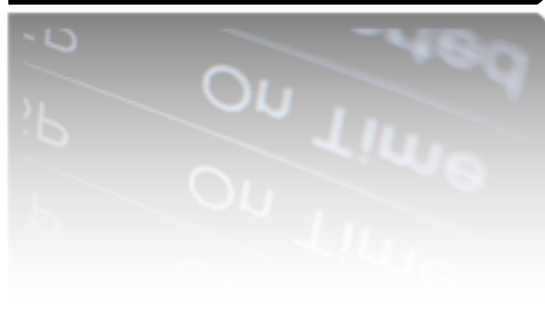# TIME MANAGEMENT

GRID

We live in a time pressured world where it is common to have multiple overlapping commitments that all require immediate attention now. Urgency is no long reserved for special occasions, they are an everyday occurrences. Missing deadlines is not the path to advancement or even good job reviews. So how can one manage the flood of responsibilities, do excellent work and maintain a positive frame of mind? The Covey time management grid is an effective method of organizing your priorities. As you can see from the grid below, there are four quadrants organized by urgency and importance.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	*Quadrant I:* Urgent & Important	*Quadrant II:* Not Urgent & Important
NOT IMPORTANT	*Quadrant III:* Urgent & Not Important	*Quadrant IV:* Not Urgent & Not Important

source: Stephen Covey, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Quadrant I is for the immediate and important deadlines.

Quadrant II is for long-term strategizing and development.

Quadrant III is for time pressured distractions. They are not really important, but someone wants it now.

Quadrant IV is for those activities that yield little is any value. These are activities that are often used for taking a break from time pressured and important activities.

Many people find that most of their activities fall into quadrant I and III. Quadrant II is often under used. Yet, Quadrant II is exceptionally important because one must work both tactically and strategically at the same time. Finding ways to expand Quadrant II activities is a common outcome from using this grid.

Using The Grid

The grid has many applications, two will be suggested here. The first and most obvious use of the grid is take your current 'to-do' list and sort all the activities into the appropriate grid. Then, assess the amount of time you have to accomplish the lists and, if necessary, reallocate activities.

The second approach is a one week assessment strategy. Make six copies of the grid (you will find a working copy on the next page) and use one grid for each day of the week, listing all activities and time spent. At the end of the week, Combine the five individual day data onto one summary grid (number 6) and calculate the percent of time in each grid. Then evaluate how well your time is spent and whether you work load needs to be reorganized.

The Bottom Line: *Do Important things First!*

Covey's Time Management Grid

Quadrant I: Urgent & Important	*Quadrant II: Not Urgent & Important*
Quadrant III: Urgent & Not Important	*Quadrant IV: Not Urgent & Not Important*