

Your HR Command Center

People Priorities in 4 Quadrants



How to Use This Matrix in HR

This isn't about processing people faster – it's about serving them better. Use it to balance urgent needs with important culture-building work.

The HR Manager's Quick Sort

1. Is there immediate risk to people, compliance, or business? 2. Does this build culture or just maintain status quo? 3. Does this require HR expertise or just HR authority?

Remember

- Your time is the organization's culture investment
- Preventing problems beats solving them
- Not every issue needs HR intervention
- Strategic HR transforms organizations

People remember how you made them feel

The HR Manager's 3-Question Filter

Navigate HR priorities with these people-focused questions:

Question 1

Is there immediate risk to employees, compliance, or the organization?

If YES: It's URGENT → Continue to Q2

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

Question 2

Does this directly impact employee wellbeing or organizational success?

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

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

Question 3

Can HR team members, systems, or vendors handle this?

If YES: Consider DELEGATING (especially if in Q3)

If NO: You need to handle it personally

Examples for Each Quadrant

Crisis Management (Do Now)

Real HR emergencies requiring immediate attention

- **Active employee conflict/harassment claim** - Legal risk and employee safety come first
- **Compliance deadline today** - Penalties and legal exposure
- **Workplace safety incident** - Employee wellbeing is non-negotiable
- **Termination in progress** - Legal and emotional sensitivity
- **Critical role suddenly vacant** - Business continuity at risk

Culture Building (Schedule It)

Strategic work that transforms workplaces

- **Succession planning** - Prevents future leadership crises
- **Employee engagement initiatives** - Retention beats recruiting every time
- **Leadership development programs** - Builds bench strength for growth
- **Compensation strategy review** - Fair pay drives performance and retention
- **Culture transformation projects** - Strong culture = competitive advantage

Delegate Zone (Systematize)

Routine tasks that don't require HR expertise

- **Basic benefits questions** - Create FAQ or delegate to benefits admin
- **Interview scheduling** - Use scheduling tools or coordinator
- **Reference checks** - Standardize process for team
- **Employee file updates** - HR assistant or HRIS automation
- **Meeting room bookings** - Not an HR function

Eliminate Zone (Just Say No)

Time wasters that don't serve people or business

- **Office gossip mediation** - Not every conflict needs HR
- **Perfect policy wordsmithing** - Clear beats perfect
- **Attending every meeting invite** - Protect time for real HR work
- **Non-strategic vendor demos** - Only evaluate when you have real need
- **Outdated report creation** - If no one uses it, stop making it

Common Teacher Traps to Avoid

The Everything's Confidential Trap

Treating every employee issue as top-secret urgent crisis.

Solution: Develop clear criteria for true confidential urgencies. Most employee questions can follow normal channels.

The People Pleaser Pitfall

Trying to solve everyone's problems immediately to be liked.

Solution: Being strategic with your time serves employees better long-term than reactive people-pleasing.

The Compliance Panic

Living in fear of audits and treating all compliance as urgent.

Solution: Build compliance into regular Q2 rhythms. Proactive compliance prevents Q1 crises.

The Open Door Overload

Being so available that you can't do strategic HR work.

Solution: Set office hours for non-urgent issues. Protect time for Q2 culture-building work.

Your Daily HR Excellence Routine

10 minutes of planning prevents hours of crisis management

Morning (5 minutes)

1. Scan for overnight employee issues
2. Check compliance calendar
3. Review interview and meeting schedule
4. Sort new requests using 3-question system
5. Block time for one strategic initiative

Afternoon (5 minutes)

1. Update employee issue tracking
2. Document critical conversations
3. Move incomplete urgent items to tomorrow
4. Send proactive check-ins to key stakeholders
5. Clear desk of confidential materials

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