



VAL WILLIAMS

*Uncover the Key to Creating Value*

## The “IT Factor”: A Leader’s Real Job Security!

There’s a myth out there, even with Senior Executive leaders, that if you just produce results and hit your objectives; that will be enough. So you keep working harder and harder. Your goal becomes to produce more results more quickly. You say, “If only I can make more sales, have my team complete more projects earlier, answer more of these emails, then I’ll continue to be successful.” **When leaders follow this “more, better and faster” strategy they’re often surprised that instead of achieving confidence in their success, they feel more burned out and more insecure.** They worry a lot about

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their job security; they fear being replaced. When you employ this strategy of “do more, faster” over the long-term, then you actually become more reactive, less strategic and, frankly, more replaceable.

It’s easy to understand how this happens. A few months ago I was at Starbucks over a very long cup of coffee, talking with a colleague about typical corporate culture. We were noticing that in the past, when we ourselves were corporate Executive leaders, we too were trained that it’s all about the results. But this perspective can sometimes lead to seeing people as commodities. My colleague said it well: In corporations, without thinking about it, we can often treat people as if **“the doing has value but the doer (the person) does not.”** This applies to many Senior Executives themselves. You can be at Vice President level; and still feel like you are easily replaced; that your role could be eliminated any day – that you’re just another cog in the machinery.

But, the idea that the doer is interchangeable is actually not true... unless you buy into it. The doer (the person, the executive) has unique experiences, unique ways of contributing, and a unique viewpoint that sets him or her apart. This uniqueness is your **It Factor**. Your It Factor is your presence, the specific way that you carry yourself; the specific impact that you have on people when you walk into the room. **This It Factor is the space where your personal innovation and creativity spring from. The It Factor is the place from which you become inspirational and create followership as a leader.** Some people may call it charisma, but you don’t have to be overly charismatic to possess the It Factor. It’s this intangible It Factor that is the thing that makes you – you.

If you focus on your It Factor, then **you become irreplaceable.**

Look at it this way – the It Factor is what you bring to a task that makes the outcome different than someone else doing the same task. It’s the extra value you bring if you bring your **whole** self to the job. It makes the difference between doing something ordinary and creating something spectacular.

I saw this at work in a recent meeting with a VP of Marketing for a packaged goods company. He was discussing with his team how to get into the mind of consumers so they’ll buy the company’s product. The product was a food item that this VP believed really improves the long-term health of children. He was passionate about his subject and had a personal connection to what he was saying. I could have listened to him all day. He was not just creating the materials for a marketing campaign; he was inspiring his team to create a campaign that changed people’s motivations for buying – to present a product that changed their lives. Everyone in the room felt like this campaign really **mattered**. This was a perfect example of bringing his It Factor - his passion for the goal. And he changed the tone of the meeting from merely getting a task done to creating a campaign that inspired both his employees and the people who will buy their product.

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## The “It Factor”: A Leader’s Real Job Security

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### So, how do you get in touch with your It Factor?

**Step 1:** Because the It Factor is based on your unique experiences and unique viewpoint, it starts with being able to summarize what you personally care about. **What is the reason that you are committed to being a senior leader in your company or organization?** Look at your

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values. Look at your passion. Answer the question: Why do I care so deeply about being a leader of people in my specific company?

To help you with this step, here are some examples of clients that I’ve worked with in the past and the passions that drive their success:

- A VP of a financial services company says that what he cares deeply about is financial education for people so that they have a better life.
- A VP in a pharmaceutical company is passionate about accelerating the development of cures for diseases.
- The head of a research organization cares deeply about interdisciplinary approaches to health care.
- A VP at a consumer goods company is driven to teach people to accomplish more together rather than separately.

In each of these cases it is their passion combined with their leadership skills that drive their success in their companies.

**Step 2:** Clarify what you think needs to be different in the world. You need to have the courage and develop the power to go out into the world with your very personal and specific viewpoint about what needs to change. But, before you can do that, you need to be very clear about

exactly what that is. **Then look for how you can make that contribution to the world, even while in your current leadership position.**

**Step 3:** You will need to get out there creating relationships with people – connecting to people – and inviting them to join you in doing things to make the changes you want to see in the world. People are attracted to you and join in your cause, if you inspire them to care too. **This is what creates followership.** It is your It Factor that will attract people to want to work with you.

The real key to longevity and job security as a Senior Executive leader is to combine producing great results with embracing your personal It Factor. Powerful senior executive leaders are those who realize that **“the doing has value, and the doer can be the most significant part of that value.”** When you realize this; then you don’t have to worry about other people as competition anymore; because you’re in your own lane. **Your It Factor makes you irreplaceable.**

### Meet Val Williams



Val Williams, MCC, is an Executive Leadership Consultant who specializes in helping senior executive leaders develop vision, strategic plans, people development strategies, virtual skills, and the powerful executive presence that

actually influences. Since 1994 Val has delivered individual executive coaching, team coaching, training seminars, management retreats and keynotes. Her approach combines her own hands-on experience as a corporate executive leading teams of 700+ people with her training and certification as a Master Certified Coach by the International Coach Federation.

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