



COMMUNITY  
HEALTH CARE  
ASSOCIATION  
of New York State

# The Art of the Open Door Policy

Master Facilitator: Nikki Dixon-Foley

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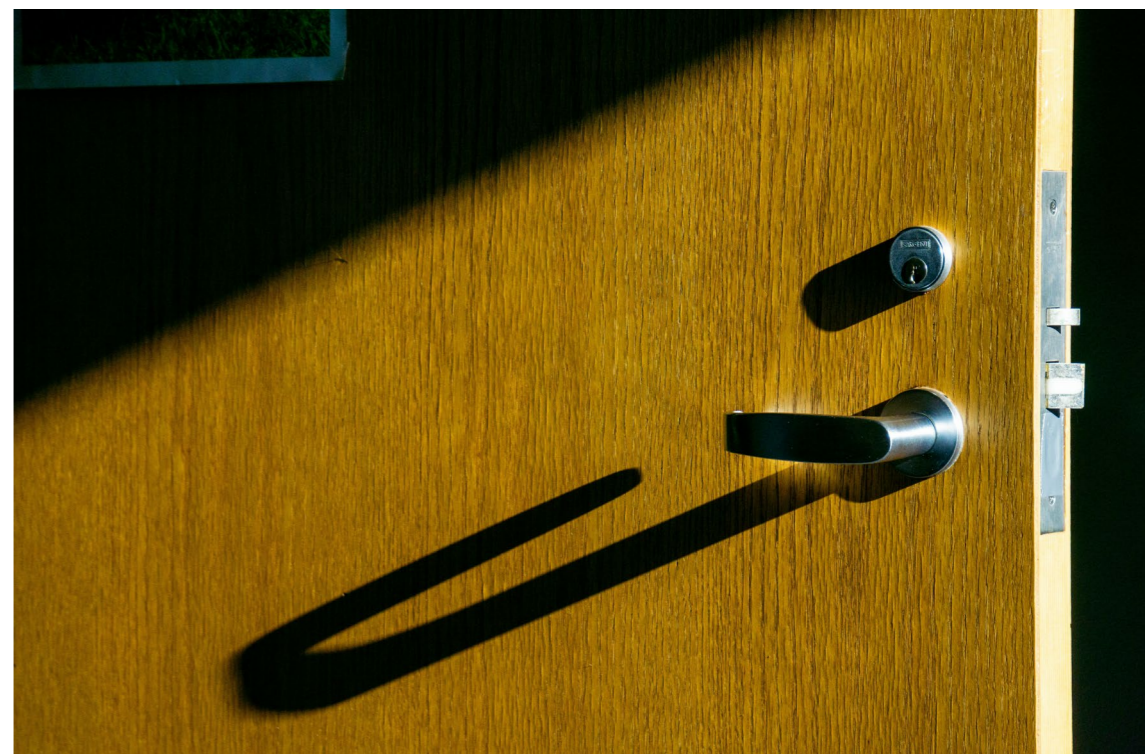
# Learning Objectives

1. Develop strategies for balancing team accessibility with effective time and priority management.
2. Build leadership practices that foster open communication, feedback, and autonomous problem solving.
3. Define and refine boundaries that promote productivity, accountability, and team development.

## Chat In:

Do you tell your staff that you have an “open-door” policy?

What message are you hoping to convey to staff through your “open-door” policy?



