THE ART OF SETTING PRIORITIES

Setting priorities is the act of assigning weight to a list of items. It is determining what is more important than something else. When setting priorities, a simple A, B, and C system works very well.

An “A” priority is anything that you must do. The task is critical to the successful performance of your job. It is important because it has a high payoff and it is also urgent. An “A” priority task needs to be done fairly quickly, or the consequences will be severe.

A “B” priority is something you should do. It’s also critical to successful performance because it has high value, but it’s not as urgent as an “A” priority. Priority “B” tasks can be temporarily postponed, if necessary.

A “C” priority is a “nice to do.” It is desirable to complete them, but it’s not critical to the overall success of your job.

When you’re prioritizing tasks, use these questions to help you make your priority decisions:

1. Why am I doing it?
2. How does it relate to my goals/objectives?
3. What is the immediacy of the task? How urgent is it?
4. Is it really important?
5. Can anyone else do it?

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