

PRIORITY CLARIFICATION GRID

Purpose

Sort conflicting demands when everything seems urgent to create focus and reduce overwhelm.

Instructions

Use this worksheet when facing multiple competing priorities or when helping your team prioritize effectively.

Part 1: Priority Inventory

List all current demands competing for attention:

[illegible]

Part 2: Impact Assessment

For each item, evaluate the following:

Strategic Impact

How does this connect to team/organizational goals?

Item/Project	Strategic Goal Connection	Impact If Successful (H/M/L)	Impact If Delayed/Unsuccessful (H/M/L)

Relationship Impact

How does this affect key relationships?

Item/Project	Stakeholder Importance (H/M/L)	Stakeholder Expectations	Trust Impact If Delayed (H/M/L)

Growth Impact

How does this contribute to team/individual development?

Item/Project	Learning Opportunity (H/M/L)	Capability Building Potential	Future Work It Enables

Part 3: Effort and Constraints Analysis

Assess the practical aspects of each priority:

Item/Project	Time Required	Resource Requirements	Dependencies	Flexibility (H/M/L)

Part 4: Urgency vs. Importance Matrix

Place each item into the appropriate quadrant:

Quadrant 1: Urgent and Important

Items requiring immediate attention that align with key goals:

Quadrant 2: Important but Not Urgent

Items that create significant value but have flexibility in timing:

Quadrant 3: Urgent but Not Important

Items with time pressure but limited strategic impact:

Quadrant 4: Neither Urgent nor Important

Items that could be eliminated, automated, or significantly delayed:

Part 5: Capacity Reality Check

Your/your team's actual capacity:

Hours available per week: _____

Percentage already committed: _____

Remaining capacity: _____

Given this capacity, what can realistically be accomplished?

What must be delayed, delegated, or declined?

Part 6: Priority Decisions

Based on the analysis above, determine:

Top Priorities (Focus Here)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Rationale for these selections:

Secondary Priorities (Address If Possible)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

3. _____

Approach for these items:

Items to Renegotiate

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Specific renegotiation approach for each:

Items to Decline or Defer

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Communication approach for these decisions:

Part 7: Implementation Planning

For top priorities, outline implementation approach:

Priority 1: _____

Key milestones and timeline:

Resources needed:

Success metrics:

Priority 2: _____

Key milestones and timeline:

Resources needed:

Success metrics:

Priority 3: _____

Key milestones and timeline:

Resources needed:

Success metrics:

Part 8: Communication Plan

How will you communicate these priorities to:

Your manager:

Your team:

Other stakeholders:

Part 9: Buffer Management

Unexpected work always emerges. Plan for it:

Buffer capacity reserved (% of time):

Criteria for accepting new urgent work:

Process for handling interruptions:

Part 10: Review and Adjustment Triggers

Establish when to revisit priorities:

Scheduled review points:

Situational triggers for reprioritization:

Process for mid-course adjustments:

Additional Context:

Effective prioritization requires both analysis and courage:

- **Analysis to understand the relative value and urgency of different demands**
- **Courage to make explicit choices about what won't get done**

Remember these prioritization principles:

- **Not everything can be a priority - By definition, priorities mean some things come before others**
- **Saying no preserves your yes - Declining lower-value work creates capacity for what truly matters**
- **Different stakeholders have different priorities - What's urgent to one person may not be strategic for the organization**
- **Capacity is a reality, not a mindset - No amount of "working harder" can create more than 24 hours in a day**
- **Priorities need protection - Without active management, urgent matters will always displace important ones**
- **Communicate choices proactively - Letting people know what you're not doing (and why) builds understanding**

The most effective managers don't try to do everything. They make deliberate choices about what matters most, communicate those choices clearly, and focus their team's energy accordingly.

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