

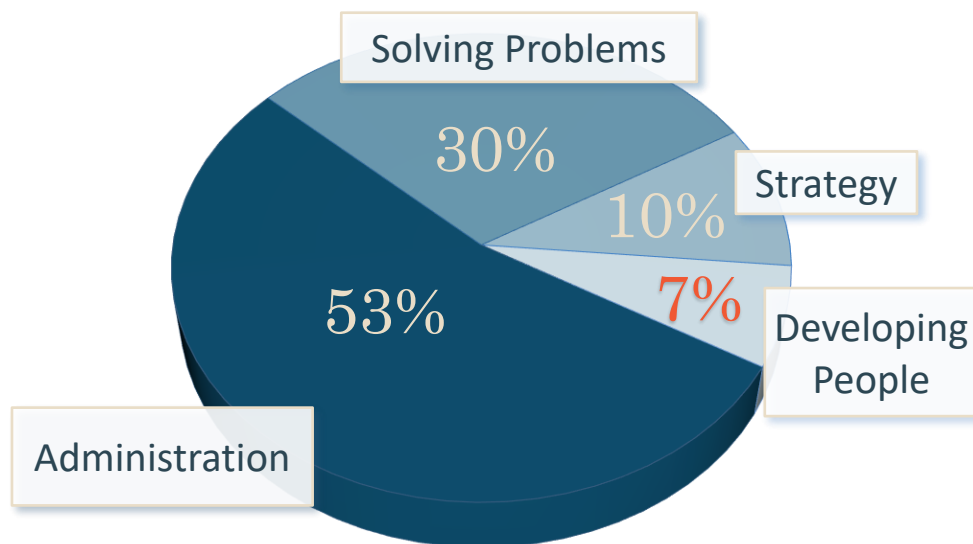
FINDING TIME

11 Ways to Find Time for Employee Development

THE PROBLEM

Our number one job as leaders and the most powerful way to make a positive impact in the lives of others is to develop leaders. It's in our blood. We want to see our people grow. We want to help them perform better, to have more confidence, and to gain more skills. We gain tremendous satisfaction when we go home at the end of the day knowing that we've made a difference in the life of an employee.

But how often does that happen? If you're like most leaders, here is how you spend your time:



*Source: Accenture Survey of 1,770 frontline, mid-level, and executive-level managers from 14 countries.

Now there could be a lot of reasons why we might spend only 7% of our daily time on developing others, but perhaps we've fallen into one or more of the following myths:

- Myth #1** People will grow on their own
- Myth #2** Growth is not my responsibility
- Myth #3** Growth happens in a day
- Myth #4** Someday I will find time to help people grow

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Probably the most common of these myths is **Myth #4: Someday I will find time to help people grow.**

Have you fallen into this trap before? How many times have you had some sort of people development task on your to-do list (cross training, giving feedback, doing an evaluation, having a one on one, showing appreciation) and you've never gotten to it because of the other "fires" or supposed higher priority tasks.

Believing in this myth is like imagining that one day you'll be walking around, you look over into the corner, and suddenly begin this conversation with your coworker:

"Hey John, look at this. Look what I just found! Gosh, I haven't seen one of these for ages."

"What is it? I've never seen anything like it before."

"John, it's a free hour. It's just sitting there in the corner waiting for someone to pick it up. I can't believe I've found it. I've found a free hour."



No, we are never going to just find time.

UNDERVALUING EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT LEADS TO YOU FEELING:

- Anger because your employees are not improving over time
- Frustration because you know your employees have more potential that you've not developed
- Dissatisfaction because you feel like you are not really making a difference

NOT ONLY THIS BUT YOUR EMPLOYEES:

- Don't perform to their ability
- Believe that being average is OK
- Resent you for not caring about their personal development

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THE SOLUTION

Sure, it's not fair. If our number one responsibility as a leader is to develop others, it should be a lot easier to find the time to do so. While it may not be easy, the purpose of this document is to help you become more intentional with your time so that you can find the time to develop others.

