

# Squirrel In Hell

2018-01-21

## Actionable Eisenhower

*Note: This is a small peek into the kind of background model-building that goes into Be Well Tuned. I don't currently have resources to invest into writing, so the description is pretty bare-bones. On the positive side, I have changed the blog theme to black text on light background - I hope that makes it more readable.*

The Eisenhower matrix is a (somewhat) useful high-level framing of a certain aspect of productivity, based on classifying tasks/activities into four types. It's casual application was entertainingly explored in this [Wait But Why](#) post. I'll minimally quote just the matrix itself:

Q1	Q2
urgent and important (do it now)	important but not urgent (decide when to do it)
Q3	Q4
urgent but not important (delegate it away)	not urgent and not important (delete it)

Now while I don't deny that this classification is (somewhat) useful, it's definitely not very actionable. The typical obvious conclusion from reflecting on it, "I should do more Q2 activities", predictably does not get implemented. Well, that's because implementing a systematic way to do Q2 activities *is itself a Q2 activity*.

However, there's a version of the matrix which is much closer to being actionable (close enough that I dared to write [specific instructions](#)). Basically, I'm taking the distinctions between types of activities in the world, and turning them into distinctions between states of mind:

Q1	Q2
alert and anxious ("stressed")	alert and calm ("meditative")
Q3	Q4
unfocused and anxious ("useless")	unfocused and calm ("relaxed")

The unfocused/alert axis corresponds roughly to [PSNS/SNS](#) activation. The anxious/calm axis corresponds to how much the brain is under

### Blog Archive

[January 2018](#) (3)  
[December 2017](#) (3)  
[November 2017](#) (1)  
[October 2017](#) (2)  
[September 2017](#) (1)  
[August 2017](#) (2)  
[July 2017](#) (1)  
[May 2017](#) (2)  
[April 2017](#) (1)  
[March 2017](#) (2)  
[January 2017](#) (2)  
[November 2016](#) (1)  
[October 2016](#) (1)  
[September 2016](#) (2)  
[August 2016](#) (1)  
[April 2016](#) (1)  
[March 2016](#) (1)

### More by SquirrelInHell

- [AI Safety Comics](#)
- [Android Apps](#)
- [Be Well Tuned](#)
- [Rationality Updates](#)

psychological/emotional pressure to solve some specific problem or task.

The "common sense" understanding of relaxation runs across the diagram, visiting mostly Q1 ("stressed") and Q4 ("relaxed") as a result of reacting to the environment. Although people sometimes end up in Q3 ("useless") by accident, as in e.g. spending a sleepless night worrying, it is much less likely that they will accidentally do something Q2.

**No comments:**

**Post a Comment**

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)