

*Inspirational Emails***Overcoming the Addiction to the Urgent**

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Steven Covey, in one of his wonderful management books entitled "First Things First," talks about the trap that many successful people fall into: **addiction to the urgent**. Covey concisely surmises the situation by **dividing up working time into different quadrants**. In quadrant one: **the truly urgent issues**, pressing deadlines or people problems that absolutely must be dealt with. These issues will truly make a difference in the health of any business endeavor. **Spending a good amount of time here is** (unfortunately) **necessary** for most people with any executive or management responsibility.



After this quadrant things get interesting, or shall I say counterproductive. As Covey points out, **our natural tendency is to spend the rest of our time on "urgent" matters which turn out not to be truly important**, but nonetheless not "urgent." In this category are **a number of time-wasters such as non-vital phone calls, memos, and meetings**; none of which will really make a strategic difference in the short-term or long-term outcome of whether our endeavors succeed or fail.

Covey astutely points out that rather than spending our time in this quadrant **we need to move to a different quadrant**, which while strategically important, may not appear to be "urgent". It is here where we do the long-term planning, preparation, reflection, the careful mulling over of major decisions, personnel issues and so on. **It is here where our future successes are visualized and plotted and future failures or hassles can be averted.**

Covey's point is that we never get to this quadrant if we get snared by the urgent yet non-vital.

Bottom line: figure out what is strategically important and can only be done by yourself. If any one else can possibly handle it - let them. If only you can produce what is required then do it - as quickly as possible. Then get out of the "urgent mode" and back into the thinking and planning quadrant.

You can purchase Steven Covey's book "First things First" through our God on the Net bookstore.