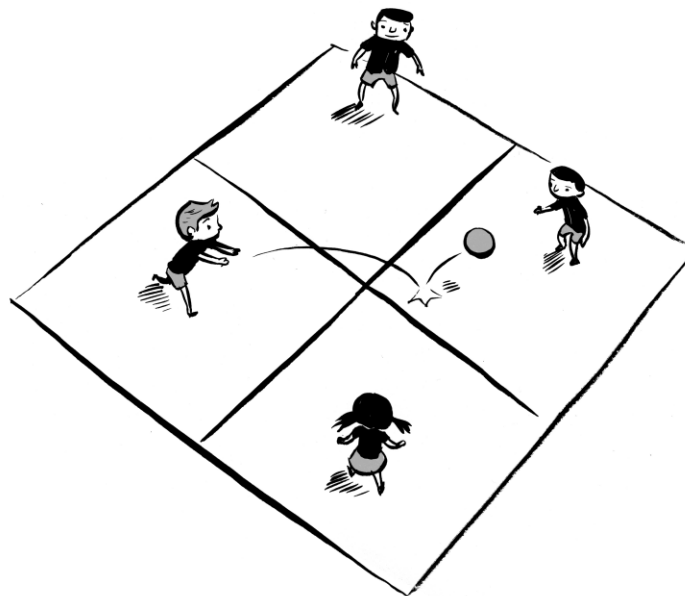
We'll do this through three easy steps.

THREE EASY STEPS TO FINDING TIME FOR EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT:

- Step One: Make development a top priority
- Step Two: Learn time-saving strategies
- Step Three: Create a game plan for action

STEP ONE – MAKE DEVELOPMENT A TOP PRIORITY

Remember the game of four square? In this children's game, you bounce the ball from your square into the square of another. The goal is to bounce it in such a way that they are unable to receive and pass the ball onto another square, thus getting them out. When you are out, you must move back to the beginning square and everyone else rotates forward a square. The goal is to get into the top left square and be crowned king (or queen for the ladies). Therefore, every action in every part of the game has one ultimate target – get to the place of royalty!



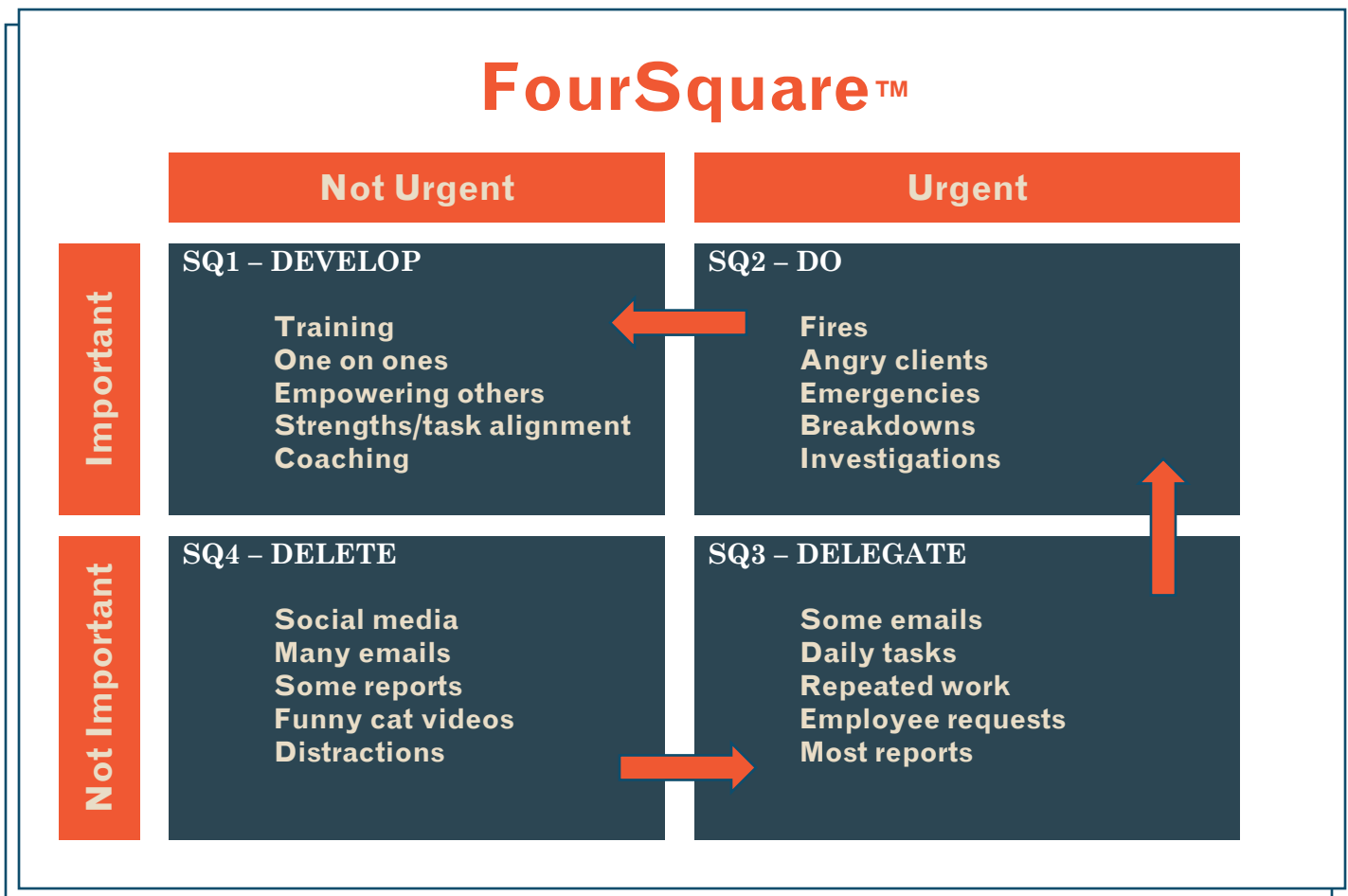
What if every day we came to work and we had one primary goal, to develop our employees?

