

# S.T.A.R.S. Program 2026



## Time & Project Management

*In collaboration with  
Brighter Leaders*



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## The Eisenhower Matrix

Important

Not Important

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Schedule it  | Do it now   |
| Eliminate it | Delegate it |

Not Urgent

Urgent

## Tools for different scenarios - build buffer time and say “no” without burning credibility

| Tool                              | Scenario                                                                             | Sample Phrases                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>“Yes, If”</b>                  | Your manager asks you to take on a new project                                       | "Yes, I can take this on — and to make sure it gets the right focus, I'd recommend we pause Project X or adjust the timeline on Y. Which option makes the most sense to you?"                                |
| <b>Protecting Buffer Time</b>     | A colleague books a meeting during your blocked focus time                           | "I've set aside this time to work on the strategic deliverable due Friday. Could we move this meeting to tomorrow afternoon so I can give both the project and our conversation the attention they deserve?" |
| <b>Delegation Opportunity</b>     | Someone brings you a task that doesn't need your direct involvement to be successful | "That's important. To move it forward quickly, let's have Anna take the lead. I'll stay involved at the decision points, but she can own the execution."                                                     |
| <b>Reframe to Strategic Goals</b> | A request comes in that feels urgent but isn't aligned with strategic priorities     | "I see why this feels urgent. To keep us on track with our strategic goals, I'd suggest we revisit this after the product launch. That way we don't lose momentum on our main priorities."                   |
| <b>Boundary + Offer</b>           | Someone expects you to respond instantly (Slack/email)                               | "I usually check Slack at 11am and 3pm so I can stay focused on deep work. If something is truly urgent outside of that, please text me and I'll jump in."                                                   |



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If an activity moves a project forward, builds people, or strengthens collaboration, it's a value-driver. If it just keeps people busy without visible outcomes, it's likely a time-waster.

## Time-Wasters (low or no value)

- **Unnecessary Reports** → Creating long status reports no one reads.
- **Overlong Meetings** → Weekly check-ins with no clear decisions or outcomes.
- **Perfectionism** → Spending hours polishing slides that are “good enough.”
- **Reply-All Emails** → Endless email chains where little progress is made.
- **Duplicated Work** → Two people collecting the same data in different formats.

## Value-Drivers (high impact)

### Results:

- Delivering a project milestone on time.
- Solving a customer issue that improves satisfaction scores.

### Learning:

- Running a short retrospective to capture lessons learned.
- Testing a new tool that saves the team hours.

### Relationships:

- One-on-one coaching conversations with team members.
- Cross-functional workshops that build alignment.



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- Context-Switching
- Vague Ownership
- Over-Meeting Culture

Hidden Drains on  
Productivity



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## Delegation for Growth

### Delegating Tasks

“Do this exactly as I say.”



- Keeps control with the leader
- Limits team growth

### Delegating Outcomes

“You own this result.”



- Builds ownership, initiative
- Frees the leader's time



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Realistic Timelines Without  
Losing Ambition

