



# TriMetrix®HD Urgency

# Urgency

*Decisiveness, quick responses and fast action. Critical situations demanding on-the-spot decisions made in good judgment. Important deadlines met.*

## Why is this behavior important?

Imagine you are a 911 dispatcher. You have to treat every call as if it is an emergency whether it is a citizen reporting a stopped vehicle on the roadway or a bank teller reporting a robbery at gunpoint. As you can see, there are differing levels of Urgency to the calls received. The stopped car on the roadway is dangerous and might cause an accident, but obviously, someone's life is immediately in danger during the robbery. The degree of Urgency varies, but the dispatcher must respond rapidly and appropriately in both cases.

A strong sense of Urgency is critical to success. We have all had experiences of putting out fires by managing unforeseen situations that have suddenly derailed projects. However, that's not really what we mean by a sense of Urgency. Yes, you need to have a sense of Urgency in order to manage difficult and rapidly developing situations. But what Urgency also implies is an interest in proactively completing work and treating every project with a high level of importance.

To be successful, you need to be able to direct your energy toward the completion of a goal or project without requiring external prompting. Just like the 911 dispatcher described above, you must be able to make rapid assessments of situations you experience and decide on appropriate courses of action. In other words:

- You shouldn't need your supervisor to direct your activities all the time. Instead, you should be able to take initiative on your own.
- You should be able to trust your own instincts about what actions are appropriate to take at what time.
- You should be able to approach projects in an appropriate priority order without losing focus on lesser-priority items.
- You should aggressively be working toward improving and developing the skills that you possess.

Approaching every new task and each new problem with a sense of Urgency will not only help you attain success, but it will also help you be seen as a true go-getter, someone who is competent, effective and efficient at managing diverse activities in the course of a day. In addition, if you treat everyone you deal with as important and every project you take on as essential, the level of internal and external customer service you offer will be phenomenal.

## What behavioral characteristics are associated with Urgency?

Someone who has characteristics associated Urgency:

- Is able to maintain focus on multiple projects simultaneously.
- Has the ability to rapidly determine the degree of Urgency required by each situation.
- Believes that providing rapid and appropriate service or solutions is the best way to provide excellent customer service.
- Trusts his or her own decisions and takes action on them.
- Has the ability to adapt comfortably in dynamic situations.

## How do you develop your own abilities in Urgency?

- Prioritize your daily, weekly and monthly to-do lists. The most urgent items must be your first priority.
- If there is an interruption of your progress on established projects, assess the new task to determine its level of Urgency.
- Don't take on more tasks than you can manage but do take on as much as you can without sacrificing quality or the amount of attention you pay to any one project.
- Don't procrastinate! The longer you wait to handle a difficult or confusing task, the worse the situation can get.
- Set a specific goal or goals for each problem you face. Make deadlines by which you hope to accomplish problem definition, problem-solving and final resolution.
- Be assertive. Say what you think in a way that is easy for other people to understand while remaining open to their comments and concerns.
- Focus on your results. Make your actions count. Don't waste energy on futile or pointless tasks.
- Establish completion dates for projects and phases of projects.
- Make realistic promises. Don't make unreasonable commitments in order to impress. It's much more impressive to keep your promises and deliver consistent, high-quality results.
- Monitor your progress as you work toward completion of projects and evaluate your results so you can make better plans for the future.
- Always deliver what you promised on or before the date you promised it.
- Continually seek to exceed others' expectations of you.
- Delegate whenever possible. Don't give other people work you should be doing, but do recognize other people's areas of proficiency and delegate appropriate tasks for which other people have more expertise than you.
- Don't be afraid to ask other people for help if you need it.

- Remember that any interaction you have in person takes precedence over any others. Don't interrupt conversations to take phone calls, read e-mails or handle any other disruption.
- Understand the difference between urgent and important. Important tasks should be done carefully and effectively. Urgent tasks are essential and require rapid response and must take precedence over other tasks.
- Keep track of paperwork and electronic files. Make sure you're organized and can quickly locate information you need.
- If you are facing multiple urgent tasks, make careful prioritization decisions based on deadlines, amount of work required and other relevant factors.

# Urgency

## *Activities*

### Activity 1: Priority Listing

Make a list of all of the activities you have on your desk right now:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

- How many of them are urgent? Important? Less important?
- What progress can you make today on each project?
- What could you delegate to someone else?
- Should any tasks be deleted completely from your list because they aren't really important?
- Do you need help with any of the tasks?

Keep up with this list. Add new projects to it and reprioritize your list each time you add a new item.

## Activity 2: Trusting Your Instincts

Have you ever stopped working on a project because you were waiting for feedback on it?

Have you ever missed a deadline because you wanted to check and double-check a project before turning it in?

When you don't know what to do next on a project, do you wait for your boss to direct you?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are probably having trouble trusting your own instincts and abilities. A big part of acting with Urgency is understanding that you must sometimes take decisive action without guidance.

Take some time to think about why you have difficulty taking action. Are you afraid of failing? Have you gotten in trouble for making mistakes? Do you feel you misjudge situations or people regularly? Are you self-conscious about taking responsibility?

## Activity 3: Self-Improvement

A large part of being able to manage projects with Urgency is being aware of your abilities and limitations. If you know with confidence what you can handle and what you should ask for help on or delegate to others, you will be more effective at achieving needed results.

With that in mind, think about the following questions:

In your own opinion, what are your five greatest skills?

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

What are the five most important aspects of your job?

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Do your five skills match the five most important aspects of your job? Where are they the same? Where are they different?

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What are the three most common compliments you get from other people?

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

What are the three most common criticisms?

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

Where can you get training in areas where you need improvement?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