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To do this, we must understand what President Eisenhower taught decades ago:

"What is important is seldom urgent and what is urgent is seldom important."

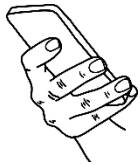
Steven Covey popularized this idea by teaching that there are things that are urgent and there are things that are important and there are things that are both. We've taken Covey's idea, have adjusted it to the flow of the game of four square, and have placed into Square 1 "Employee Development".



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Let's break each of these squares down so that we can find ways to prioritize differently and move more quickly into the position of royalty (SQ1).

SQ4 – Not Urgent; Not Important



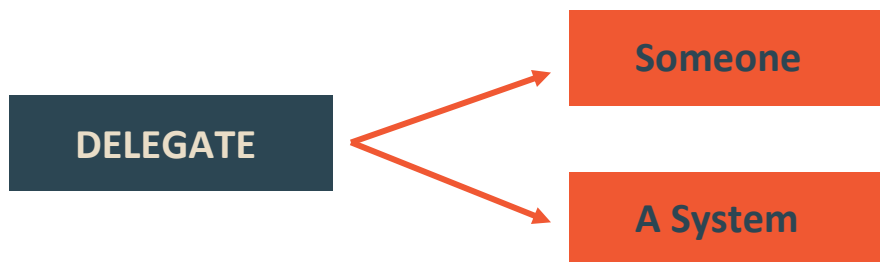
Just like in the game, everyone starts here. This square includes all the things that can be considered time wasters. When we are scrolling endlessly through our Facebook feed, signing up for email lists that we'll never read, getting distracted by every shiny object, or completing that report that no one every looks at, we are spending time in SQ4.

ACTION: DELETE these items. If needed, start keeping track of the things that distract you or create a not to-do list, detailing all the things you are not going to do so that you can stay focused on what is important.

SQ3 –Urgent; Not Important

The next square are the day-to-day activities. Stuff that has to get done, but not super important. This could be the daily prospecting calls you make, the weekly email, completing the KIP report, responding to emails, meetings you have to go to, and many of the other routine facets of work.

ACTION: DELEGATE these items. Most likely you cannot delete many of these items. Yet, with a bit of intentionality, you can start to delegate items in this square and therefore get done what needs to get done but in less time. When it comes to delegation, there are two places you can send work:



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Delegating to someone. This is actually pretty simple to do as most tasks that can be delegated can be taught quickly. Keep in mind that delegation and empowerment are different. Delegation are repeated tasks that do not require a great degree of skill and may or may not be aligned with the receiver's strengths. Empowerment (a SQ1 activity) requires more time on training, often involves coaching, and it is intentionally aligned with the receiver's strength areas.

Delegating to a system. A system is simply a set of steps that, when repeated, produce predicted results. For example, think about your shower this morning. Did you forget to use soap? Of course not! Why? Because you have a system for showering. Perhaps you start by soaking your body, then you shampoo your hair, then grab the soap and start working from your head down. Because of your system you don't have to think about the steps of showering. When you create a system for business (often called a SOP), you streamline a process and remove the thinking time that is required if there is no system in place.

SQ2 –Urgent; Important

It is in this square where you earn your leadership badge. These are the fires, the breakdowns in the production line, the angry parent that just showed up to the principal's office, the employee who just got caught stealing, or the order that just got bumped up because the client needs it "now".

ACTION: DO these items. There really is no way around this one. With SQ2 items, you have to allocate all resources and put these as top priority. Keep in mind two things, however. First, by spending time delegating SQ3 items and spending more time in SQ1, the number and severity of your fires will go down. Second, just because it is someone else's fire, does not mean it has to be your fire.



