

Small Business Owner's Eisenhower Matrix

Your Path from Operator to Owner



How to Use This as a Business Owner

Your goal is to spend less time IN your business (Q1/Q3) and more time ON your business (Q2). This matrix helps you make that shift.

The Owner's Quick Sort

1. Does this keep the doors open today? 2. Does this grow the business or reduce future work? 3. Can someone else handle this with training? Be ruthless about protecting growth time.

Remember

- You didn't start a business to have a job
- Systems and people create freedom
- Working harder isn't the answer
- Your business should serve your life
- Growth happens in Q2

The Business Owner's 3-Question Filter

Make fast decisions with these three questions:

Question 1

Will this affect cash flow or operations in the next 48 hours?

If YES: It's URGENT → Continue to Q2

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

Question 2

Does this grow revenue, reduce costs, or improve customer satisfaction?

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

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

Question 3

Can an employee, contractor, or system handle this?

If **YES**: DELEGATE IT (especially if in Q3)

If **NO**: You need to handle it personally

Examples for Each Quadrant

Crisis Mode (Do Now)

True emergencies that threaten your business

- **Payroll processing** - Employees depend on getting paid on time
- **Major equipment breakdown** - Can't operate without functioning equipment
- **Tax filing deadline** - Penalties and legal issues if missed
- **Key customer complaint** - Could lose significant revenue
- **Cash flow crisis** - Need money to keep doors open

Growth Zone (Schedule It)

Strategic work that builds your business

- **Creating standard operating procedures** - Allows you to delegate and scale
- **Marketing strategy development** - Drives future customer acquisition
- **Financial planning and budgeting** - Prevents future cash flow issues
- **Building customer relationships** - Creates loyalty and referrals
- **Staff training and development** - Reduces your daily involvement

Delegate Zone (Train Others)

Operational tasks that don't need you specifically

- **Routine customer inquiries** - Staff can handle with proper training
- **Social media posting** - Can be scheduled or delegated
- **Supply ordering** - Create a system others can follow
- **Appointment scheduling** - Use online booking or delegate
- **Basic bookkeeping entries** - Hire a part-time bookkeeper

Delete Zone (Stop Doing)

Time wasters that don't move the needle

- **Perfectionist tweaking** - Good enough is often perfect for small business

- **Unnecessary meetings** - Could be an email or quick call
- **Comparing to competitors constantly** - Focus on your customers instead
- **Micromanaging capable employees** - Trust your team or train them better
- **Low-value networking events** - Not all networking drives business

Common Teacher Traps to Avoid

The Superhero Complex

Believing you're the only one who can do things 'right' in your business.

Solution: Document how you do things, then train others. 80% quality from employees beats 100% quality from an exhausted owner.

The Perfectionism Prison

Spending hours perfecting things customers don't notice or care about.

Solution: Ask: 'Will this perfectionism drive more sales or satisfaction?' If no, it's Q4.

The Yes Disease

Taking on every customer request, custom order, or special project.

Solution: Not all revenue is good revenue. Focus on profitable, scalable work that fits your model.

The Comparison Game

Constantly watching competitors instead of focusing on your customers.

Solution: Spend that time talking to actual customers. They'll tell you what matters.

The Owner's Daily Matrix Check

15 minutes to stay strategic while managing operations

Morning (10 minutes)

1. Check cash position and critical metrics
2. Review team capacity and coverage
3. Sort new tasks into quadrants
4. Identify ONE growth activity for today
5. Delegate or defer Q3 items

Afternoon (5 minutes)

1. Mark completed tasks
2. Note what got delegated successfully
3. Capture new tasks that emerged
4. Plan tomorrow's Q2 time block
5. Celebrate moving from IN to ON

© 2025 EisenhowerMatrix.com and Appfluence Inc. Visit us at <https://www.eisenhowermatrix.com>