

Urgent vs. Important?

By Kim Dannies

Prioritizing our time and commitments during a busy week can be bewildering. Consistent reminders that yes, we CAN have it all – we just can't have it all at the same time, is a smart perspective to hold close as you practice the fine art of prioritizing. When planning work/life strategy set your priorities within a growth context by taking a good look at the roles you play and how they line up with your core values. For example yes, you'd like to grow your law firm's client base by 50% and have four new partners on board within the next two years, but you are also trying to practice law part-time, so that you can ferry your two children around after school everyday. By prioritizing your goals and choosing a realistic pace that will honor both objectives, you can indeed deliver that goal within a reasonable time span. It's all about thinking through the big picture and then leaving some wiggle room for the unexpected.

When you are faced with too many decisions try employing an automatic shuffle before responding. Resist the temptation to instantly focus on urgent things vs. important things. Urgent items usually fall into two categories: emergencies and inconveniences. Your spouse having a heart attack is clearly both urgent and important and requires your immediate undivided attention (core values of wellness, vital relationships, etc....) but when your teen-aged driver locks their keys out of the car that qualifies as an urgent inconvenience that can and should be handled by your child and triple A. The importance of keeping the appointment with the web designer, and on task with your goal to launch a new website, should probably outweigh the urgency of a bike ride on a cloudless, calm 75 degree day, given that you'll be cycling Saturday and Sunday as well. Sometimes prioritizing hurts, but it works.

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