

# HOW TO PRIORITISE TASKS READY FOR ACTION

## PRIORITISATION EXERCISE (STEP ONE)

Step 1: The first step is to think about importance. To do this you need to think about what you want to achieve from your job. Once you have done this, you need to think about the type of tasks that will help you achieve your objectives. It is important you carry out this step before you prioritise your tasks, otherwise there will be little meaning to the way you prioritise.

What do I want to achieve from my job?

What are the most important tasks to complete to ensure I meet my job objectives?

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

# HOW TO PRIORITISE TASKS READY FOR ACTION

## PRIORITISATION EXERCISE (STEP TWO)

Step 2: Once you are clear about what 'importance' means to you, you are ready to prioritise tasks. Using the table, list some of the tasks you've been asked to complete in the last couple of weeks. Then, rate the importance of each on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is 'extremely important'.

Next, consider why they are important. We think some tasks are important just because we do them automatically – but where do they fit on your scale? Again, you might need to think again about what you consider 'important'.

**Urgency:** Now, rate the urgency of each task on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is 'deadline imminent'. (Notice that the 'urgency' scale only goes up to 5 – because your first consideration was to rate a task's 'importance'.)

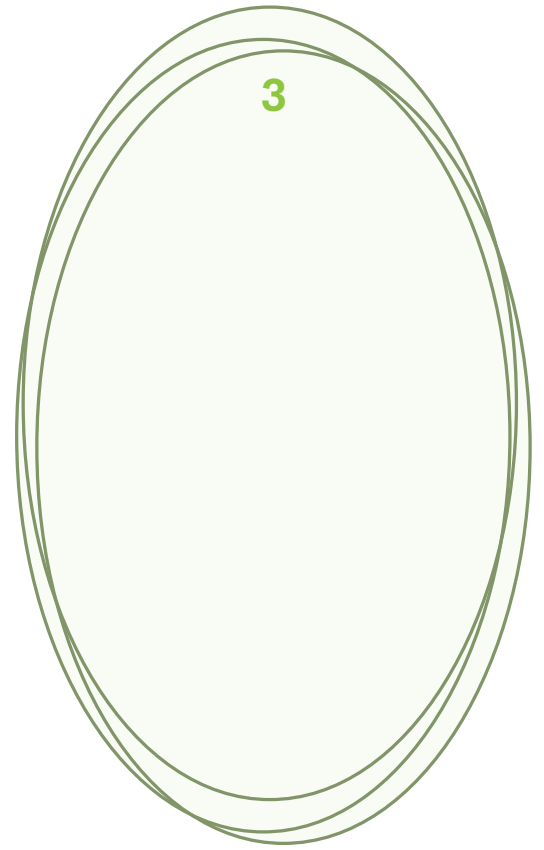
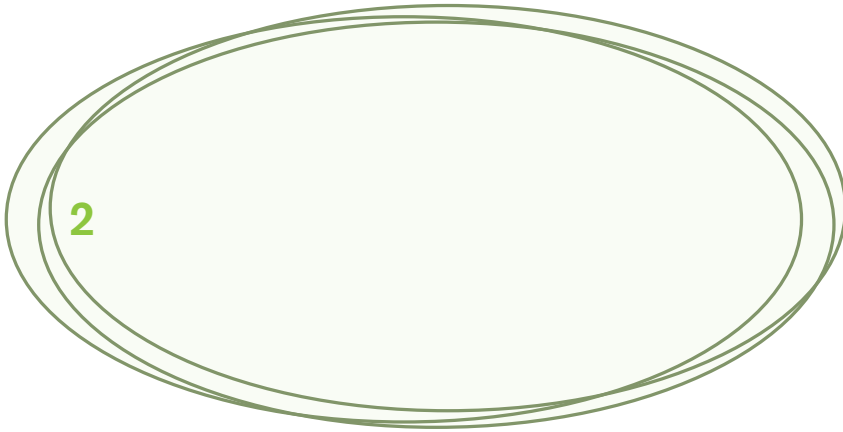
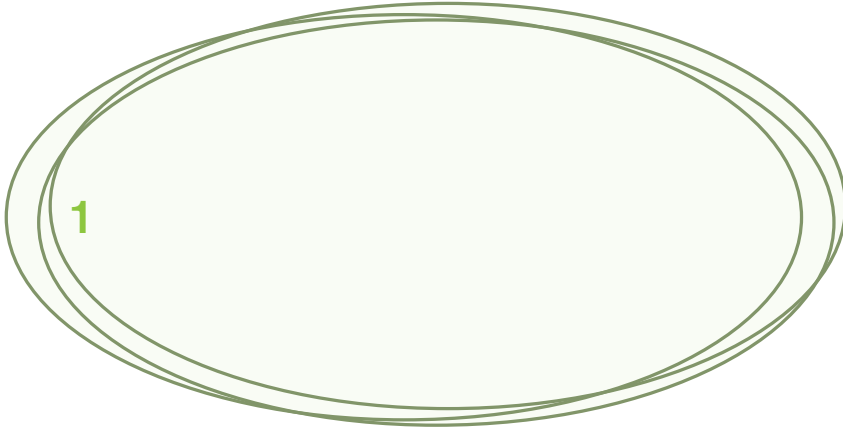
**Priority:** Next, add the 'importance' and 'urgency' scores. The tasks with the highest scores are those that you should focus on and do first.

