




Coaching Card Five – Time Management

Our fifth coaching card in the series is focused Time Management. You can [download and print the cards here](#).



Time Management		Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	MANAGE	FOCUS	
Not Important	AVOID	LIMIT	

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This decision matrix, also known as the 4 Quadrants of Time Management matrix, is the brainchild of Dwight Eisenhower, the decorated army general and President of the United States. It was made very popular by Stephen Covey and he explained in his books seven habits of highly effective people that this matrix could help with our productivity. The main idea Stephen Covey described was that each task should be looked at to assess its urgency and its importance. We should be able to assess each task for these characteristics and then prioritise tasks accordingly.

It is a very popular time management model used by many organisation's.

So why does this work? It ensures that we start to realise what we should be focusing on and what tasks we shouldn't! This will assist with us being able to focus on those tasks that we should be and those that are allowing us to meet our goals.

Let's look at each quadrant to help you understand the model and be able to apply it.

First look at this example from Stephen Covey to help understand what tasks should be in each quadrant:

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	I <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Crises> Pressing problems> Firefighting> Major scrap and rework> Deadline-driven projects	II <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Prevention> <i>Production capability</i> activities> Relationship building> Recognizing new opportunities> Planning> <i>Re-creation</i>
Not Important	III <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Interruptions> Some calls> Some mail> Some reports> Some meetings> Proximate pressing matters> Popular activities> Some scrap & rework	IV <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Trivia> Busywork> Some mail> Some phone calls> Time-wasters> Pleasant activities

Important = how important is the task in terms of contributing to your goals or your organisational objectives

Urgent = tasks that require your immediate attention. What the consequences of completing this task for YOUR goals

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Important/Urgent – These are important deadlines with high urgency. These are tasks that need immediate attention.

For this consider how much time you spend in this quadrant. If you are constantly in this space with your tasks, then you are in a reactive state with your decision making. Although this may be required for some of your work as we can anticipate all change or issues, it does limit your ability to think rationally and strategically

Thinking reactively can be stressful and cause some anxieties as we can make mistakes and regret decisions. Having team members in this quadrant consistently can lead to burn out.

Important/Non-Urgent – These are longer term development and strategic thinking. This is for tasks that require consideration.

We hope this is useful for you and if you have any questions, then please contact us at coaching@cmcbp.co.uk. We would also love to hear from you on how you have used this model.

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