# The Open Door Policy

## Greatest of Intentions:

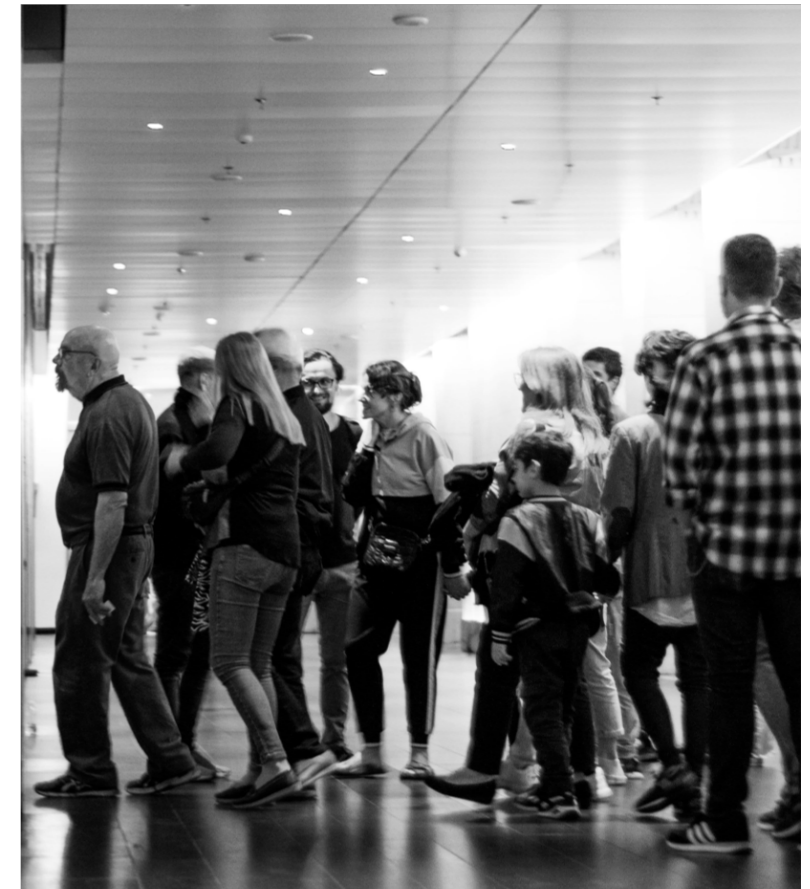
1. Promotion of transparency and trust
2. Accessibility and open communication
3. Generates problem-solving environments
4. Encourages innovation and idea sharing
5. Elevates morale and improves engagement



# The Open Door Policy

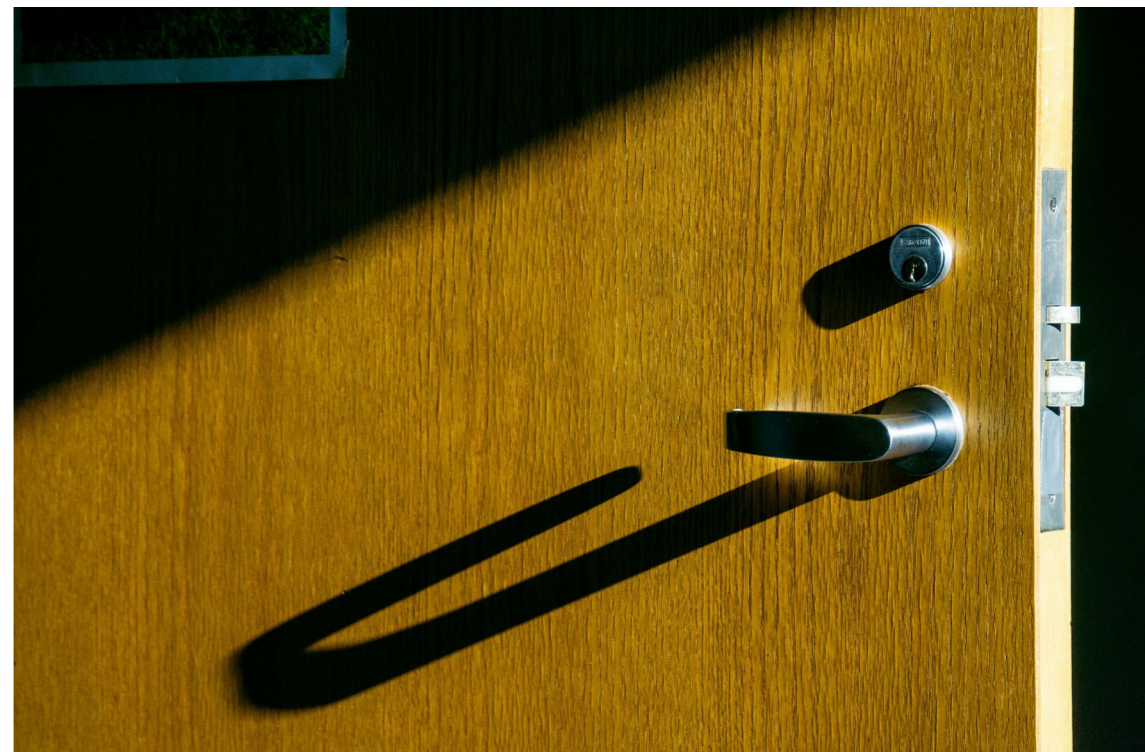
## No good deed goes unpunished:

