

Timely Tips

from Thinking Well Consulting

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This week: The Four Working Windows

Dear Reader,

The Four Working Windows

From which window are you looking out?

Being in overwhelm or out of focus and distracted is not a place of productivity, innovation and growth. Sometimes we spin like whirling dervishes only to find that we've created a lot of dust and little output.

Stephen Covey, in *First Things First*, came up with the idea of a matrix or four zones in which to work, calling it *Working in the Zone*.

In each quadrant or zone there is a space for you to first identify and then insert your activities. First categorize them according to where they fit best on this grid.

Here are the categories:

Important and Urgent	Zone I
Important but Not Urgent	Zone II
Urgent but Not Important	Zone III
Not Urgent and Not Important	Zone IV

in what zone would you place deleting emails? In what zone would you place, calling up your boss to tell him/her that a deadline will be missed? Think of all the activities you perform on a daily basis and place them in the following grid, in the order you normally prioritize them. Then, look at these activities again and notice if they are in the correct zone. As an example, is the first thing you do, review your emails instead of calling back an irate customer or handling a time sensitive project? Which is Important and Urgent and which is Urgent and Not Important.

Notice how often you respond to urgent issues which are not important. Can you better prioritize these activities? Use the following grid:

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	I.	II.
NOT IMPORTANT	III.	IV.



Notice what percentage of your day is being spent in each zone. Are you spending more than 50% in the urgent and not important zone? How is that impacting your productivity? Accurate tracking will be your first step in regaining control of how to best use your time.

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Flo Mauri

Thinking Well Consulting

646-270-6276

www.thinkingwellconsulting.com

flo@thinkingwellconsulting.com