

THE EISENHOWER DECISION MATRIX

The Eisenhower Decision Matrix—named for Dwight D. Eisenhower, the former president and celebrated general, and sometimes called the Urgent-Important Matrix—can help you determine which tasks to prioritize and which tasks to delegate or eliminate. Read through the following instructions to learn more.

HOW TO USE THE EISENHOWER DECISION MATRIX

To complete the Eisenhower Decision Matrix, list your upcoming tasks by urgency and importance. Then sort each task into the appropriate category of the matrix. View the results to determine where each task fits on your priority list. You'll find your highest-priority tasks in the top row of the matrix, with lower-priority tasks in the bottom row.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	DO <u>Do these tasks first:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Important tasks with impending deadlines.• Crises and pressing problems.	DECIDE <u>Schedule these tasks on your calendar:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research, planning and preparation• Relationship-building• Strategies and new opportunities
NOT IMPORTANT	DELEGATE <u>Delegate or postpone these tasks:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-critical emails• Certain calls and meetings• Certain administrative tasks	DELETE <u>Remove these tasks from your to-do list:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time wasters• Unnecessary or busy work

HERE'S A MORE DETAILED BREAKDOWN

DO: IMPORTANT AND URGENT

Make tasks in the upper left quadrant your highest priority. Do them immediately.

DECIDE: IMPORTANT BUT NOT URGENT

Tasks in the upper right quadrant are your second-highest priority. Decide when you'll do them—and make sure to schedule or block the time on your calendar.

DELEGATE: NOT IMPORTANT BUT URGENT

Tasks in the bottom left quadrant are low-priority items and should be avoided. Delegate them if possible, or postpone them until you've completed your high-priority tasks.

DELETE: NOT IMPORTANT AND NOT URGENT

Finally, tasks in the bottom right quadrant are unnecessary. They aren't pressing, and they don't contribute to your mission or goals. Eliminate them, and don't waste your time.

If you're having trouble assessing the urgency and importance of a task, try asking yourself this question:

"What are the consequences if this task does not get done?"