

Time Targets

We've all experienced the overwhelm associated with having too many things on our plate. One way to reduce this overwhelm is to leverage time-management tools.

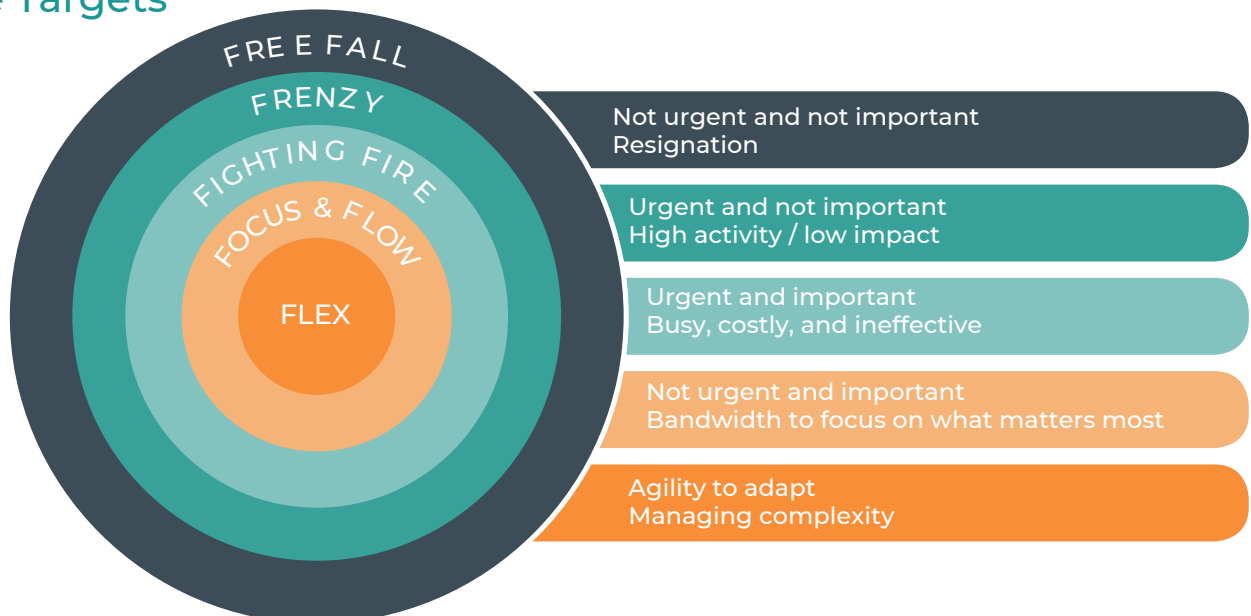
Time Quadrants

The "4 Quadrants of Time Management Matrix" is a powerful tool for managing time. Credited to U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower and later popularized by Stephen Covey, this tool is designed to conceptualize how we organize time and help us focus on what matters most. Not all tasks are of equal importance nor equal impact/value. Too often, the loudest or most urgent tasks aren't important or valuable. The "4 Quadrants of Time Management Matrix" is a quick and easy way to sort and rank everything on your plate.

The 4 Quadrants of Time Management Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
Important	Necessity (manage / tolerate) Pressing problems, crisis, rush deadlines etc.	Productivity (focus / invest) Planning, prevention, preparation, personal development etc.
Not important	Distraction (avoid / migrate) Interruptions, emails, phone calls etc.	Waste (avoid / eliminate) Trivia, TV/Entertainment, escape activities, busywork etc.

Time Targets



Using Time Targets to Understand the Five States

Take a moment to check inward. Pay attention to your energy, emotions, and mental state.

- If you are in a state of Flex or Focus and Flow, notice what is working so you can replicate it.
- If you are Fighting Fires, take 5 minutes to create more time.
- If you are in a state of Frenzy, take 5 minutes to remember your desired outcomes and purpose.
- If you're in Free Fall, consider stepping away and taking a brief walk to reflect on why.

	FLEX Agile	FOCUS AND FLOW Not urgent/ important	FIGHTING FIRES Urgent/ important	FRENZY Urgent/ Not important	FREE FALL Not urgent/ Not important
	Mental: How you're thinking...				
+	Responsive	Focused, optimized, in control, and proactive	Reactive and focused		Contemplative
-			Overwired	Frenzied	
	Emotional: How are you feeling...				
+	Content	Inspired and energized	Inspired and invigorated		
-		So focused, you may be neglecting others	Chaotic and adrenaline-charged	Exhausted	Checked out
	If you went to the beach to surf, this is how each state might feel...				
	Time is passing by without you even noticing...	Sitting just in front of the wave, you're enjoying the experience, and feeling the sustainable and scalable energy as the wave propels you forward..	You are on top of the wave and your adrenaline is surging; it feels great but is also energetically and emotionally draining...	Paddling frantically after the wave, you're getting tossed around, drinking ocean water, and feeling overwhelmed...	You're chilling on your board, missing waves, or back on the beach taking perspective on the entire scene...



Core Questions

Where are you spending your time?

What levers would help you increase your time closer to the center of the target?

What structures help you be at your best (i.e., in the zone of focus & flex or flow)?

What expectations, priorities, boundaries and habits are holding you back?

What distracts, limits, or inhibits you from having a bullseye on time management?

What individual changes could you make?

What organizational changes could you make?



Do a Time Target Assessment

Set a 30-minute repeating timer on your phone. Every 30 minutes make a note:

- Where are you spending time?
- What percentage of time in each task?
- Is it the best use of your time?



Tips from Time Maestros

- Spend the majority of your time—ideally, more than 60%—on important but non-urgent tasks.
- Anticipate and solve problems proactively.
- Build enduring systems to position yourself for ongoing success (build once, use many times).
- Use not important or urgent time strategically to unwind and recharge, building habits for healthy rejuvenation.
- Everyone needs some distractions. Build a list of healthy options so as to avoid going into “free fall” (e.g., if you need to take a break, read an article, listen to a podcast, or schedule a short workout). Don’t try to boil the ocean at the start! Start small and build capacity over time.



Awareness

- Where do you feel your best? Where do you spend most of your time? What are the factors that drive you into less impactful quadrants? Consider the unintended consequences of operating in a constant state of chaos or reactive firefighting.
- Where do you typically operate from? What's your default mode? How can you shift from it?

Accountability

- How can you integrate more strategic time focus into your work culture?
- How do you engage others in a different set of conversations?
- Use a time log to actively identify crisis and support proactive management. How do you effectively manage your time to ensure proactive crisis management?

Activation

- What is it you need to be the best version of yourself? How can you block space to spend time on the important not urgent?
- What buffers you from distractions and firefighting?
- What are the unconscious benefits of maladaptive behavior?

Integration/Acceleration

- What is the larger impact of addressing important non-urgent issues?
- How does your focus create a larger ripple around you?

Agility Building

- How can you increase your time in focus and flow?
- What supports you in managing your time to stay on target?
- How can you enhance your awareness of each state to optimize your well-being?
- What triggers are most prone to diverting you from your mental, emotional, physical, or social goals?

Understanding the impact of resilient behaviors is vital to helping us make better use of our time.