

Time Management: The Urgency Index

Academic Success Center
Iowa State University

How much does urgency control your life? Circle the number that most closely represents your normal behaviors or attitudes regarding the following statements. (0=Never, 2=Sometimes, 4=Always)

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I seem to do my best work when I am under pressure. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. I often blame the rush and press of external things for my failure to spend deep, introspective time with myself. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. I'm often frustrated by the slowness of people and things around me. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. I feel guilty when I take time off work. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. I always seem to be rushing between places and events. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. I frequently find myself pushing people away so that I can finish a project. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. I feel anxious when I'm out of touch with the office for more than a few minutes. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. I'm often preoccupied with one thing when I'm doing something else. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. I'm at my best when I am handling a crisis situation. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. The adrenaline rush from a new crisis seems more satisfying to me than the steady accomplishment of long-term results | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. I often give up quality time with important people in my life to handle a crisis. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. I assume people will naturally understand if I have to disappoint them or let things go in order to handle a crisis. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. I rely on solving some crisis to give my day meaning. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. I often eat lunch and other meals while I work. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. I keep thinking that someday I'll be able to do what I really want to do. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. Many items checked off of my "To Do List" at the end of the day makes me feel like I've really been productive. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

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Scores & Score Interpretation

0 - 25	26-45	46+
Low Urgency	Strong Urgency mind-set	Urgency addiction

The Urgency Addiction

- Creates predictable, reliable sensations
- Becomes the primary focus and absorbs attention
- Temporarily eradicates pain and other negative sensations
- Provides artificial sense of self-worth, power, control, security, intimacy, accomplishment
- Exacerbates the problems and feelings it is sought to remedy
- Worsens functioning, creates loss of relationships

The Importance/Urgency Quadrants (by Steven Covey)

	Urgent	Non-Urgent
Important	<i>Quadrant 1</i>	<i>Quadrant 2</i>
	Examples: Things due today or tomorrow, dealing with emergencies or crises	Examples: long-term projects, planning ahead, studying in advance, getting started early
Not Important	<i>Quadrant 3</i>	<i>Quadrant 4</i>
	Examples: interruptions, distractions, fun events that come up, social invitations	Examples: time wasters, busy work, procrastination activities, aimless internet browsing

The Impact of Spending Your Time in Each Quadrant

Quadrant 1	Quadrant 2
When you spend all your time in Quad. 1 activities, you may feel stressed, panicked, or reactive (like you're always managing crises and putting out fires). Too much time here may result in burn out!	Spending time in Quad. 2 has the potential to make a positive difference in your life. These items have impact! You're planning ahead on the important things. This effort creates vision and balance, and a sense of control over what's ahead.
Quadrant 3	Quadrant 4
If you spend too much time in Quad. 3, you may be busy getting things done but everything has a short term focus, and isn't connected to your broader plans and big picture goals.	If you're spending a lot of time in Quad. 4, you're not taking responsibility for things that need to get done, you may find it hard to achieve academic success, or to balance it with healthy relationships, wellness, work and other commitments.

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