

## SETTING GOALS & PRIORITIZING

### TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX

**Adapted from:** The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, **Steven Covey, 1990**

	<b>URGENT</b>	<b>NOT URGENT</b>
<b>IMPORTANT</b>	<b>A.</b> Crises Pressing Problems Deadline-driven Projects	<b>B.</b> <b>Prevention, Personal Enhancement activities</b> <b>Relationship Building</b> <b>Recognizing new opportunities</b> <b>Planning, recreation</b>
<b>NOT IMPORTANT</b>	<b>C.</b> Interruptions, some calls Some e-mail, MSN Some meetings Pressing matters Popular activities	<b>D.</b> Trivia, busy work Some e-mail, MSN Some phone calls Time wasters Pleasant activities

Consequences of spending time in each quadrant

	<b>URGENT</b>	<b>NOT URGENT</b>
<b>IMPORTANT</b>	<b>A.</b> <b>Stress</b> <b>Burnout</b> <b>Crisis management</b> <b>Always putting out fires</b>	<b>B.</b> Vision, perspective Balance Discipline Control Few Crises
<b>NOT IMPORTANT</b>	<b>C.</b> <b>Short term focused</b> <b>Crisis management</b> <b>See goals and plans as worthless</b> <b>Controlled by other people's priorities</b> <b>Feel victimized, out of control</b>	<b>D.</b> <b>Total irresponsibility</b> <b>Fired from jobs</b> <b>Dependent on others for basics</b>

## Interpretation of the Time Management Matrix

Which activities would you like to spend most of your time doing? A,B,C or D?

### TYPE A “Fire Fighter” Trap

**I must do now or the house will burn down!**

Examples: cramming for tests, last minute essay writing - deadline tomorrow, friend in crisis needs to talk, need to arrange for accommodations on exam, bill needs to be paid,etc.

### TYPE B “This is what it’s all about”

- Many activities in life are TYPE B.
- TYPE B activities require planning and initiative. They also require time to reflect.
- TYPE B activities are easily put on hold due to lack of urgency.

### TYPE C “I can’t say NO” Trap

I don’t consider this important or satisfying but I have a hard time getting away from it and it prevents me from accomplishing the important stuff.

### TYPE D “Procrastinator” Trap

I’ll just do this because it is easy, mindless and helps me avoid the hard stuff activities.

## Instructions

Covey breaks activities in four groups or quadrants:

- A. important-urgent
- B. important-not urgent
- C. not important-urgent
- D. not important-not urgent.

Look at your goals in relation to each quadrant and assess where each fits.

Although you might have Type A goals from time to time, the ultimate aim is to spend most of your time working in the Type B quadrant. In other words, do **IMPORTANT BUT NOT URGENT TASKS FIRST**.

If you are finding yourself more often in the Type A quadrant, you are in crisis mode. Perhaps you are procrastinating, stressing too much or do not yet have strong time management skills.

Covey found that highly effective people spend some of their time in the B quadrant, i.e. they are not crisis managers but time managers. Try not to let B’s become A’s.