

Step 1: CEO Eisenhower matrix

“Put on your own oxygen mask before you help others.” That brings peace of mind. Making lists helps, but they can become too long. What are you going to spend your limited time on? We use the “Eisenhower matrix”, named after the American army commander in chief, during the Second World Situation, who went on to become president. He made a very clear distinction between urgent and important.

In our opinion, the Eisenhower Matrix is the “bottom up” and “quick and dirty” variation of the Scaling Up methodology, making time for the really important. Most likely, you will have come across him in certain books concerning time management. With this [Eisenhower matrix one-pager](#) you gain an overview within fifteen minutes. We also use this to set priorities.

	Urgent	Less urgent
Important	Quadrant 1: Major fires that must be extinguished now <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request WTV • Call biggest clients • Employee safety plan and communication 	Quadrant 2 Ensure that there is no need to extinguish a fire next week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the financing gap • New meetings with suppliers • ...
Less important	Quadrant 3: Small fires, other people’s urgent priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting new supplier • Email from demanding customer • ... 	Quadrant 4: ‘Work evasive behavior’ Very difficult under pressure, stay away! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corona news • ERP implementation (was in Quadrant 2, but situation has changed)

Tips

- You choose the boundary between Urgent and Less Urgent, for example plan your week 1 week ahead, or plan 1 day ahead, when in real crisis mode
- What is really important? Your safety plus that of loved ones and employees, continuity of your company, etc. Reasoning from both personal and business **Core Values**.
- Distinguish between **“next actions”** that can be done at once without preparation (mark with a square, to easily check off) and **“projects”** (everything that requires more steps, mark with a circle).
- Choose your top priorities and, in addition, fight to make time for 1 or 2 issues from Quadrant 2.
- For top priority “projects” create an initial planning, on another page, taking note of “next actions”.



Step 3: Decide who's in your crisis team

Over the past week (s), we've been engulfed with news about the coronavirus. Everyone within our organization became obsessed, following updates closely. We sat glued to our screens, constantly monitoring news sites, twitter and whatsapp groups. Understandable, however, Corona news is not in our **Circle of Influence**.

We believe it works well to divide the company into **Offence and Defence teams**. The Offence team is the Corona Crisis Team, dealing with all urgent crisis actions and projects (more about this later). **The Defence team** are all other people, otherwise known as the "business as usual" team. We understand that this is difficult, but it is crucial that most people (no matter how good or bad the situation becomes), keep their eye on the ball, ensuring that normal business continues. If everyone gets involved in Corona, you know one thing for sure: no one cares about the customer anymore.

It is crucial for the Defence team to know that there is an **Offence team** dealing with the crisis. We like demarcation in the Scaling Up method. And this is also the case with a clearly defined Crisis team. Clarity ensures less stress and higher output, especially for the **Defence team**.

The next step is to determine, with your Leadership Team (MT), who will be on the crisis team. Our first suggestion, not to include the entire MT because we recognize the value of assigning some key players to take charge of the Defence Team, ensuring good customer service continues. (The Main Thing is to Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing). Who then? Our suggestion is as follows:

Who	Role
Head of Company (CEO, founder)	Takes decisions internally and externally in times of crisis.
Young Potential	Depending on the size of the organization 1 or more. It is important that at least 1 person can fully focus on the problem. Preferably tech savvy and good with data. Keeps the Situation Room up to date, mirrors sharing online and supports the CEO in communication.
CFO / financial	Necessary for cash forecasts and cost optimization.
Human Resources	Has an overview of all employees, their history, and can create an HR risk map.



Scaling Up works with the FACe tool to create role clarity, accountability and definition of success. Which is why we have created a Functional Accountability in Crisis Teams tool (FACT) for this specific team. This tool clarifies who is responsible for what in the team, areas that require attention and individual output. Detailed instructions on how to fill this in can be found in the enclosed [Functional Accountability in Crisis Teams](#).

Step 4: Determine top-priorities

Use the **Eisenhower Matrix** with the team. You will notice that not everyone automatically comes up with the same top priorities. You may have overlooked something yourself. Some team members may want to work on 10 or 20 “priorities”, simultaneously. Creating a **“Not to do list”** alongside the Eisenhower Matrix works very well for us.

