

THE Myth OF Multitasking

EXERCISE

(Are you really multitasking ... or are you switchtasking? The following exercise will help you quickly understand the negative impact in efficiency caused by switchtasking.)

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| | Multitasking is worse than a lie |
| M | |
| I | |
| M | |
| I | |

FIRST PASS

1. Have a timer with a second hand ready again.
2. In the third row, re-copy the phrase "Multitasking is Worse Than a Lie". After copying the entire phrase in the third row, then switch to the fourth row and write the numbers 1-27.
3. Ready, Set, Go! (After you have completed the last number (27), write down your total time to completion.)

SECOND PASS

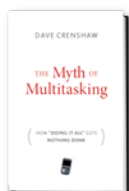
4. Have a timer with a second hand ready. For best results have another person time you.
5. In the first row, copy the phrase "Multitasking is Worse Than a Lie". For every letter you write in the "M" row, switch to the second row (labeled "1") and write the corresponding number.

Like this:

Multitasking is worse than a lie.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27

6. Ready, Set, Go! (After you have completed the last number (27), write down your total time to completion.)
7. Compare the time to completion between the first and second pass. Typically, a person will take twice as long to complete this exercise when switchtasking (second pass) vs. focusing on one task at a time (first pass).



Adapted from *The Myth of Multitasking: How "Doing It All" Gets Nothing Done* by Dave Crenshaw.

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