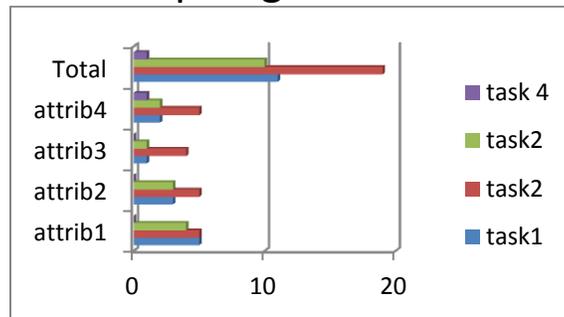




URGO Method

(a method that tangibly illustrates ROI on seemingly urgent items)

Urgent Rate and Graphing for Overwhelm (URGO)



Every day we are inundated with new tasks, special requests, and high-profile client requests. But we rarely truly take the time to relationally and realistically prioritize to our best career advantage. A co-worker is in the middle of some family issues and you end up picking up his/her slack. The company undergoes some re-organization, and your project lists has increased. Often times we don't feel we have a choice, but you really do.

Below are some quick steps that gives you a visual chart that clearly outlines which project or task to spend your time on.

I call this my URGO (Urgent Rating Graph Order) method.

Step 1: Identify your imperatives or career goals

Step 2: List your significant time sinks or tasks

Step 3: Score each task 0-5 (5 being the most in aligned with your goals) for each listed goal

Step 4: Chart the results

Step 5: You now have a tangible and visible ROI for your time, create a career plan to accomplish those action items.

Example:

Step 1: My goals

Get recognized as a thought-leader in my field

Become the GoTo MPV that the executives go to on new innovation and technical strategies

Acquire a new-level promotion within the next 6 months

Step 2: List your current tasks and desired tasks

Have a great, innovative approach to solving a new market problem that might open the company to a whole new market

Team mate is growing through some tough times and I am stuck picking up his/her slack on maintenance issues

Assigned to an end-of-life product that has been scheduled to be dropped. But a few clients won't upgrade to the new product; therefore, the 'drop' schedule continues to be postponed.

Although I am not behind, I would like some time to get ahead of my current project.



Next Generation Project X is the next high-profile product. My business proposal would fit perfectly in that scenario.

Step 2: Take each task and objectively rate or score it for each of your career and professional goals.

Make a proposal for a new solution to the executives

- Get recognized as a thought-leader in my field
 - Score 5 – I feel that this is innovative and can be used in our company’s next generation product
- Become the GoTo MPV that the executives go to on new innovation and technical strategies
 - Score 4 – If this goes as I expect, I could be implementing this in Project X. I could become one of the technical leads on Project X
- Acquire a new-level promotion within the next 6 months
 - Score 4 – This would get me off some of the ‘end-of-life’ product and out of maintenance duty

-----Total Score 13

Continue to pick up slack for a co-worker

- Get recognized as a thought-leader in my field
 - Score 0 – It could be considered being a team-player, but neither my manager nor executives actually recognize or acknowledge that I’m doing this. Right now, I’m doing it. I’m not even sure my co-worker realizes the extra work he is putting on me. Besides, this really isn’t even my responsibility. It’s my manager’s role to manage everyone’s changing work schedule. Not allowing my manager to know what’s going on is not to my benefit.
- Become the GoTo MPV that the executives go to on new innovation and technical strategies
 - Score 0 – Once again, no one is aware of what I am doing for my co-worker.
- Acquire a new-level promotion within the next 6 months
 - Score 0 – This just keeps me stuck on this maintenance project.

-----Total Score 0

Working on ‘end-of-life” product

- Get recognized as a thought-leader in my field
 - Score 2 – One of the few people around here that still understands this old technology. Everyone else has either quite or has moved onto the new platforms. But this technology is currently obsolete. My company is just behind the curve on ending it.
- Become the GoTo MPV that the executives go to on new innovation and technical strategies
 - Score 0 – I don’t have a chance to even learn a new technology because of my current maintenance tasks.
- Acquire a new-level promotion within the next 6 months
 - Score 0 – Without my intervention, I’ll be stuck on this ‘end-of-life’ and maintenance gig. I’ll become the only one with this old technology knowledge and they won’t be able to remove me from this spot.

