

THE IMPORTANT – URGENT MATRIX:

A Strategy for Finding Balance

How to Use This Resource:

- This worksheet can help you to manage your time. Use the four quadrants on the next page to help you determine your priorities.
- Write down your tasks and activities (for the day, week, semester – up to you).
- Reflect, evaluate, and review why you have placed these activities in separate quadrants.
- Make a plan for accomplishing, delegating and refocusing your tasks.
- Repeat as needed.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	Necessity (Quadrant 1)	Productivity & Balance (Quadrant 2)
NOT IMPORTANT	Deception (Quadrant 3)	Waste & Excess (Quadrant 4)

Quadrant 1 : URGENT + IMPORTANT

- This is where you need to meet a deadline, trouble shoot, or engage in crisis management.
- Some things become necessity (they are both urgent and important) as a result of procrastination or lack of planning.
- Consider: You may be spending more time than necessary in this quadrant because you spend too little time in Quadrant 2.

Quadrant 2: NOT URGENT + IMPORTANT

- This is the quadrant of optimal performance, and productivity.
- In Quadrant 2, you plan, prepare, prevent crisis, clarify goals, improve performance, make time for exercise and relaxation, and experience more balance in your life.
- Because Quadrant 1 is both urgent and important, the only place to find more time for Quadrant 2 is by spending less time in Quadrants 3 and 4.

Quadrant 3: URGENT + NOT IMPORTANT

- This is the “phantom” of Quadrant 1, and it includes things that need to happen right now, although they are of little significance or benefit to you.
- Urgency creates the illusion of importance. But the actual activities in this quadrant, if they are important, are important only to someone else. Phone calls, emails, drop-in visitors and other people’s poor time management fall into this category.

Quadrant 4: NOT URGENT + NOT IMPORTANT

- This quadrant represents activities that zap precious time and energy from your day. This quadrant is characterized by “time wasters” (e.g. excessive TV, inappropriate social networking, phones, games.)

The Important – Urgent Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crisis management• Problem managing (asking for extensions, handing in “less than” work, pulling all-nighters.• Anxiety peaks, sleep difficulties• Reactive responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactive• Preparation• Prevention• Planning• Re-creating• Time for “fun” activities
NOT IMPORTANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other people’s request/issues• Phone, email, texting• Unnecessary reports• Others’ “drama”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trivial busywork• Irrelevant phone calls, email, texting• Time wasters• Escape Activities: Facebook, Twitter, internet

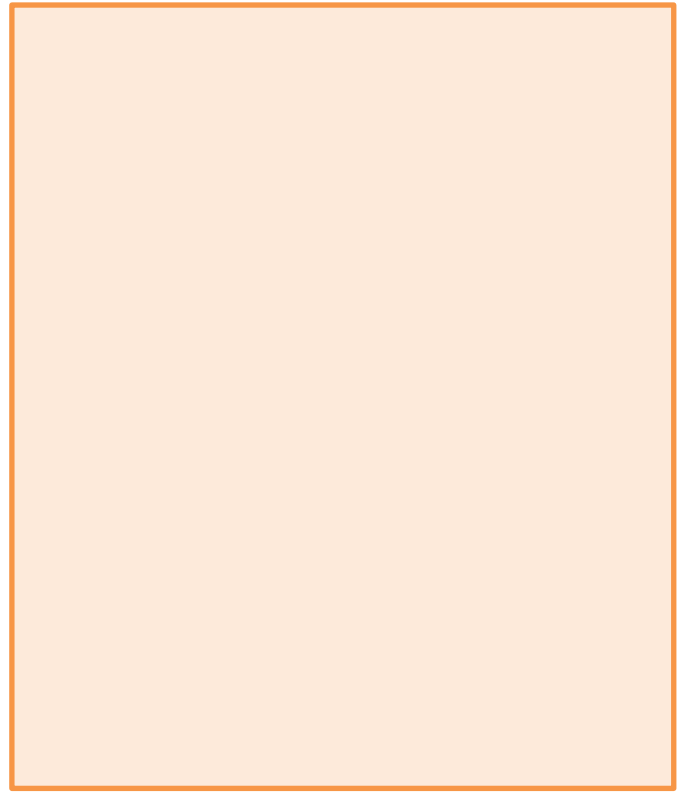
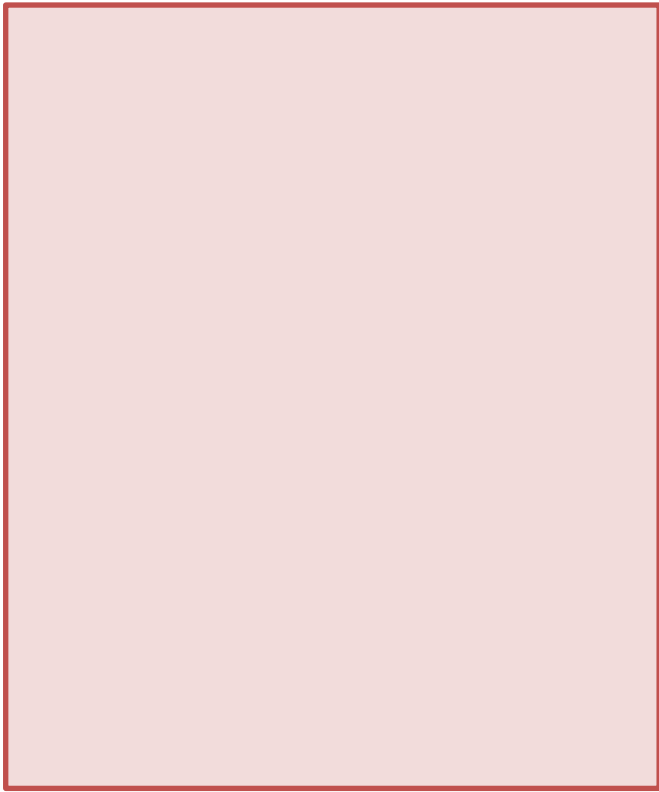
	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT		
NOT IMPORTANT		

The Important – Urgent Matrix

URGENT

NOT URGENT

IMPORTANT



NOT IMPORTANT

