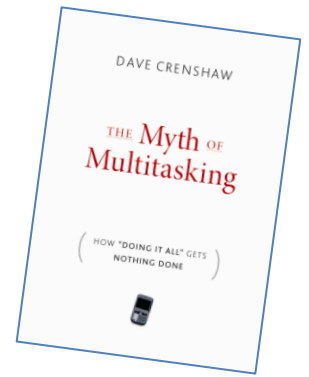


The Six Invaluable Factors

By Dave Crenshaw

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and *The Myth of Multitasking: How 'Doing It All' Gets Nothing Done*



Are you invaluable?

In terms of your value as a human being, clearly the answer is yes.

In terms of the marketplace, however, you will likely find a very different answer. Are you someone others in the market can't live without, or are you easily replaceable?

Every day the market you work in, regardless of the industry, asks you this question: "Are you invaluable?"

Did you answer the question satisfactorily today? Well done. Get ready to answer it again tomorrow.

As the speed of innovation and information ever quickens, so does the need for you to have clear answers for this "invaluable question." It is no longer enough to simply have a job. It is no longer enough to simply advertise and attract customers to work with you. Loyalty to employees, to brands, to personalities, and to media disappears the instant one's attention is switched to new, shinier options.

The Burden of Now

Can you feel the increasing burden of this demand to perform, to attract, to inspire, to bribe, to incite, to entice, to titillate, to just plain grab whatever you can from whoever's in front of you at the moment? This burden will only increase, with no imaginable end in sight. The marketplace has become a never-ending marathon sprint with little time to sleep, eat, or drink, let alone spend time with family, friends, or hobbies. This burden is at once both fleeting and crushing.

Yet some have learned to play by a different set of rules. They have a system to rise above the chaos. You can see it in individuals who continue to succeed while others around them struggle for survival. You can see it in companies that attract and retain customers with ease while other companies battle for market share.

Those who shine have made themselves invaluable. They have set themselves apart from the rest by providing genuine, infinite value in a world filled with hype.

The Six Factors

I wrote *Invaluable* primarily with individuals working in a business in mind. This new book teaches—through parable—how employees, managers and CEOs can work together to make each other

invaluable and, in turn, the company as a whole. *Invaluable* shows the process of becoming irreplaceable on a very personal, individual level.

Below is a list of six Invaluable Factors that anyone can use in today's market. Frontline employees, CEOs, and companies as a whole can all apply these Invaluable Factors to become truly irreplaceable.

#1 - Demand

The Invaluable Factor of Demand represents how well your skill set matches the current needs and wants of the market.

Demand is different from the other five Invaluable Factors in that you have little direct control over it. The only way you can improve upon this factor is to increase your understanding of current and future market trends and work to align your actions with those trends.

- *Question for employees:* What is the current and future market demand for your personal skill set?
- *Question for businesses:* What is the current and future market demand for your products and services?

#2 - Ability

The Invaluable Factor of Ability simply represents how well you do what you do, or how much value you actually provide.

Ability requires continuous progress in the results you deliver. It is not enough to just know what your position is supposed to be or how to do what is required of you. It is not enough to have satisfied customers. You must also seek to continually improve on that ability on a daily basis to become more and more invaluable.

- *Question for employees:* What are you doing daily to improve your ability to perform for the company you work for and the market as a whole?
- *Question for businesses:* What is an area where you are performing below customer expectations? What steps can you take to start performing above those expectations?

#3 - Irreplaceability

The Invaluable Factor of Irreplaceability measures how difficult it is to replace you. It considers the next best alternative to you or your company.

Irreplaceability is a function of two things: the available competitive options, and how deeply you understand the unique needs of your target customer or your current employer. To stay irreplaceable you must commit to ongoing research and reevaluation.

- *Question for employees:* What is the biggest thing keeping your boss from firing you right now?
- *Question for businesses:* What is the biggest thing keeping your customers from firing you, right now, and going with the next best alternative?

#4 - Focus

The Invaluable Factor of Focus requires you to avoid anything that gets in the way of you spending time in your most valuable activities (MVAs). MVAs are those activities that have the greatest impact on the bottom line, both for you personally and the business as a whole.

The more you spread yourself out in many directions, the less valuable you become. As information and available options continue to explode, so does the temptation to engage in many less valuable activities (LVAs). Focus is the strategic decision to say “no” to LVAs and “yes” to MVAs.

- *Question for both employees and businesses:* How well do you focus your actions on your Most Valuable Activities?

#5 - Connection

The Invaluable Factor of Connection assesses your ability to connect personally with others, both in terms of quantity and quality.

The value that you bring to the market is directly affected by your ability to work well with others and to share resources with others. Connection is an absolutely essential part of becoming invaluable. In order to increase Connection in the 21st century, you must not only master the art of face-to-face interaction, but digital interaction, as well.

- *Question for employees:* How many people feel personally connected to you?
- *Question for businesses:* How many people feel personally connected to your company culture as a whole and your employees individually?

#6 - Authority

The Invaluable Factor of Authority evaluates how strongly the current market considers you to be the top expert in your field.

An authority is someone others look to when they make decisions. A company that is trusted and provides knowledge freely to the market increases its ability to make sales. An employee who is recognized both inside and outside of the company as a leading expert dramatically improves his or her value. Authority is often a neglected invaluable factor, especially among employees who do not consider themselves to be a part of the public eye. However, to ignore Authority is a strategic mistake, as Authority is a dramatic market value multiplier.

- *Question for employees:* Do my peers, both inside and outside of my company, consider me to be a leading expert in my field?
- *Question for businesses:* Are we widely recognized as the leading source for knowledge and advancement in our field?