Task	Importance (1-10)	Why is it important?	Urgency (1-5)	Priority
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

# HOW TO PRIORITISE TASKS READY FOR ACTION

## WHAT TYPE AM I?

Describe the situations below:



My prioritisation type is:

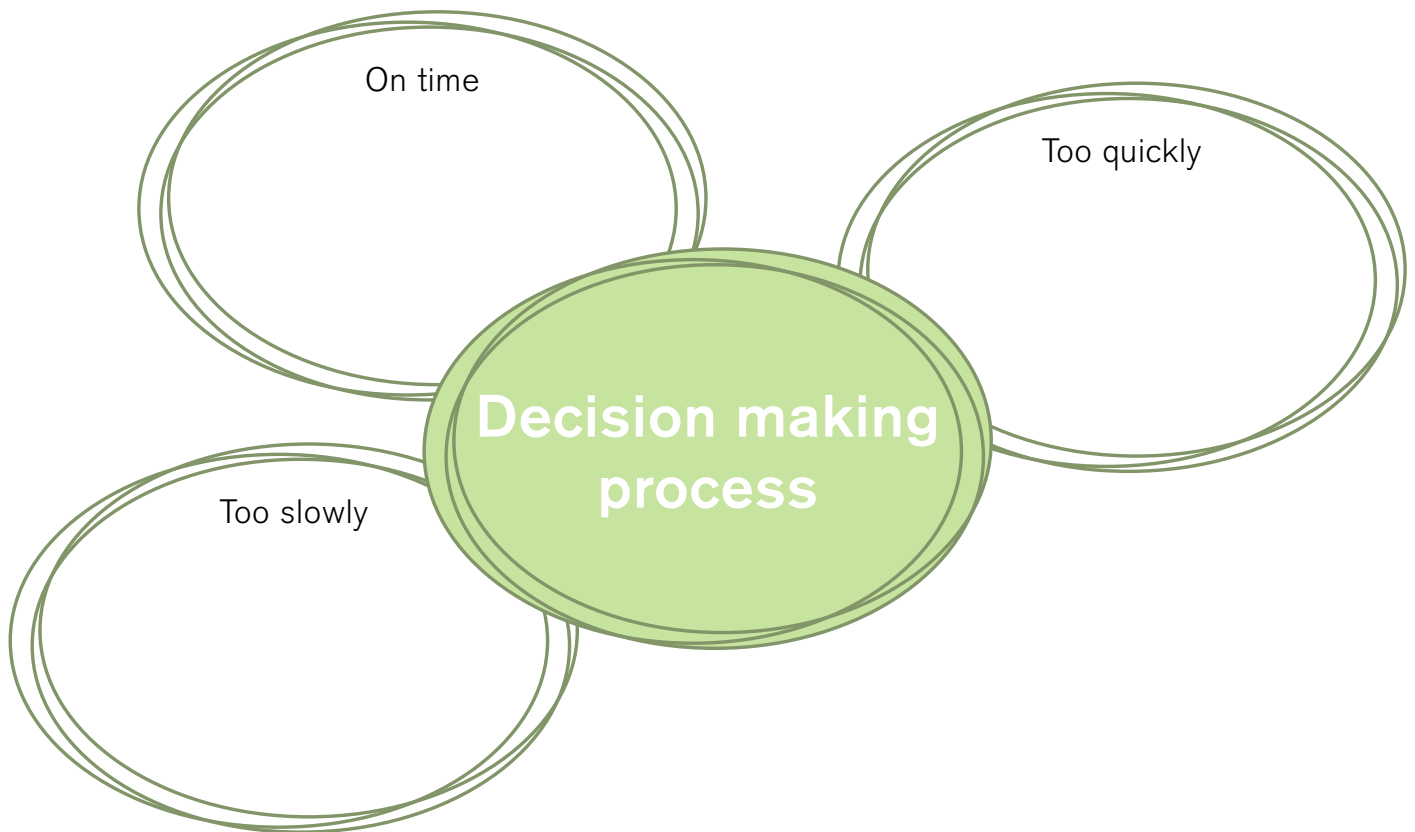
## HOW TO MAKE TIMELY DECISIONS

### HAVE YOU MADE YOUR MIND UP YET?

Step 1: Think of three, different decision making situations you've experienced: one in which you made a decision too quickly, another when you took too long and a third when it was on time and effective.

Step 2: Complete our 'Decision making process' template by answering these questions for each of the situations you chose:

- What was the context of the situation?
- What did you have to make a decision about?
- What actions did you take?
- What was the outcome?



## HOW TO MAKE TIMELY DECISIONS

### HAVE YOU MADE YOUR MIND UP YET?

Step 3: Now, review the scenarios you've just described. It's helpful to reflect on what worked or didn't work and why, in order to learn how to do things differently in future, if necessary. Do this now, by thinking about and answering the following:

- What worked well and why?
- What didn't work well and why?
- What were the consequences of making a decision too quickly?
- What were the consequences of making a decision too slowly?
- What were the key elements to making a timely decision?
- How can I optimise this behaviour again?
- What support do I need to help me make more timely decisions?

#### My Reflections

Through this exercise you should have identified some of the key factors in helping you to make timely decisions.

# HOW TO FOCUS ON THE BIGGER PICTURE

## YOUR PERSONAL TOWS GRID

Objective: Complete your project on time and budget and exceed customer expectations.

	External Opportunities (O)	External Threats (T)