1. Limited boundaries = constant interruptions
2. Leads to dependency, not empowerment
3. Unintentional chain of command confusion
4. Decision fatigue for leaders
5. Blurred lines between openness and privacy



## Chat In:

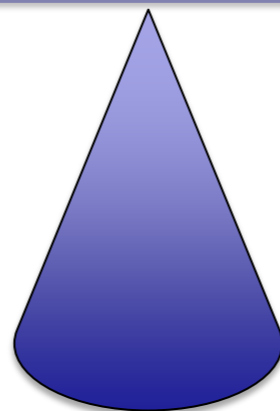
What has been your greatest unproductive consequence of your open-door policy?



# Better Balance for the Open Door Policy

## Growing Others

Decision-Making Privilege  
Coaching & Feedback Skills  
Problem-Solving Skills



## Growing Self-Focus

Setting Boundaries  
Time Management

# Growing Others

*Your Target is to Empower Others*

## Three Driving Actions

1. Improving awareness of decision scope
2. In-the-moment coaching and developing
3. Teaching to problem solve



# Clarifying Decision Scope

*Good people with good information can make better decisions*

<b>Decision Matrix Framework</b>	
<b>Decision Types and Levels</b>	<b>Decision Authority at each Levels</b>
<p><b><u>Routine Decision</u></b> Day-to-day tasks or issues the staff member can handle alone</p>	<p><b><u>Independent Decision</u></b> Decisions the staff member can make without seeking input.</p>
<p><b><u>Operational Decision</u></b> Decisions with a moderate impact on the team or department requiring consultation, but can generally be managed by the staff member.</p>	<p><b><u>Consultative Decisions</u></b> Decisions they should discuss with a colleague or you as the leader before finalizing.</p>
<p><b><u>Strategic or High-Stakes Decision</u></b> Significant decisions impacting broader goals or requiring budget adjustments, likely needing leadership involvement or final approval.</p>	<p><b><u>Escalated Decisions</u></b> Decisions that must be approved or handled by leadership due to higher stakes or organizational impact.</p>

# Leading and Teaching Decision Scope

## Key Leadership Action

1. Establish clear criteria, such as
  - a. Risk Level
  - b. Impact
  - c. Resource allocation
  
2. Develop Decision Flowchart
  - a. A visual aid to walk staff member through decision process
  
3. Set up regular check-in and feedback loops
  - a. Regularly discuss recent decisions, clarify expectations, discuss learnings.



# Real-Time Coaching and Developing

## Coaching

1. Guiding process improvement
2. Guiding competency improvement
3. Intent to improve performance

## Developing

1. Advancement of skill/knowledge
2. Expanding viewpoints
3. Provide learning avenues for practice

**Key Leadership Action: *Define the right outcome and hold them accountable!***

# Teach Problem Solving

*“We cannot solve a problem with the same level of thinking that created it in the first place”*

## 5 powerful questions to spark solution-focused thinking:

1. What do you believe the root cause of this issue is?
2. What are two solutions you could see working in this situation? What are the pros and cons of each?
3. What resources, information, or support do we need to have in place to make our proposed solution work?
4. What do you believe the first step in solving this issue is, and why?
5. What did you learn from this experience, and how can your learning be applied in the future?

# Improving Your Own Self-Focus

“What gets your attention gets all your energy”

## Establishing Boundaries

1. Define what open door means.
  - a. Create a Purpose Statement: Redefine with your team what open door means.
2. Define your System.
  - a. Office hours
  - b. Prioritize Communication Channels
3. Blocked Focus Time
  - a. Teach your team your time is as valuable as theirs.



