



***THE #1  
STRATEGY FOR  
RADICAL  
PRODUCTIVITY  
MASTERY***

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## Introduction

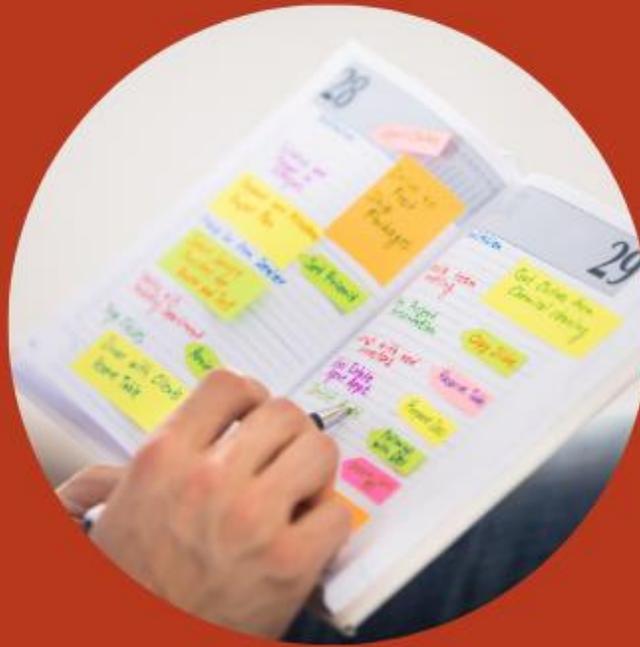
Time management is about more than just managing our time; it is about managing ourselves, in relation to time. It is about setting priorities and taking charge. It means changing habits or activities that cause us to waste time. It means being willing to experiment with different methods and ideas to enable you to find the best way to make maximum use of time.

Great time management means being effective as well as efficient. Managing time effectively, and achieving the things that you want to achieve, means spending your time on things that are important and not just urgent. To do this, you need to distinguish clearly between what is urgent and what is important:

- **Important:** These are activities that lead to the achieving your goals and have the greatest impact on your life.
- **Urgent:** These activities demand immediate attention but are often associated with someone else's goals rather than our own.

This concept, coined the Eisenhower Principle, is said to be how former US President Dwight Eisenhower organized his tasks. It was rediscovered and brought into the mainstream as the Urgent/Important Matrix by Stephen Covey in his 1994 business classic, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.





***WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS  
SELDOM URGENT AND WHAT IS  
URGENT IS SELDOM  
IMPORTANT.***

**DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER**

## Prioritizing Your Time

### The 80/20 Rule

The 80/20 rule, also known as Pareto's Principle, states that 80% of your results come from only 20% of your actions. Across the board, you will find that the 80/20 principle is pretty much right on with most things in your life. For most people, it really comes down to analyzing what you are spending your time on. Are you focusing in on the 20% of activities that produce 80% of the results in your life?

### The Urgent/Important Matrix

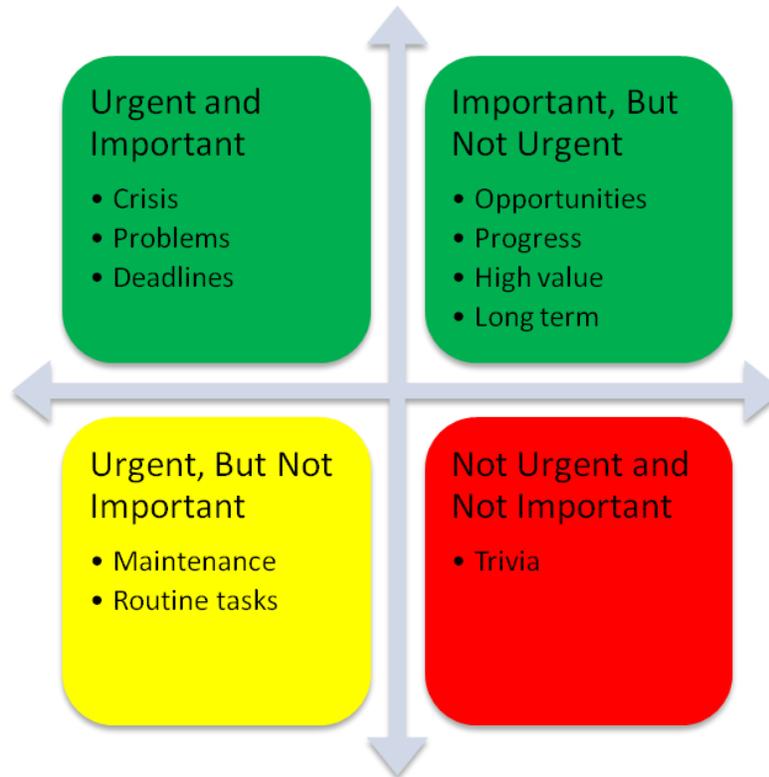
The Urgent/Important Matrix is a powerful way of organizing tasks based on priorities. Using it helps you overcome the natural tendency to focus on urgent activities, so that you can have time to focus on what's truly important.

