Executive Assistant's Eisenhower Matrix

Your Strategic Support Dashboard

Handle Now	Strategic Work

Delegate/Redirect	Decline Politely

How to Use This as an EA

Your success is measured by your executive's effectiveness. This matrix helps you protect their time for what matters most while managing your own strategic development.

The EA's Quick Decision Filter

1. Does this need executive attention today? 2. Does this advance strategic priorities? 3. Can someone else or a system handle this? When in doubt, protect Q2 time—that's where careers are made.

Remember

• You're a strategic partner, not just support • Saying no protects your executive's yes • Your growth benefits everyone • Prevention beats reaction • Excellence doesn't require perfection

The EA's 3-Question Filter

Quick decisions for incoming requests:

Question 1

Does this need executive attention in the next 24 hours?

If YES: It's URGENT → Continue to Q2

If NO: It's NOT URGENT → Continue to Q2

Question 2

Does this align with executive priorities or strategic goals?

If YES: It's IMPORTANT → Place based on urgency

If NO: It's NOT IMPORTANT → Place based on urgency

Question 3

Can someone else handle this or can it be systematized?

If YES: Consider DELEGATING (especially if in Q3)

If NO: You need to handle it personally

Examples for Each Quadrant

Crisis Mode (Handle Now)

True emergencies requiring immediate executive involvement

- **Board meeting tomorrow - deck not ready** – Can't be delayed, executive must review
- **Critical travel change** – Executive needs to be somewhere specific
- **PR crisis response** – Every minute matters for reputation
- **Key stakeholder escalation** – Relationship damage if not addressed
- **Urgent contract signature** – Deal depends on immediate action

Strategic Zone (Plan & Protect)

High-value work that makes you indispensable

- **Building stakeholder relationships** – Makes everything smoother long-term
- **Creating process documentation** – Enables delegation and efficiency
- **Executive briefing preparation** – Better prep = better decisions
- **Professional development** – Grows your strategic value
- **Proactive calendar management** – Prevents fires before they start

Redirect Zone (Delegate or Defer)

Others' urgencies that don't need executive time

- **Non-critical meeting requests** – Can be handled by team members
- **Routine travel bookings** – Can use travel team or system
- **Standard information requests** – Create FAQ or redirect to resources
- **Low-priority emails** – Batch process or template responses
- **Office supply orders** – Delegate to office manager

Decline Zone (Politely Say No)

Time wasters that dilute your effectiveness

- **Optional meetings without agenda** – Protect executive's focus time

- **Nice-to-have projects** – Focus on must-haves first

- **Excessive formatting** – Good enough is often perfect

- **Non-essential committees** – Every yes is a no to something else

- **Low-value networking** – Be selective about relationships

Common Teacher Traps to Avoid

The Yes Person Trap

Accepting every request to be helpful, overwhelming yourself and your executive.

Solution: Your job is to be strategically helpful, not universally available. Every yes should advance key priorities.

The Perfection Prison

Spending hours on formatting and details that don't impact outcomes.

Solution: Ask: 'Will my executive notice or care?' If not, good enough is perfect.

The Invisible Excellence Problem

Doing amazing work that no one sees or acknowledges.

Solution: Document your wins. Send monthly 'impact summaries' showing time saved and fires prevented.

The Mind Reader Syndrome

Trying to anticipate every need without clear communication.

Solution: Schedule weekly 15-minute priority checks. Clear expectations beat perfect guessing.

The EA's Daily Command Center Check

15 minutes to orchestrate multiple priorities

Morning (10 minutes)

1. Review all executive calendars

2. Check for overnight urgencies

3. Sort new requests into quadrants

4. Identify today's Q1 and Q2 items

5. Send daily brief to executive(s)

Afternoon (5 minutes)

1. Update completed tasks

2. Prep tomorrow's priorities

3. Send end-of-day status if needed

4. Note any process improvements

5. Clear Q4 items guilt-free