SQ1 –Not Urgent; Important

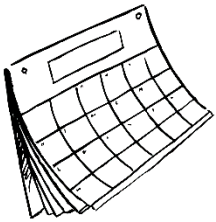
The top square; the ultimate place of intention. Here is where you can gain great satisfaction by making a significant difference in the lives of your employees. You develop relationships in this square and you learn what your team members dream, sing and cry about. In SQ1 you purposely plan activities that will help people grow, you get honest with your feedback, and you take the time to truly empower others.

ACTION: DEVELOP others, the ultimate goal of leadership.

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STEP TWO – LEARN TIME SAVING STRATEGIES

Reprioritizing your tasks will certainly help you find more time and it is the perfect place to start. Considering tools and strategies that help you become a better time manager is an important next step. Listed below you can find 11 strategies that can help you save time.



#1 - Make Time Rare. What makes something valuable? Its rare (think baseball cards). So, make your time rare by living life in 15-minute segments. Change the settings on your calendars so the default is 15 minutes. Be comfortable scheduling a one on one 15s or ending a meeting on the 45. You'd be surprised at how much extra time we usually schedule.

Estimated Time Savings: 1-2 hours/day

#2 - Stop Using To-Do Lists. This might sound a little harsh but using a to-do list is actually inefficient. What we need to do is move the to-do items into our calendar. This does four things:

WHEN YOU MOVE YOUR TO-DO LIST TO YOUR CALENDAR

- It forces you to allocate time to a certain task. Parkinson's Law states "Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion."
- It creates a sense of urgency.
- It helps you create expectations with others (I only have 10 minutes, or I don't have time now but at ___ I can meet with you).
- It helps you relax more when you go home, knowing that everything is scheduled.

Estimated Time Savings: 30 min to 2 hours/day

#3 - Set up Systems. The power of setting up systems was mentioned previously. Look at all your repeated work and take some time to create a system out of it. For example, if you happen to do cold calls, write out 2-3 intro scripts, write out a script for the typical responses and write out a voicemail script. That way, you don't have to keep reinventing the wheel.

Estimated Time Savings: 1-3 hours/week

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#4 - Check Emails Only 3 Times Per Day. How much time do you spend each day simply scrolling through your emails, deciding what to do next? Or, how often do you allow an email to distract you from the focused work you were doing? You'd be surprised! It's been said that email is a great way for other people to put their priorities into your life. Schedule your time to read and respond to email. Here's a strategy from author Kevin Kruse:

3, 2, 1, ZERO EMAIL STRATEGY

3 – Three times a day check your email (best as you start work, mid-day, and with about an hour left of work).

21 – Spend 21 minutes on your email each time you check it. Act on each email when you open it. Either delete it, delegate it (to a person, a calendared task, or a file) or do it (if less than a few minutes).

Zero – Your goal is to get your inbox down to zero emails each time you check it.

Estimated Time Savings: 30-60 minutes/day

#5 - Cluster Your Work. It's a myth that we can multitask. The truth is that to "multitask" we are simply flipping our brains from one task to another very rapidly. If you've finished a day's work and felt completely brain dead, this could be why. Clustering your work can help you stay focused for longer periods of time. Create themes for each day (i.e. Meeting Monday when you schedule all your meetings), batch your similar tasks together and use calendar colors for different types of activities (red for reports, green for meetings, etc)

Estimated Time Savings: 1-2 hours/week



#6 - Create Focus Blocks. How often do you think the average American worker gets distracted during their day? Every 8 minutes! Its no wonder we don't get anything done. If you have important tasks that need to get done, take out your calendar and schedule a 90-minute block where you'll focus. Turn off all notifications (including email), post a sign on at your work area (Can't talk, focused. Come back at ____.)

Estimated Time Savings: 1-3 hours/day

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#7 - Make Room for Margin. When reading a book, what do you do in the margin? Often, we write down our own thoughts and reflections. In your working day, do you have time to write down your thoughts and reflections? Probably not, as more than one-third of us eat while working! Margin is the space that exists between our load and our limits. It is the amount of time allowed beyond that which is needed. It is the gap between rest and exhaustion. It is the opposite of overload. Schedule small increments throughout your day to rest and “write in the margins.”

