

# TIME MANAGEMENT

## Urgent VS Important: Prioritize

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Do you know how to prioritize your tasks?

Not all your duties are equally important and of course not all of them are the same urgency. Following you can discover some of the keys that will help you to differentiate: The urgency of what is important and set priorities.

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Engage Your Team With Learning They Love

## Do you know how to prioritize your tasks?

Who hasn't been overwhelmed by their work pace and lost sight of the really important things? We live in a global society, everything that surrounds us happens very quickly and professionally most of us have assumed the precept that "If I am always busy, then I'm important."

But being too busy and overloaded with work doesn't always mean that we are really productive. It's important to differentiate what you do from what you really get. **Above all, be aware that QUANTITY does not determine QUALITY.**

It is very common to be very busy but not really effective. To simply react to what happens every day, without being aware of what is really important. Not all obligations are equally important and of course not all are equally urgent. It is essential to learn to differentiate the urgent from the important and to learn to set priorities.

When time is running out and we don't manage to carry out all that we have set ourselves, we usually blame it on excessive workloads, external factors or other people's failures, but... Have you ever considered that in most cases you are the cause of your lack of productivity?

Don't waste your time justifying yourself in how busy you are and **start focusing on what you get:**

- What you finish.
- What you achieve
- What you solve

It is important that you differentiate between what is "important" and what is "urgent". **How can we do that?**

In many cases, priority is given to tasks that are not really important.

Inadequately, this causes that gradually everything is becoming urgent and they appear situations of stress and lack of control.

**All those tasks that have a direct impact on the achievement of the goals are important.** The importance of a task is marked by the degree of influence it has on the ultimate achievement of an objective.

**The tasks that are implicit in the urgency of time are urgent.** The urgency of the task is determined by the consequences of completing it or not in an estimated time. The problem begins when we do not know how to discern between the important and the urgent. Many times we put urgent tasks before important tasks, so that the urgent takes away from us the time of the important, which finally suffers, losing in quality.

Do you know how to distinguish between tasks that are important and those that are urgent?

	URGENT	NON-URGENT
IMPORTANT	<p><u>CRISIS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major Problems.</li> <li>• Urgent work with immediate delivery.</li> <li>• To solve urgent problems or unexpected problems that may arise.</li> </ul>	<p><u>QUALITY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning.</li> <li>• Monitoring, control and quality control.</li> <li>• Training and education.</li> </ul>
NON-IMPORTANT	<p><u>SELF-CHEATING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interruptions.</li> <li>• Telephone calls.</li> <li>• Unproductive meetings.</li> <li>• Some administrative tasks.</li> </ul>	<p><u>TIME THIEVES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine work.</li> <li>• Trivialities.</li> <li>• Some phone calls.</li> <li>• Waste of time on the Internet.</li> <li>• Escape activities.</li> </ul>

## **Which tasks do you think are more critical?**

Both the urgent and the important need your full attention, but it is important that you learn to differentiate them in order to set priorities for action. The following table shows the tasks we usually perform, organized according to what is urgent and important.

## **Would you know how to classify your daily tasks according to this picture?**

To prioritize, it is essential to know how to **assign to each task the importance and urgency that it really has**. If you don't know how to prioritize, you will eventually be overwhelmed, stressed and everything you do will lose quality. We will try to help you distinguish what is important and urgent in order to make the most of your time.

In the **"crisis quadrant"** we place all those tasks that require urgent attention and are also important, as they have a direct impact on results. This quadrant requires a considerable amount of time, since it is the production quadrant, here we frame the tasks that take the bulk of your productivity forward. In this quadrant we place important problems, urgent work with immediate delivery and the solution of urgent contingencies that may arise in our work. Even if this quadrant requires a great deal of time, don't neglect the others, because sometimes many of the urgent tasks that are not important in principle end up passing to the quadrant of the crisis after constantly postponing them and not dedicating the planning they require.

In the **quadrant of quality**, we include those tasks to which we dedicate great planning, monitoring and forecasting. In short, those tasks that require and have a high quality. They are tasks of planning and preparation, such as monitoring and controlling the quality of our work or our own training. It is essential that you scrupulously take care of this quadrant, because if you do not devote the necessary time to it, these tasks will become part of the quadrant of the crisis,

where they will lose in quality notably. If you invest time and dedication in this quadrant with good planning, you will be able to considerably reduce the crisis quadrant.

**The third quadrant is called that of self cheating**, because in most cases the apparent urgency of the tasks makes them take on an important character, although in reality this is not the case. It is here where we meet with calls, meetings, unnecessary visits... even requests or orders from other colleagues, who steal a lot of our time and to whom we give the character of urgent, just to please. Learning to say "No" to some of these kinds of tasks can help you or may not overload the first quadrant.

Finally, we find the **"time thieves" quadrant** as it is home to unnecessary duties and especially the time losses that steal such a precious asset. Who hasn't wasted time on routine work, trivialities, long-distance calls or surfing the Internet? In situations of high stress and high productivity, a break is needed and we use this type of tasks as an escape valve. However, it tries to reduce this type of task to the minimum possible or even make the most of it. For example, use those "necessary" escape times to answer late emails, catch up on the latest news in your sector or to read articles that help you develop. Whatever it takes to keep these tasks from being a time-out. Take advantage of every minute you have, because every minute counts.