If you use the Scaling Up method, implementing Annual and Quarterly plans with Rocks (priorities), then also include them. Which ones can shift to the “Not to do list”? Which are more important than ever?

How many top priorities make it on the list? Make difficult choices, be clear which 3-5 are really top. What do you do with the rest? Which ones can be relegated to the “Not to do list”, at least for now? Which ones can you delegate, which belong to the **Defence team**, classified as “regular business”?



Step 5: Crisis Meeting Rhythm & Communicatie

Meeting Rhythms is one of the Execution disciplines within the Scaling Up method. The crisis team also has its own Meeting Rhythm. A crisis requires more consultation: you commence with a 'day-start' in the morning, then an afternoon check in and finish with a message to the crisis team at the end of the afternoon. But before you execute the rhythm, allow each team member half a day to get up and running, utilising the methodology in Step 4: Make a first hit a top priority.

Daily Huddles:

Day start Crisis team	Afternoon check in (crisis team)	End of day message (CEO)
One word open	Share individual progress	Summary of what's been achieved
Everyone's top priority for the day (Eisenhower)	Information that everyone should know	Urgent matters (evening work?)
Information that everyone should know	Stuck? Share your sticking points	Team motivation
Help requests	Log decisions	Points that need to be communicated across the company

Weekly Meeting

Our suggestion would be to end the week with the weekly meeting, so as not to delay getting started on a Monday morning. This way the crisis team can take some time out over the weekend, knowing a plan is in place for the coming week.



Step 6: Setting up the Situation Room

The Situation Room should be as visual as possible. Dedicate a piece of wall per subject. Show overviews, for example, Risk mapping in one part, and illustrate using graphs, tables and action lists.

We have used the Business Model Canvas, as a reference and listed the following components that should be taken into account. The first exercise is based on the one-pager [Check list Situation Room parts](#) to determine what elements you find important to focus on as a crisis team.

Cash prognosis

- Bottom up cash forecast (coming weeks and quarterly, where faster, saving)
- Cash budget top down (year, where to save, how to close a financing gap)
- Power of One Planning (plan for profitability: costs down, or maintain sales, etc)

Team

- Safety
- Moral and communication
- Productivity
- Employee list with information relevant to Corona (e.g. home, symptoms, sick, etc.)

Key activities, core process

- Risk mapping and mitigation
- Manage your KPIs
- Different for every company

Key Partners & Supply Chain

- Risk mapping and mitigation (e.g. insourcing, stocks)
- Communication

Revenue & Customers

- Risk mapping and mitigation
- Customer insights (check any assumptions regarding your customers, call or, email them)
- Customer health & revenue outlook
- Proposition and Marketing (Do they require other services and products now?)

Other resources

Differs enormously per company and business model e.g. office, production facilities, stocks.

Create additional categories if necessary

Tailor this for your own business. A marketing agency has a completely different set up than a retailer or production company.

For each Situation Room segment we have [a support checklist](#)



About the authors



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Eddie is a passionate entrepreneur, his two main activities are **Beterschappen** (nutrition and lifestyle for kidney patients) and **De Kleine Strategie** (advice and coaching, including ScaleUp Pro at **ScaleUp Company**). In 2006, as co-founder of ISIS, - Innovative Solutions In Space - Eddie transformed the company into a 50 strong team. He worked from 2014-2016, with McKinsey & Company as a consultant for large corporations.



Mirik Castro

Mirik is a ScaleUp Pro and partner at **ScaleUp Company**. He's been using his entrepreneurial skills since 2005, (Holland turnaround, KMA Textiles, Johns Phone) and started a Biogas company for farmers in East Africa in 2009. Together with his brother he lived in Tanzania for 6 years and expanded the company, with 140 employees. Mirik began his career in 2000 at the Boston Consulting Group and moved to Stork NV in 2002. Mirik is an active member of the Entrepreneurs Organization where he also trains many accelerators in the Scaling Up method.