The Urgent/Important Matrix:

- **Urgent and Important:** Activities in this area relate to dealing with critical issues as they arise and meeting significant commitments. *Perform these duties now.*
- **Important, But Not Urgent:** These success-oriented tasks are critical to achieving goals. *Plan to do these tasks next.*
- **Urgent, But Not Important:** These chores do not move you forward toward your own goals. Manage by delaying them, cutting them short, and rejecting requests from others. *Postpone these chores.*
- **Not Urgent and Not Important:** These trivial interruptions are just a distraction and should be avoided if possible. However, be careful not to mislabel things like time with family and recreational activities as not important. *Avoid these distractions altogether.*



## The Urgent-Important Matrix



### Being Assertive

At times, requests from others may be important and need immediate attention. Often, however, these requests conflict with our values and take time away from working toward your goals. Even if it is something we would like to do but simply don't have the time for, it can be very difficult to say no. One approach in dealing with these types of interruptions is to use a Positive No, which comes in several forms.

- Say no, followed by an honest explanation, such as, "I am uncomfortable doing that because..."
- Say no and then briefly clarify your reasoning without making excuses. This helps the listener to better understand your position. Example: "I can't right now because I have another project that is due by 5 pm today."
- Say no, and then give an alternative. Example: "I don't have time today, but I could schedule it in for tomorrow morning."
- Empathetically repeat the request in your own words, and then say no. Example: "I understand that you need to have this paperwork filed immediately, but I will not be able to file it for you."

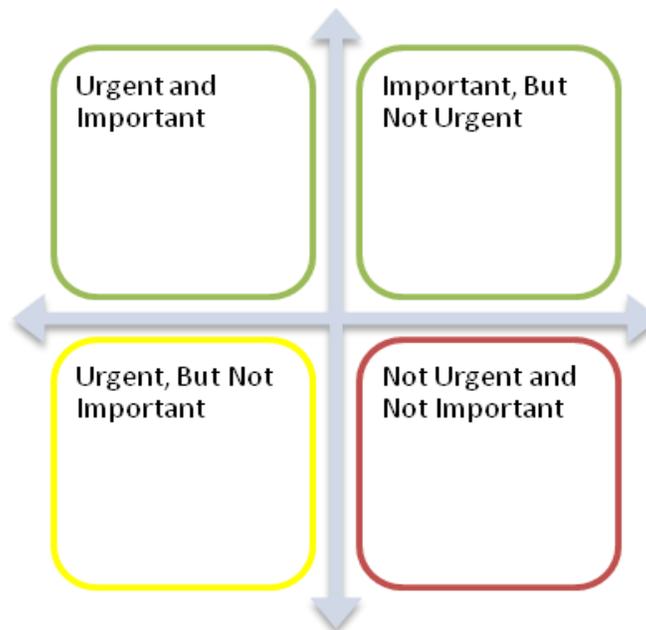
- Say yes, give your reasoning for not doing it, and provide an alternative solution. Example: “Yes, I would love to help you by filing this paperwork, but I do not have time until tomorrow morning.”
- Provide an assertive refusal and repeat it no matter what the person says. This approach may be most appropriate with aggressive or manipulative people and can be an effective strategy to control your emotions. Example: “I understand how you feel, but I will not [or cannot]...” Remember to stay focused and not become sidetracked into responding to other issues.

