

Prioritizing Projects: The Covey Time Management Matrix

One of the greatest challenges in church media is determining what deserves your attention first. Without a clear system, the loudest voice, the latest request, or the biggest emergency often becomes the highest priority.

Our team uses Stephen Covey's Time Management Matrix as a framework for evaluating every project that comes into the media department. While every request is valuable, not every request requires the same response or timeline.



The matrix organizes work into four quadrants based on two simple questions:

- Is this important?
- Is this urgent?

Quadrant 1: Important & Urgent

These projects have immediate deadlines and directly impact ministry.

Examples:

- Sunday service graphics
- Weekend announcement slides
- Conference materials due this week
- Last-minute production needs

These projects demand immediate attention, but our goal is not to live here. While emergencies are inevitable, too much time in Quadrant 1 often indicates poor planning somewhere in the process.

Quadrant 2: Important & Not Urgent

This is where we strive to spend most of our time.

Quadrant 2 is where healthy media departments are built. These projects aren't urgent today, but investing in them now prevents unnecessary stress later.

Examples:

- Conference planning months in advance
- Branding projects
- Volunteer training
- Building new systems
- Updating handbooks
- Strategic planning
- Content calendars
- Dreaming and brainstorming future campaigns

The more intentionally we work in Quadrant 2, the fewer projects become emergencies in Quadrant 1.

Quadrant 3: Urgent & Not Important

These tasks often feel urgent because someone else needs them immediately, but they don't significantly advance the mission of the ministry.

Examples:

- Minor edits requested at the last minute
- Small administrative tasks
- Non-essential requests with unrealistic deadlines

Whenever possible, these projects should be delegated, completed efficiently, or scheduled appropriately without disrupting higher-priority work. In other words, urgent & non-important tasks cannot be what dominates your work space every day if your desire is to grow the ministry.

Quadrant 4: Not Urgent & Not Important

These activities consume time without producing meaningful ministry impact.

Examples:

- Unnecessary redesigns
- Perfectionism on low-impact projects
- Busy work
- Tasks that don't support current ministry goals

These should be minimized whenever possible so our time is invested where it matters most.

Our Philosophy

We understand that every media department will spend time in all four quadrants. Weekend services, unexpected changes, and ministry opportunities naturally create moments of urgency.

However, our goal is not to become experts at living in Quadrant 1. Our goal is to spend as much time as possible in Quadrant 2.

When we consistently invest in planning, systems, training, and preparation before projects become urgent, we create healthier teams, produce better creative work, and reduce unnecessary stress throughout the ministry.

Great media departments don't simply react well. They prepare well.