

Eisenhower Matrix

delegate faced overcome alleviate demand clear dealing

Before Dwight Eisenhower became president in 1953, he served in the U.S. Army as an Allied Forces Commander during World War II. He was with daunting decisions every day that led him to invent what is now called the *Eisenhower matrix*. He claimed that we must spend our time on things that are important and not just the ones that are urgent. To do this, and to the stress of having too many tight deadlines, we need to understand this distinction:

Important activities have an outcome that leads to us achieving our goals, whether these are professional or personal.

Urgent activities immediate attention, and are usually associated with achieving someone's else's goals. They are often the ones we concentrate on and they demand attention because the consequences of not with them are immediate.

When we know which activities are important and which are urgent, we can the natural tendency to focus on unimportant urgent activities, so that we can enough time to do what's essential for our success. This is the way we move from "firefighting" into a position where we can grow our businesses and our careers.

How it works:

Organize your task list into four separate quadrants, sorting them by important vs. unimportant and urgent vs. not urgent, as shown in the graphic above. Ideally, you should only work on tasks in the top two quadrants—the other tasks, you should or delete.