**Check for Understanding: The Urgent-Important Matrix**

Write each task in the appropriate matrix quadrant below.

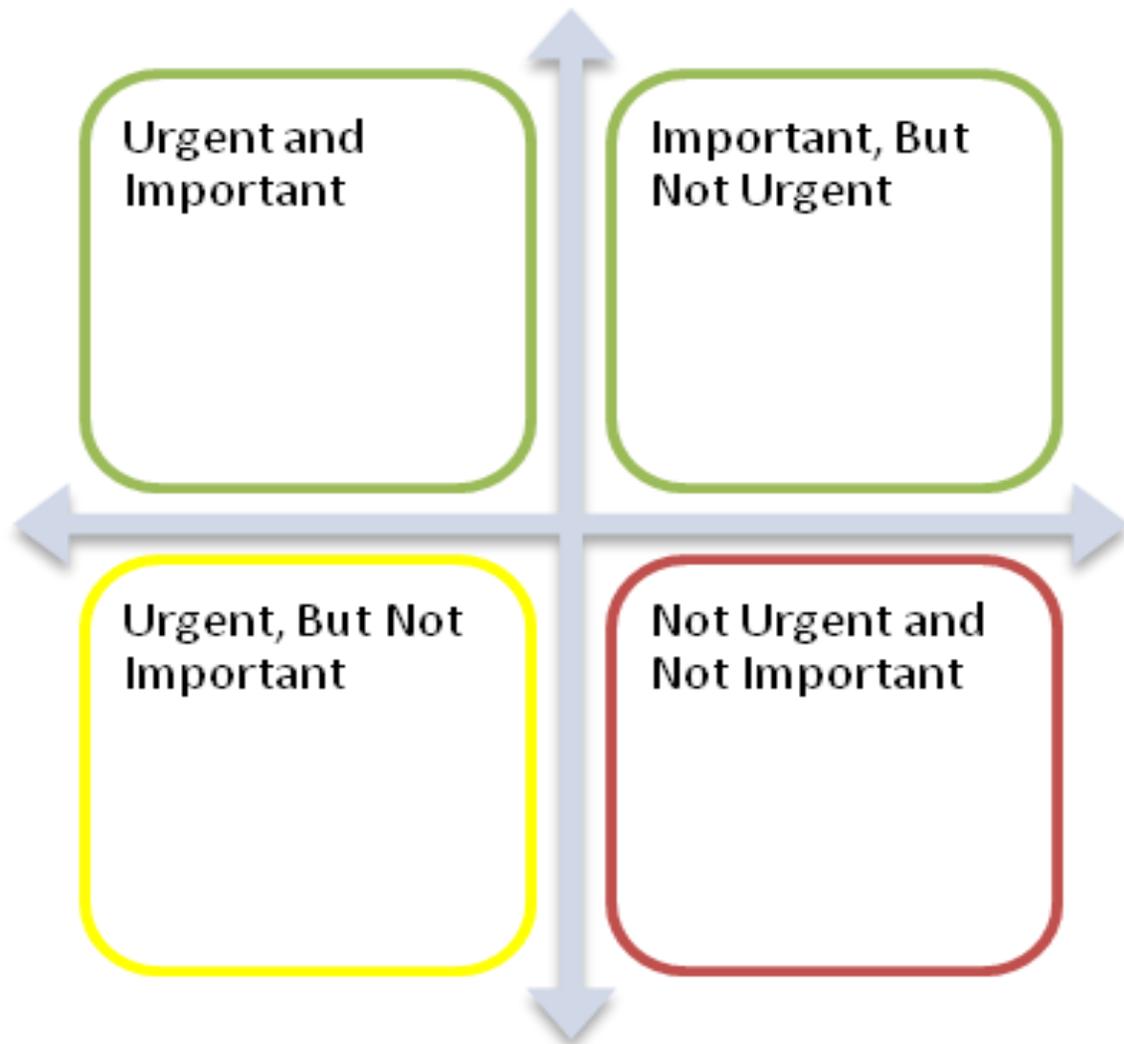
**TASK LIST**

1. Prepare daily status report
2. Work on training to get additional certification
3. Complete year-end items (two days overdue)
4. Complete data gathering for invoice project (due in three days)
5. Have lunch with Bob
6. Talk to Jim about possibility of taking on signing authority project
7. Send daily invoice errors to Tina



## Practical Application

Review your personal task list. Write each task in the appropriate matrix quadrant below.





