

Results first prioritisation

Created by Charlotte Rooney and presented by Build Your Edge.

This resource is designed to be used alongside Charlotte's Build Your Edge episode, 'High Performance, Happy Team'. Listen first as the conversation brings the ideas to life and gives the context you need to get the most from this document.

Step 1: Define your end goal

The #1 reason that most people struggle to prioritise is because they START IN THE WRONG PLACE!

When faced with an overwhelming list of tasks, projects, plans and expectations - most people start by looking at what's in front of them and asking "What is most urgent?"

The problem with that approach is that it only considers the immediate future.

But, true prioritization isn't about the immediate future. It's about the ultimate destination you want to get to - whether that's in a work project or your personal life.

That's why this prioritization formula is much more effective. Because we start with the Results you want to achieve. We start with the end.

Define the End Goal

Take a moment to step back and ask yourself:

- Where do I want to be at the end of today? The end of the week? Month or Year?
- What do I want to have accomplished?

By answering those questions, you know what you're driving towards, and you're ready to start ACTUALLY prioritizing rather than reacting.

Step 2: Categorise your tasks based on impact

You now know what you want to have finished within the time frame that you're prioritizing.

Now, it's time to actually start ranking activities based on their impact and ease. But with so many activities on your list, where do you even start?

First - WRITE THEM DOWN. If all your tasks are just in your head, they will feel much more overwhelming than if you can see them. Write everything down, in any order, on any piece of paper. But get it out of your head!

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It is fine if you're not sure that the list is exhaustive. You can always add in tasks as they crop up later. Just follow the same process to categorise them.

Categorize all your Tasks

The key to making real progress is focussing your time and energy where it matters. All too often, we start with what we think is urgent, or what we think is easy to do.

But that won't get you to your goal in the most effective way.

I know your time is limited, so you want to get the most out of every moment you have. In the next page I will show you exactly how to do that, simply, logically & in a foolproof formula.

Categorize everything on your list based on two factors (and be ruthless!):

1. Ease

Is the activity easy or hard to do? It's EASY if you can do it now with the resources you currently have. If you'd need help, then it's hard.

2. Impact

Is completing the task essential for you to reach your goal? If it is (i.e. what you're trying to create won't work without it) then it's HIGH Impact. If not, it's low impact.

Next you'll put all your tasks in a 2x2 like this:

Hard & High Impact (Important tasks)	Easy & High Impact (Quick wins)
Hard & Low Impact (Ditch all of these)	Easy & Low Impact (Nice to haves - time fillers)

I recommend doing this using post it notes or a spreadsheet so that you can easily move tasks from one quadrant to another as you reassess.

Easy & High Impact

These are your quick wins! Prioritize these activities as they will give you momentum and build confidence, and they move you forward towards your goal FAST!

Hard & High Impact

These activities are important but might require more effort or resources. You want to schedule these soon, because they're going to take longer to complete, but they're vital to your success. Break them down into smaller steps and tackle them strategically. You'll almost certainly be looking

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for help on these - whether that is from your team, a friend or family member, pro bono or by hiring someone to help.

Easy & Low Impact

These activities are nice to do but won't have a major impact on your goal. Don't let them distract you from the big needle movers - but you can plan them in while you're waiting for someone to help you out, or if you need a quick win to re-establish motivation. Or you can simply cross them off your list.

Hard & Low Impact

Don't bother wasting any of your time and energy on these activities because the return on your investment isn't worth it! Strike them off your list and forget about them.

Done?

Great! You've already eliminated about 25% of the tasks on your list - and ALL of the unnecessary activities which drain your time and energy and don't move you forward.

There's one final stage to dramatically increase your chances of successfully becoming a powerhouse of productivity.

Step 3: Plan, act, and stay focussed!

Create a Plan (get it on your calendar!)

Now that you have your activities categorized, it's time to create a plan. This doesn't have to be a rigid schedule, but rather a flexible roadmap to guide your actions.

Research has shown that when we have a concrete plan for how, when and where we will take action we're much more likely to do it.

Here are some tips for creating your plan:

Start with the quick wins

Tackle those easy, high impact activities first to gain momentum and build confidence.

Plan for & start asking for the help you need

You may have to wait to get it, so get the ball rolling ASAP and that way you won't get held up in the future.

Break down big tasks

If an activity seems overwhelming, break it down into smaller, more manageable steps.

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Assign clear owners to each task

Based on your team's skills, interest and availability, make sure that each task has ONE clear owner who will be responsible for making sure it gets done.

Set deadlines

Assign realistic deadlines to each activity to keep yourself & your team accountable.

Be flexible

Life happens! Don't be afraid to adjust your plan as needed.

Tip

Your plan is a living document. It's okay to revise and refine it as you learn and grow. The important thing is to have a roadmap to guide you on your journey.

Tools and Tips

There are countless tools and techniques available to help you with planning and organization. Here are a few ideas:

Digital calendars or project management tools

These can help you track progress and stay on top of deadlines.

Time blocking

Schedule specific blocks of time for different activities to avoid distractions and maximize productivity.

Accountability partners

Find someone who shares your goals and can help you stay motivated and on track, hire a coach, or ask your mentor to hold you accountable.

Take Action

There is ONE CAVEAT: a plan is only as good as the action you take. So, don't let your plan sit on a shelf gathering dust. Start taking small steps every day towards your goals.

Celebrate your progress, learn from your setbacks, and keep moving forward.

Your success is now inevitable.

Communication Guide

We want to be clear, concise and compelling. Especially when communicating upwards.

This framework will help you to do that.

Start with the aim of the communication

What is the key point you want your audience to understand at the end?

Never more than 3, ideally keep it to 1

What do you want your listener to THINK, FEEL & DO after they have heard your message?

Emotions are what drive action, so spend time thinking clearly about that. How do they need to feel to take the action you want them to take?

Thoughts create emotions, so what thoughts would create the feeling you need to drive the action you want?

Consider the starting point for your audience

What do they think, feel and do right now?

Why is it in their interest to stay that way?

What reaction do you anticipate to your communication?

Resistance? Why?

Acceptance? Why?

What is your relationship to the listener?

This will impact the structure of how you deliver information.

If the listener is more senior, ALWAYS use the Top Down approach. Senior leaders have very little spare time or attention and so you want to get them the most important information as quickly as possible

Top down

Start with the key point, then give up to 3 pieces of supporting argument / reasoning

Bottom up

Start with up to 3 pieces of evidence / reasoning and then lead into the main point.