# Improving Your Own Self-Focus Time Management

## Identify Your Top Five Time Wasters

1. Trying to do too many things each day
2. Lack of defined weekly goals
3. No defined monthly goals
4. No defined annual goals
5. Not prioritizing daily tasks
6. Unfocused work style
7. Unorganized desk and paperwork
8. Ineffective delegation
9. Unscheduled people dropping by
10. Unplanned phone calls

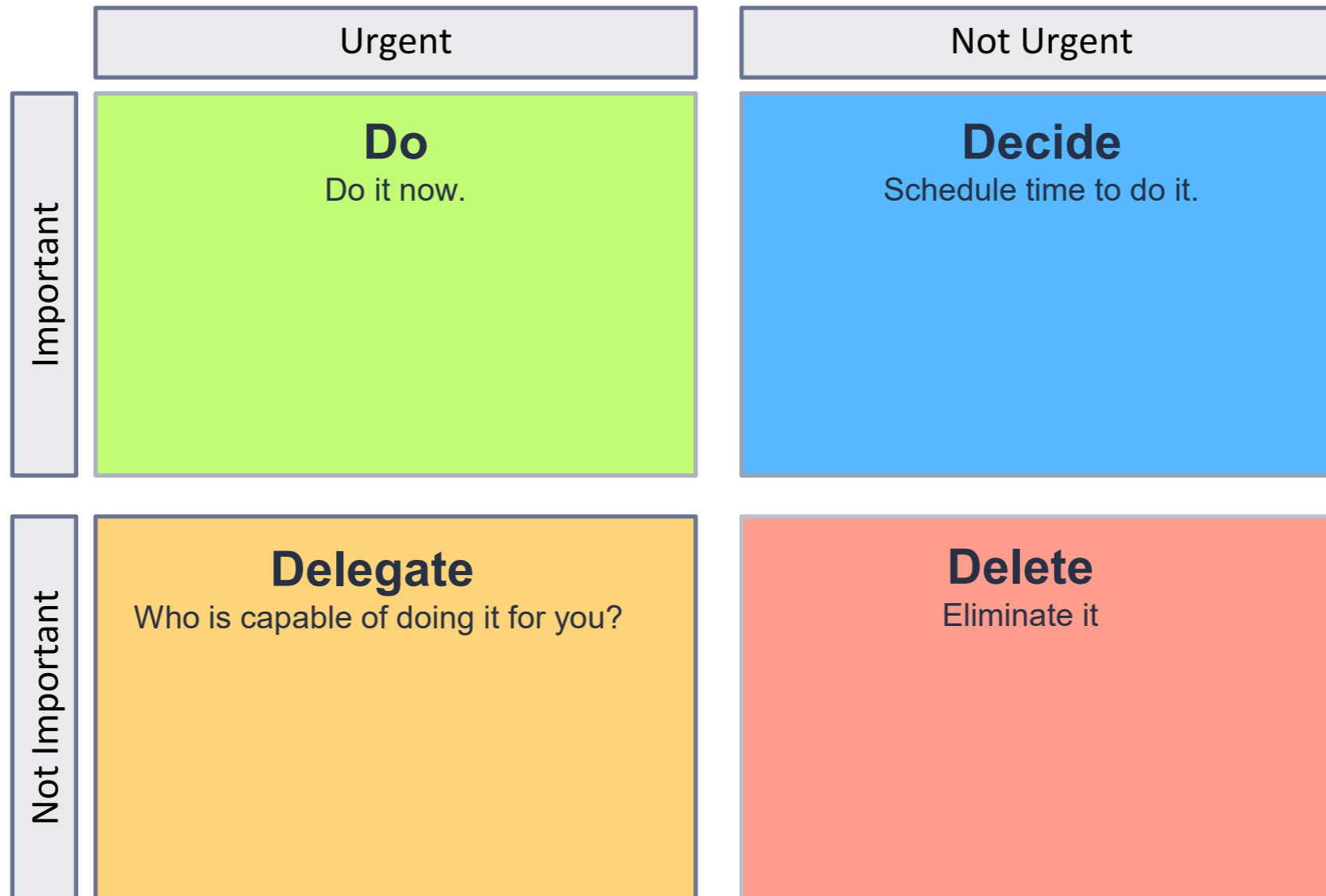
11. Perfectionism
12. Inability to say "no"
13. Transit between office and work sites
14. Sorting through junk e-mail
15. Ineffective meetings

**What would you add to the above list?**



# Priority Matrix - The Eisenhower Tool

*Choose what you spend time on wisely*



**Questions, Comments, or Thoughts?**