<b>Internal Strengths (S)</b>  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.	<b>SO</b> Example: 1. External opportunity – changing client needs. Use strength of creative thinking and innovation to come up with exciting new ideas to engage the client.	<b>ST</b> Example: 1. External threat – tight deadline and budget. Use strength of strong organisational skills to project plan effectively and deliver on time and to budget.
<b>Internal Weaknesses (W)</b>  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.	<b>WO</b> Example: 1. One of my team members on the project is excellent at negotiating. I will maximise the opportunity to utilise their skills to negotiate with suppliers to overcome my weaker negotiation skills.	<b>WT</b> Example: 1. I will minimise my weakness in negotiation and avoid future threats in this area by going on a training course to help with negotiation skills.

Using this grid will help you understand how to focus on the bigger picture. You can use the bigger picture information you generate to evaluate the different options.

# HOW TO MAKE COMPLEX IDEAS SIMPLE, CLEAR AND CONCISE

## WRITTEN REPORT EXERCISE

This exercise will help you identify what the crucial points of your idea are, so that you can convey them simply, without being hampered by unnecessary details.

Think about an area of your work that involves complex ideas. Develop a written report to explain this to someone who is new to your area of work, maybe as part of their induction. Ask someone with less experience to review it and see if it makes sense to them. Use the following headings to help you:

- Label/Name the issue (short heading)
- Define, in no more than 15 words, what it is
- Identify the key elements, number them and put them in sequence of understanding, i.e. which concept does the person need to be familiar with in the first instance, then the next concept, etc.

Element	Definition