

# Mulcahy Memo – October 2016

Published for clients and friends of the Mulcahy Law Firm, P.C.

by Beth Mulcahy, Esq.



Dear Clients and Friends,

I hope you are enjoying the slight change of weather lately! It sure is nice to be in the low 90's with the 80's in sight for all next week.

A very common complaint that our law firm hears from association board members is that the board never accomplishes anything. Some boards complain that they spend a majority of their time "firefighting" maintenance issues and dealing with angry or litigious homeowners. That being said, many boards never spend time thinking about strategic long-term planning for the association, funding reserves and important/urgent problems with difficult solutions. In my opinion, association boards need to radically change how they prioritize their important and urgent tasks as board members to create healthy and successful associations. This month's Memo discusses "The Eisenhower Method" to help you and your board prioritize items on your to-do list. Please scroll down to view the Memo.

Our Fall series of classes is off to a great start! We had great attendance at all five classes in September. We hope to see you at one or more of our classes this month!

## **Glendale HOA Academy:**

- *10/11- 1:00- 2:30 p.m.- Code enforcement and Collections*
- *10/18- 1:00- 2:30 p.m.- Amending CC&Rs*

## **Tempe HOA Academy:**

- *10/11- 9:00- 11:00 a.m.- Delinquent Assessments & Vendor Bidding and Contracting*
- *10/25- 1:00- 3:00 p.m.- 2016 Legislative Update and Q&A*

## **Scottsdale Neighborhood College:**

- *10/27- 1:00- 3:00 p.m.- Board Members: Roles, Responsibilities, Meetings & Minutes*

For registration information or to view a full listing of the classes, please visit our website by clicking [here](#).

We hope that you can join us for one of our upcoming classes!

Follow us on Facebook! Our law firm has a very active page with free tips and legislative updates for board members, managers and owners that is updated weekly.

Thank you!



Sincerely,  
Beth Mulcahy, Founder and Senior Partner  
Mulcahy Law Firm, P.C.

## Best Practices for Community Associations: How to Prioritize "Urgent" and "Important" Tasks

*By: Beth Mulcahy, Esq.*

### The Eisenhower Principle Can Be a Guide to Associations

In a 1954 speech to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was quoting Dr J. Roscoe Miller, president of Northwestern University, said: "I have two kinds of problems: the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent." This "Eisenhower Principle" is said to be how he organized his workload and priorities.

Eisenhower recognized that great time management means being effective as well as efficient. In other words, we must spend our time on things that are important and not just the ones that are urgent. To do this, and to minimize the stress of having too many tight deadlines, we need to understand this distinction:

- **Important activities** have an outcome that leads to use achieving our goals.
- **Urgent activities** demand immediate attention, and are usually association with achieving some else's goals. They are often the ones we concentrate on and they demand attention because the consequences of not dealing with them are immediate.

When we know which activities are important and which are urgent, we can overcome the tendency to focus on unimportant urgent activities (such as firefighting maintenance issues that could be delegated to others such as your manager), so that we can clear enough time to do what's essential for our success. This is the way we move from "firefighting" into a position where we can truly improve our associations.

### How to Use Eisenhower's Principle

To use this principle, list all of the activities and projects that your board needs to do. Try to include everything that takes up your time as a board member, however unimportant. Next, think about each activity and put it into one of four categories:

- Important and urgent.
- Important but not urgent.
- Not important but urgent.
- Not important and not urgent.

Then schedule tasks and activities based on their importance and urgency.

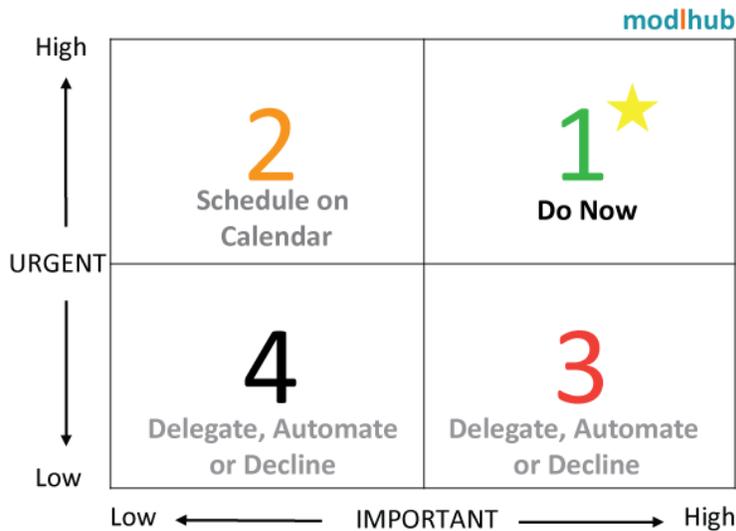
Source: [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE\\_91.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_91.htm)

Analysis of Strategic Challenges for \_\_\_\_\_

Step One: List Your challenges/problems and rate level of urgency and importance (between 1-10, with 10 being highest urgency and importance).

1. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
2. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
3. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
4. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
5. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
6. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
7. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_
8. Urgency # \_\_\_\_\_ Importance # \_\_\_\_\_

Step Two: Graph your problems on the following chart below and determine which challenges/problems you need to do now, schedule on the calendar, assign or delegate or drop.



If you have any questions, please contact Beth Mulcahy at 602.241.1093 or [bmulcahy@mulcahylaw.net](mailto:bmulcahy@mulcahylaw.net).