks:

- ✓ Unnecessary meetings or calls
- ✓ Requests from colleagues that aren't a priority
- ✓ Handling minor issues that can be delegated
- ✓ Last-minute favour requests from others

Best Practice: Learn to say no or delegate whenever possible so you can focus on high-impact work.

Quadrant IV: Not Important and Not Urgent

These tasks are distractions that consume time without providing real value. If left unchecked, they can take up most of the day, leaving little room for productive work.

That said, not all Quadrant IV activities should be eliminated. Some downtime—like watching TV or scrolling social media—can be useful for relaxation. The key is moderation and ensuring they don't interfere with higher-priority tasks.

Examples of Quadrant IV tasks:

- ✓ Excessive social media or TV time
- ✓ Mindless web browsing without purpose
- ✓ Attending unnecessary events
- ✓ Procrastination activities that delay meaningful work

Best Practice: Push these activities until all other important tasks are completed. Enjoy leisure time without letting it dominate your day.

	IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT
URGENT	Quadrant I (Do Immediately)	Quadrant II (Delegate)
NOT URGENT	Quadrant III (Schedule)	Quadrant IV (Do Later/Delete)