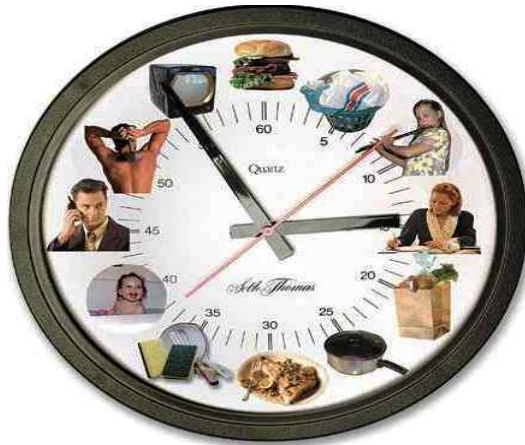




VIRGINIA FLIGHT SCHOOL SAFETY ARTICLE – NO 18/08



EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT – A “SOFT” FLYING SKILL

The following quips are unfortunately heard more and more often during everyday life :

- “ There just aren’t enough hours in the day!”
- “My time is not my own – I’ll see if I can give you 5 minutes later”
- “What happened to this year?”
- “Not now darling – mommy’s very busy”
- I have all this to do – I don’t know where to start – how am I possibly going to get it all done in time!”

The list goes on and on! Familiar?

EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT AND FLYING

How does effective time management link in to aviation as a safety factor?

Fact : Ineffective time management is one of the greatest stressors.

Fact: Stress reduces pilot task effectiveness resulting in a compromise to safety integrity!

Therefore effective time management is a safety initiative.

TYPICAL TIME MANAGEMENT METHODS

The traditional time management methods are :

- Notes and checklists.
- Calenders and diaries.

EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT

Before discussing the principles of effective time management it is perhaps prudent to revisit the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness.

Efficiency. Efficiency is simply doing things right.

Effectiveness. Effectiveness on the other hand is doing the right things right. One might be highly efficient in that you are doing things right but you could be doing the wrong things (relative to desired outcomes) right. Activities therefore have to be identified that directly contribute to a desired outcome and be done correctly. Then we are being effective.

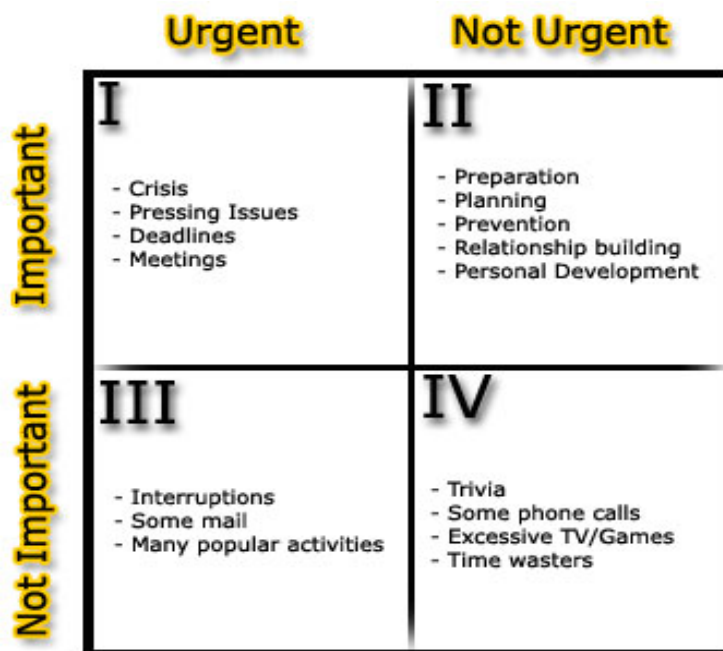
Effective time management adds the important aspect of *PRIORITISATION*, *CLARIFYING VALUES* and of comparing the relative *WORTH of ACTIVITIES*.

Effective time management further focuses on setting goals, specifically long-, intermediate and short term targets.

It encompasses the concept of planning where a specific plan is made to accomplish set goals and activities *determined to be of greatest worth*.

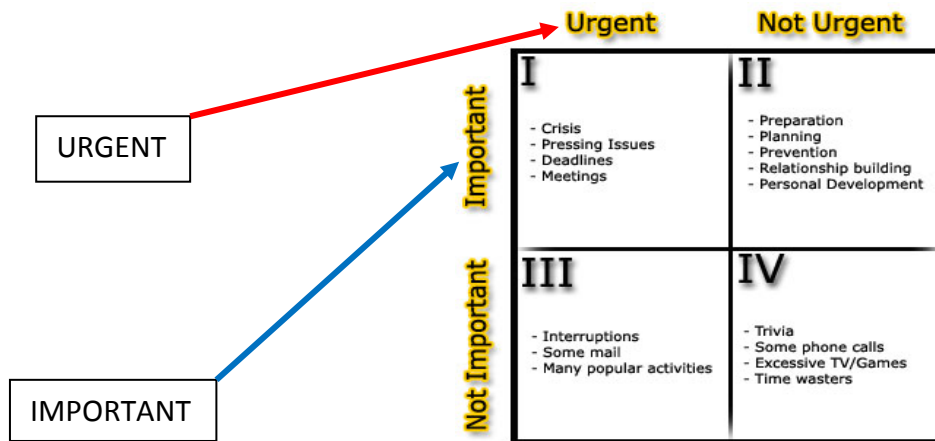
THE TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX

The time management matrix is divided into four quadrants where urgent/not urgent is on the horizontal axis and important/not important is on the vertical axis. Each quadrant will be examined in a bit more detail further on.



ACTIVITY CLASSIFICATION

Urgent: Urgent matters are usually visible. They press on us and demand attention e.g. ringing phone. They are most often pleasant, fun and easy to do but are often *unimportant!*



Important. Importance has to do with results. It contributes to your mission, values and priority goals.

QUADRANT 1



Quadrant I deals with significant results that require immediate attention.

Quadrant 1 Characteristics. Quadrant I consumes people. They are crisis managers problem-minded people, deadline driven producers. Focus on quadrant I dominates you. Problems are never ending and increase in magnitude.

Quadrant 1 Results

- Stress
- Burnout
- Crises management
- Always “putting out fires”.

QUADRANT 3



Quadrant III people spend most of their time reacting to urgent things, assuming they are also important.

Quadrant 3 Characteristics. In reality the urgency of Quadrant III matters is most often based on the priorities and expectations of others.

Quadrant 3 Results

- Short term focus
- Crisis management
- Chameleon characteristics – constant chop and change
- See goals and plans as worthless
- Feel victimised – out of control

QUADRANT 4



Quadrant IV people spend most of their time procrastinating and fooling themselves that what they are doing has value . They basically lead irresponsible lives.

Quadrant 4 Results.

- Total irresponsibility
- Job Hopping
- “Sponge” off others.

QUADRANT 2



Quadrant II people are not problem minded, they are opportunity minded.

Quadrant 2 Results

- Vision, perspective
- Results
- Discipline
- Control
- Few Crisis

SO - EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT?

The essence in effective time and life management is to organise and execute around balanced priorities.

The key is not to prioritise what's on your schedule but to schedule your priorities.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- List your "to do's" and then prioritise them in order of importance.
- Organise your activities on a weekly basis. It provides much greater balance and context than daily planning.
- Daily planning can and must still be done but should be in the context of weekly planning. Avoid the "fill the daily diary" with activities syndrome.

HAVE FUN AND ABOVE ALL FLY SAFELY!