***THE BEST EXECUTIVE IS THE ONE WHO HAS SENSE ENOUGH TO PICK GOOD MEN TO DO WHAT HE WANTS DONE, AND SELF-RESTRAINT ENOUGH TO KEEP FROM MEDDLING WITH THEM WHILE THEY DO IT.***

**THEODORE ROOSEVELT**

## **Delegating Made Easy**

If you work on your own, there's only so much you can get done, no matter how hard you work. As well, everyone needs help and support, and there is no shame in asking for assistance. One of the most common ways of overcoming this limitation is to learn how to delegate your work to other people. If you do this well, you can quickly build a strong and successful team of people.

At first sight, delegation can feel like more hassle than it's worth. However, by delegating effectively, you can hugely expand the amount of work that you can deliver. When you arrange the workload so that you are working on the tasks that have the highest priority for you, and other people are working on meaningful and challenging assignments, you have a recipe for success.

Remember, to delegate effectively, choose the right tasks to delegate, identify the right people to delegate to, and delegate in the right way. There's a lot to this, but you'll achieve so much more once you're delegating effectively!

## **When to Delegate**

Delegation allows you to make the best use of your time and skills, and it helps other people in the team grow and develop to reach their full potential in the organization. Delegation is a win-win situation for all involved, but only when done correctly. Keep these criteria in mind when deciding if a task should be delegated:

- The task should provide an opportunity for growth of another person's skills.
- Weigh the effort to properly train another person against how often the task will reoccur.
- Delegating certain critical tasks may jeopardize the success of your project.
- Management tasks, such as performance reviews, and tasks specifically assigned to you, should not be delegated.

## **To Whom Should You Delegate?**

Once you have decided to delegate a task, think about the possible candidates for accepting the task. Things to think about include:

- What experience, knowledge, skills, and attitude does the person already have?
- What training or assistance might they need?

- Do you have the time and resources to provide any training needed?
- What is the individual's preferred work style? Do they do well on their own or do they require more support and motivation? How independent are they?
- What does he or she want from his or her job?
- What are his or her long-term goals and interest, and how do these align with the work proposed?
- What is the current workload of this person? Does the person have time to take on more work?
- Will you delegating this task require reshuffling of other responsibilities and workloads?

When you first start to delegate to someone, you may notice that he or she takes longer than you do to complete tasks. This is because you are an expert in the field and the person you have delegated to is still learning. Be patient: if you have chosen the right person to delegate to, and you are delegating correctly, you will find that he or she quickly becomes competent and reliable. Also, try to delegate to the lowest possible organizational level. The people who are closest to the work are best suited for the task because they have the most intimate knowledge of the detail of everyday work. This also increases workplace efficiency and helps to develop people.

