

# Stephen Covey - 4 Quadrants

## Urgent vs. Important

In assessing particular tasks in the context of urgent vs. important, it can be helpful to recognize that an urgency may be created externally and there may be little internal importance. This is emblematic of some typical situations I have experienced.

- “Just because you planned poorly, I have to drop everything to respond?”
- “You promised the client we would finish by Friday?”
- “The client wants us in their office this afternoon at 3:00. Clear your other meetings.”

Does this sound familiar? Below is a version of the Covey Model you can use to begin determining the relative urgency and importance of your activities as they relate to time management.

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project crises</li> <li>• Pressing problems</li> <li>• Unexpected requests from leadership or clients</li> <li>• Deadline-driven projects</li> <li>• Absenteeism/Sick Days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship building</li> <li>• Planned activities</li> <li>• Recognizing new opportunities</li> <li>• Supervision/Feedback conversations</li> <li>• Building organizational capacity</li> <li>• Learning opportunities</li> <li>• Self-Development</li> <li>• Client check-ins</li> <li>• Scheduled meetings</li> </ul>
Not Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interruptions</li> <li>• Office drop-ins</li> <li>• Some calls</li> <li>• Some email and messaging</li> <li>• Some reports</li> <li>• Some meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Busywork</li> <li>• Filing</li> <li>• Trivia and minutiae</li> <li>• Some email and messages</li> <li>• Some phone calls</li> <li>• Gossiping and idle speculation</li> <li>• Idle chatter</li> </ul>