

Quadrant Two Time

Franklin Covey's time matrix tool is a great one that I find myself mentally referring to often. The tool is a matrix comprised of 4 quadrants. It is designed to reveal how you are spending your time and to show you how it may benefit you if you redistributed your time in other quadrants. The time management matrix gets you to question what is **important or not important** and **urgent or not urgent** in your life.

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	I Important deadlines Crises Pressing important meetings Emergencies Last minute preparations	II Relationship building Personal development Employee training Exercise and health Prevention and planning
Not important	III Some emails and phone calls Many interruptions Some popular activities Some meetings	IV Trivia Some phone calls Excessive TV Time wasters

We all can find ourselves in Quadrant 1 often which is both urgent and important. An example of this is a top client showing up to your office with a big problem. You better not put this one off. There is no escaping Quadrant 1 time and the key is to distribute your time into the quadrants that will benefit you and help you to achieve your goals and with less stress and pressure. If you spend all of your time in Quadrant 1, chances are you are stressed out and in crisis mode much of the time. This is because you are not allowing yourself time to unwind and plan and prepare. This takes place in Quadrant 2.

Quadrant 2 is the quadrant that I adore. This is the important but not urgent quadrant. I like to have as much Quadrant 2 time as Quadrant 1 time. This is the quadrant for the planners. Spending your time working on preparing for client meetings, writing plans and presentations is what this quadrant is made of. If you schedule adequate time in Quadrant 2, you will find yourself calmer, more collected and very well prepared for your responsibilities.

Distractions are a part of life and many times can't be avoided. Quadrant 3 is the quadrant that is urgent but not important. Things that fall here are phone calls from potential vendors. They are urgent because they are on the phone right now, but they are not necessarily important to what you are doing. We must try to control the amount of time spent in this quadrant.

Finally, Quadrant 4 is the not urgent and not important category. Activities that fall here may be browsing the internet or playing a game on the computer. While time in this quadrant is somewhat necessary to unwind for most people, the danger comes when you spend too much time here.

The key to effective time management is to control how much time you spend in each quadrant. Make sure you are spending adequate time in preparing for activities and planning so that when you are face to face with a client or a deadline, you are all over it.

Even if you are in crunch time right now, make sure to balance your year out with periods of rest and planning. It is beneficial to pre-plan your Quadrant 2 time by scheduling appointments for planning and preparing. You will feel refreshed and energized with enough Quadrant 2 time.