

Categories of Time Management

I. Important and Urgent

These are top-priority tasks that must be done immediately or in the very near future. They must be taken care of very soon. Procrastination, if it has been a factor, is no longer an option.



II. Important, but Not Urgent

These are the greatest value activities, but they often get ignored. They require thought and mental clarity, but since they are sometimes challenging, we don't even do one of them in a day.

Effective people pay attention to these tasks. Ineffective people let them slip. Most of the really important things in our lives are not urgent. They can be done now or later, and some can be postponed forever. Despite their importance, affecting our health, wealth, or self-fulfillment, we will put them off indefinitely unless we initiate action. If our activities are keyed to other people's priorities, or to system-imposed deadlines that make things urgent, our own priorities will sit on the back burner forever.

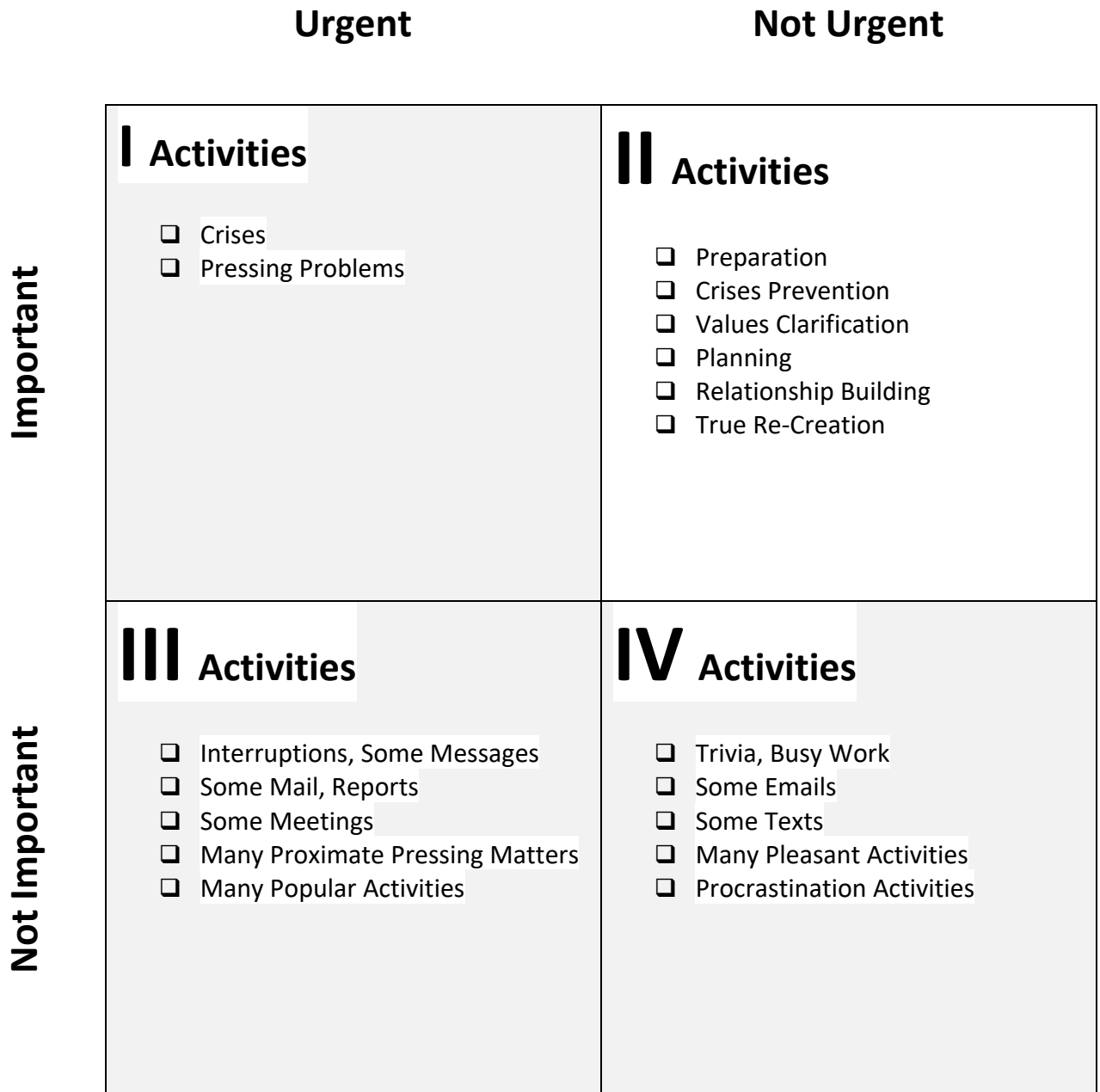
III. Urgent, but Not Important

In this category are the duties that clamor for attention, but that could be appropriately assigned a low priority if we examined them closely. These tasks get done because they have built-in time limits, and we often move more important items to the back burner in order to complete them.

IV. Busywork

These are the many tasks which are marginally worth doing, but are not important or urgent. We tend to do them ahead of other tasks because they are diversionary. They provide a feeling of activity and accomplishment, while giving us an excuse to put off urgent, but not important, tasks.

Time Management Quadrant



Time Management Quadrant (Continued)

Exercise

Take out your calendar and look at the past two weeks. How would you classify all of your activities?

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	I Activities	II Activities
Not Important	III Activities	IV Activities