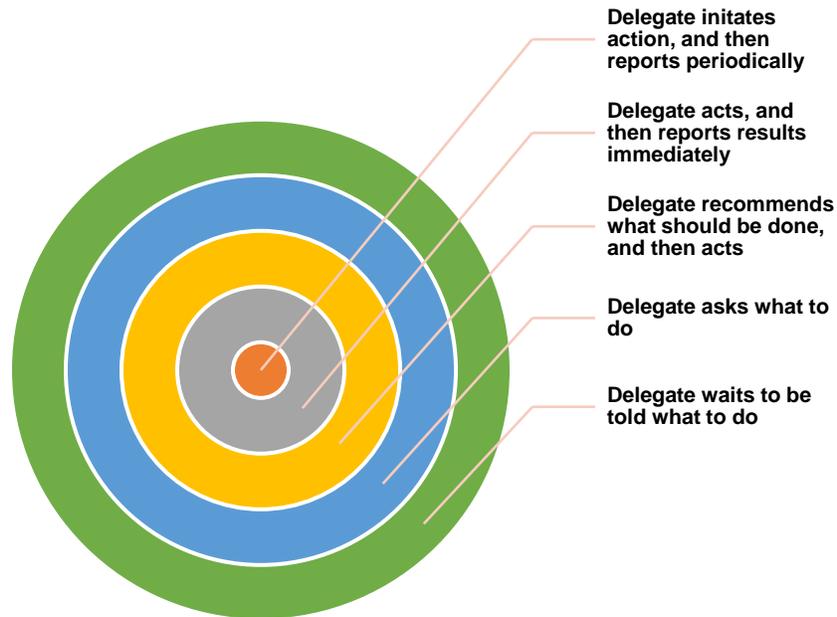
### **How Should You Delegate?**

Delegation doesn't have to be all or nothing. There are several different levels of delegation, each with different levels of delegate independence and delegator supervision.

### **The Spheres of Independence**

People often move throughout these spheres during the delegation process. Your goal should be to get the delegate to one of the inner three spheres, depending on the task being performed. Make sure you match the amount of responsibility with the amount of authority. Understand that you can delegate some responsibility, but you can't delegate away ultimate accountability. The buck stops with you!

## The Spheres of Independence



### Keeping Control

Now, once you have worked through the above steps, make sure you brief your team member appropriately. Take time to explain why they were chosen for the job, what's expected from them during the project, the goals you have for the project, all timelines and deadlines, and the resources on which they can draw. Work together to develop a schedule for progress updates, milestones, and other key project points.

You will want to make sure that the team member knows that you want to know if any problems occur, and that you are available for any questions or guidance needed as the work progresses.

We all know that as managers, we shouldn't micro-manage. However, this doesn't mean we must abdicate control altogether. In delegating effectively, we have to find the difficult balance between giving enough space for people to use their abilities, while still monitoring and supporting closely enough to ensure that the job is done correctly and effectively. One way to encourage growth is to ask for recommended solutions when delegates come to you with a problem, and then help them explore those solutions and reach a decision.

### The Importance of Full Acceptance

Set aside enough time to thoroughly review any delegated work that delivered to you. If possible, only accept good quality, fully complete work. If you accept work that you are

not satisfied with, your team member does not learn to do the job properly. Worse than this, you accept a new project that you will probably need to complete yourself. Not only does this overload you, it means that you don't have the time to do your own job properly.

Of course, when good work is returned to you, make sure to both recognize and reward the effort. As a leader, you should get in the practice of complimenting members of your team every time you are impressed by what they have done. This effort on your part will go a long way toward building team members' self-confidence and efficiency now and in the future.

### **Check for Understanding: Delegation at Gadgets Unlimited**

Bob Bugs has just come out of a meeting with the Gadgets Unlimited CEO, Sly Smiley. Sly wants someone to research new conveyor belts and recommend a solution to prevent the recent Gadgets Unlimited crisis from reoccurring. Although he wants Bob to oversee the project and approve the final report, it doesn't matter if Bob does this himself or delegates it. Sly does want the report within thirty days.

Bob can think of three delegation options. The first one to come to mind is Fran Fudd, the production floor supervisor. However, she has a lot of projects right now. She is also more experienced on the management side than the technical side. Then there is David Daffy, one of the senior production specialists. He has good knowledge of the inner workings of the production machinery and has repaired the conveyor belt problem several times. The last candidate is Elmer Ender. He is a junior production specialist who is eager to rise in the company and has good general technical skills. However, he has never worked with Conveyor Belt #4.

### **QUESTIONS**

- Who should Bob Bugs delegate to? Why?
- What level of independence would Bob want the delegate at?
- How might Bob maintain control throughout the task?
- How might Bob define success?

## Practical Application

Review the items listed in **Urgent, But Not Important** and the **Not Urgent and Not Important** quadrants on page 6.

Consider the following questions for each task listed:

- Who should you delegate each item on the list to? Why?
- What level of independence would you want the delegate at?
- How might you maintain control throughout the task?
- How might you define success?



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