-----Total Score 2

Although I am not behind, I would like some time to get ahead of my current project.

- Get recognized as a thought-leader in my field



- Score 2 – The current projects are on the technology that is being phased out. I can not be regarded as a thought-leader with this project. As long as I don't fall behind, my remaining time should be spent on other things.
- Become the GoTo MPV that the executives go to on new innovation and technical strategies
 - Score 0 – This is not new technology. Therefore, spending more time that I need on this is fruitless.
- Acquire a new-level promotion within the next 6 months
 - Score 2 – If my project is actually phased-out, I will be available for a new project or position. But there's no telling when that will be. It's been in this same state for 2 years already.

-----Total Score 4

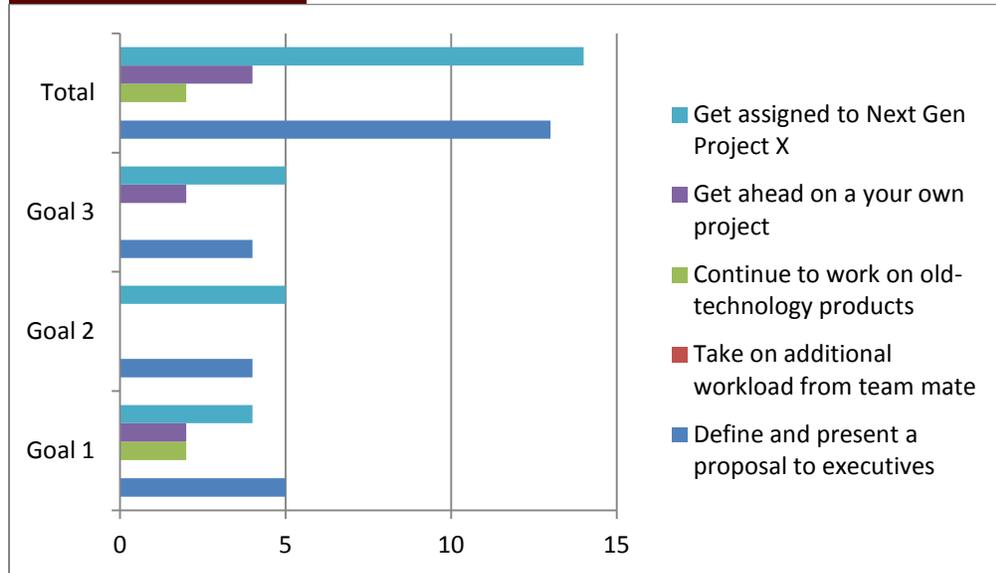
Next Generation Project X is the next high-profile product. My business proposal would fit perfectly in that scenario.

- Get recognized as a thought-leader in my field
 - Score 4 – This project is getting lots of visibility. I already have ideas on the next directions on this platform.
- Become the GoTo MPV that the executives go to on new innovation and technical strategies
 - Score 5 – My proposals will tie my ideas to the Project X evolution schedule. We will be no only able propel the development cycle forward but be able to patent and license how we are doing it.
- Acquire a new-level promotion within the next 6 months
 - Score 5 – My blending my business process ideas directly into the Product X infrastructure, I will be building a foundation for a promotion and leadership role.

-----Total Score 14

Step 4) Chart the results

From the chart, you can visually see that Getting the Next Gen Project X and Presenting your proposal to the executives are your top career and professional goals.



Step 5) Create your career plan with those to priorities in focus.

Some suggestions would be:

- Stop picking up the slack for your co-worker. Talk to him/her honestly about the issues and encourage them to talk to your manager about it.
- Start diverting your time to creating that proposal and interviewing executives on what they are really looking forward to in the next fiscal year.
- Start volunteering your time on Project X and networking with the Project X managers.
- Prototyping your process as it would look and feel in Project X
- Continue to work on your proposal and demo/practice on Project X team and managers.
- Start patent disclosure meetings with your company legal departments.

The above is just an example. Your goals and tasks will be different and more complex than the above. But this method works on a variety of situations from task priority, career management, risk analysis, and much more. It takes the emotional out of the decision process and allows you to focus on the ROI for your professional career development.

Try it and let me know what you think.

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