Margin Time

Monday	
8:00a	Weekly team meeting
8:15a	
8:30a	
8:45a	
9:00a	Work on PnL report
9:15a	
9:30a	Phone Call w/X Client
9:45a	
10:00a	One on One with Sally

Estimated Time Cost: 40-60 minutes/day

#8 - Reciprocate the Responsibility. One of the biggest mistakes of new leaders is to think that they have to solve all the problems. They don't and when they do they actually strip a learning opportunity away from their employees. When someone comes to you with a problem, simply turn it back to them. “What do you think we should do? How would you solve this issue?” If they cannot produce an answer, have them go back to work and think about it more. Tell them that you'll check in later to see what they think...but don't solve the problem for them. As leaders we often are too eager to solve than to teach.

Estimated Time Savings: 20 min-3 hours/day

#9 - Delete and Delegate. We've mentioned this before, but let's think about it terms of the Pareto Principle.

THE PAREDO PRINCIPLE

80% of your results come from 20 percent of your actions.

Make a list of all your high return tasks (your 20%ers). Everything else should be deleted or delegated. CW Ceran teaches that “Genius is the ability to reduce the complicated to the simple.”

Estimated Time Savings: 2-4 hours/day

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#10 - Just Do It. Its hard to admit, but about 90% of the decisions you make in a day don't really matter. What you wear, where you eat, and what sort of pen you write with in the big picture don't matter at all. Efficient leaders don't spend a lot of time pondering over small and medium decisions. Just decide and move on. You'll save a ton of time and your employees will thank you for your quickness.

Estimated Time Savings: 20-60 minutes/day

#11 - Schedule Development. Ultimately, this is the whole goal of this document. By following all of the suggestions contained herein, you'll definitely find more time for development, but that time can quickly slip away if you don't schedule it. At the beginning of each week, block out periods of time when you will spend time with your employees and then don't change these appointments. Treat them like you would treat a meeting with your superior. You'd never tell him/her that you can't make the meeting because you've got too many emails in your box. Well, don't change your people development time either.

Estimated Time Investment: 3 hours/day (40% of your working time)

11 TIME-SAVING STRATEGIES

1. Make time rare
2. Stop using to-do lists
3. Set up systems
4. Check email only 3 times per day
5. Cluster your work
6. Create Focus Blocks
7. Make room for Margin
8. Reciprocate the responsibility
9. Delete and delegate
10. Just do it
11. Schedule development

STEP THREE – CREATE A GAME PLAN FOR ACTION

Henry David Thoreau stated, "It is not enough to be busy. The question is, what are we busy about?" Most likely you've come across an idea in this document that you'd like to try or perhaps it has inspired additional thought and you've come up with your own ideas. Either way, without creating an intentional game plan, these ideas will leave as quickly as they came. Therefore, allocate some time now or within the next 24 hours to reflect on your efforts towards employee development and create a game plan to spend more time on your number one priority. Here are some questions to guide you:

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THE GAME PLAN

What are some things you can **DELETE** during your workday?

What are some things that you can **DELEGATE**...

To others?

To a system?

Name two time-saving strategies you'd like to try:

Strategy #1: _____

- How will you do this?
- When will you do this?
- Who will hold you accountable?

Strategy #2: _____

- How will you do this?
- When will you do this?
- Who will hold you accountable?

What would your work look like if you spent more time developing others on your team?

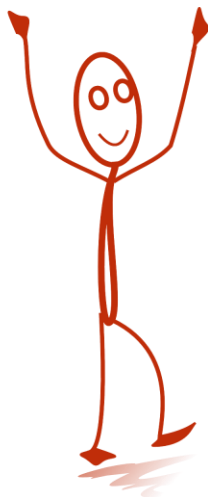
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THE RESULTS

When you follow the three easy steps to finding time for employee development, great things will result.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRIORITIZE EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT:

- You'll be fighting less fires.
- Your people will be more empowered.
- You'll have a deeper bench of leadership.
- Your whole organization will become more effective/profitable.
- You'll have greater satisfaction as a leader.



Let's find time for
employee development!

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influencing leaders, impacting employees

Jason Hunt teaches leaders how to bring out the very best in their employees through training and speaking. He is the founder of Eye Squared Leadership and he has had the pleasure of working with companies large and small, including FedEx, The Taylor Corporation, Bongards Creameries, Jack Links, and Pearson. Jason's first major leadership responsibility was to run a branch of 100 church members in outer Siberia when he was 19. Since then, he has been in various leadership positions, including principal of a junior high where he turned around the culture of a school in only 2 years. Jason has a masters degree in leadership from the University of Minnesota, is certified by the John Maxwell Leadership Institute, and is the author of The Other Side: 5 Rules for Leading with Influence. He currently lives in Owatonna, with his wife and their four children.

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