

SOP Template: Criteria for Message Classification and Urgency Levels

This SOP defines the **criteria for message classification and urgency levels**, detailing the parameters and standards used to categorize messages based on their content, importance, and required response time. It covers classification categories such as informational, warning, and critical messages, along with corresponding urgency levels including low, medium, high, and immediate. The purpose is to streamline communication workflows, ensure prompt and appropriate responses, and enhance overall operational efficiency and decision-making processes.

1. Message Classification Categories

Category	Description	Typical Examples
Informational	Contains general information not requiring immediate action.	System updates, scheduled maintenance notifications, routine status reports.
Warning	Indicates a potential issue or risk; requires attention or monitoring.	Resource usage limits approaching, security advisories, non-critical errors.
Critical	Notifies about a significant issue that requires prompt action to avoid major impact.	System failures, data breaches, regulatory violations, threats to personnel safety.

2. Urgency Levels

Urgency	Description	Expected Response Time
Low	Non-urgent; no immediate action required.	Within 24-48 hours
Medium	Requires action but is not time-sensitive.	Within 4-8 hours
High	Urgent; response needed to minimize impact or prevent escalation.	Within 1 hour
Immediate	Requires instant action to address critical risks or incidents.	Within 15 minutes

3. Classification and Urgency Decision Matrix

Message Content	Classification Category	Recommended Urgency Level
Routine system announcement	Informational	Low
Security patch required soon	Warning	Medium
Critical system outage	Critical	Immediate
System approaching resource limit	Warning	High

4. SOP Procedures

- Review message content** and determine its impact on operations, safety, security, or compliance.
- Assign a classification category** (Informational, Warning, Critical) based on the nature and severity of the message.
- Assess the required urgency level** using the urgency definitions and decision matrix above.
- Communicate the message** via appropriate channels, tagging it with category and urgency level for transparency and prioritization.
- Monitor response and escalation** as needed to ensure timely and effective action.

Note: Always document message classification and urgency criteria in communication logs for audit and continual improvement purposes.