

2005–2006: “What have you done this year?”*

TAKE #1: Re-imagine! (Big Time.)

I have traveled far and wide and on the Web championing the causes I most care about. And cajoling one and all to take not just action, but radical action ... **NOW**. To Re-imagine! [*“If you don’t like change, you are going to like irrelevance even less.”—General Eric Shinseki*]

I have argued that the game has forever changed. [**THREE BILLION NEW CAPITALISTS**—book title/Clyde Prestowitz*] [*Think ... True Globalization! Think ... Web!] [Think ... Life Sciences!] We live in a Beijing & Bentonville World ... **A WORLD THAT WILL CUT US NO SLACK!** [*“There is no job that is America’s God-given right anymore.”—Carly Fiorina*]

It’s scary!

It’s cool!

Answer: **RE-IMAGINE!** “Organizations” are morphing into entirely new creatures with entirely new ways of doing business. Rigidity and Hierarchy and Stable “Departments” are ... **OUT**. Adaptability and Improv and Value-added Service Providers from hither, thither ... and Yon ... are ... **IN**.

Add value. [**LOTS and LOTS and LOTS and LOTS of.**] Turn a MACHINE MAKER into ... the WORLD’s LARGEST PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FIRM ... almost overnight. [IBM.] Make every damn move & twitch a ... **DELICIOUSLY DESIGNED GASP-WORTHY “EXPERIENCE.”** [Whole Foods/Starbucks ... just a cuppa and grocery shopping, for Lord’s sake.] [Sales per Square Foot/Grocery: Albertson’s: \$384; Wal*Mart: \$415; **Whole Foods: \$798**]

One special way to Add Value is to acknowledge that ... **WOMEN BUY EVERYTHING.** [Consumer goods. Increasingly: Commercial services.] SO ... **LET’S DESIGN AND MARKET PRODUCTS WOMEN WANT!** [*“Kodak Sharpens Digital Focus On Its Best Customers: WOMEN”*]*—Page 1 Headline/Wall Street Journal. ***Duh!**]

One special way to Add Value is to acknowledge that ... **BOOMERS*-GEEZERS HAVE ALL THE MONEY.** [*80 million boomers in the U.S. alone.] SO ... **BIG IDEA ... SERVE UP WHAT THEY WANT!**

*Question from Jessica Sutherland, head of Institute for International Research/Middle East, to Tom Peters ... Dubai ... 18 September 2005.

[Bonus: One “little way” to get on with No.1 above is to acknowledge that ... **WOMEN ARE ALSO BETTER LEADERS**—their typically collaborative style matches the emerging collaborative/virtual world to a tee. So ... let’s put ’em in charge. Or, at least, improve their 8 of 500 Fortune 500 CEO slots batting average.]

ME. YOU. Challenge. Or, rather, imperative. [Remember: change vs. irrelevance.] Add value. [LOTS and LOTS and LOTS and LOTS of.] I watch a DVD of CIRQUE DU SOLEIL [world’s Best-managed Company ... per me] before every speech. I WANT TO DO IN MY WORLD WHAT THEY DO IN THEIRS. I AIM TO STAND WAY OUT. [Yes, the “market for speakers,” too, is competitive beyond belief!]

I want to/aim to/am determined to/will ... Master the ... BRAND YOU LIFE. [Energetic. Entrepreneurial. Adaptive. Cool. Never Boring. Never stationary ... for even a minute.] I think I’m boringly average: I think that all of us ... from the USA to Brazil to Sri Lanka ... must quickly become ... **MASTERS OF OUR OWN SHIP.** [“Dependence” is “So yesterday.”]

Value-added Challenge 2005+:

**Forget ... BETTER.
Embrace ... DIFFERENT.
INNOVATE.
Or DIE.**

Dare to fend off encroaching ... IRRELEVANCE.

What have ... YOU ... done ...TODAY ... to stuff the Irrelevance Genie back into his bottle?

**I KNOW THERE’S A PROBLEM.
I THINK THERE’S A SOLUTION.
I HOPE THERE’S A WILL.
I KNOW THERE’S A WAY.
I SINCERELY BELIEVE ... THIS IS EVER SO COOL.
SO COOL IT MAKES ME TINGLE.**

**THE OLD RULES ARE DEAD.
AND BURIED.
IMPROV!**

[“Successful people are those who are good at Plan B.”]

MAKE IT UP AS YOU GO ALONG.

MAKE IT “DIFFERENT.”

[NOT MERELY “BETTER.”*]

*[*I repeat myself. It’s intentional.]*

YES: THIS IS SO COOL IT MAKES ME QUIVER.

“COOL” IS IN.

[My personal goal ... day in and day out: MAKE 'EM GASP.]

GASP-WORTHY ... or Bust.

[What have I been doing this year? Working on the Art of the Speech/Presentation. Working harder than ever. I'm still a rank amateur—Tom Hanks says his self-assigned best grade in a movie is “C.” Amen. I want to Master the Art of Persuasive Declamation. Or at least I want a “B” or two before I put down the mike. How hard do I plan to work next year? HARDER. I want to get this stuff I do and love and care ever so much about ... RIGHT. I'll never get there—but it won't be for lack of will or effort or aspiration. And I do Enjoy/Love the Adventure ever so much.]

“BUTTONED DOWN” IS TOAST.

EMBRACE FREAKS.

[These ... ARE ... Freaky Times.]

JOIN THE PARADE.

JOIN THE RACE. JOIN THE SPRINT.

JOIN THE MARATHON.

[Become an “enterprise Tri-athlete.”]

**USE YOUR RIGHTEOUS FEARS TO SPUR IMMEDIATE
CREATION OF THE ...**

“GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH.”

THE ... BRAND YOU GALA ...

NOW.

[IT'S NOT OPTIONAL.]

This is what I've been preaching. This is my hustle. This is my mission. This is what I believe. I will go to my grave ... WITH ABOUT 10,000,000 FREQUENT-FLYER MILES ... stirring this ever so important pot. Yup ... THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING THIS YEAR.

“In classical times when Cicero had finished speaking, the people said, ‘How well he spoke,’ but when Demosthenes had finished speaking, they said, ‘LET US MARCH.’”—Adlai Stevenson

[In my own small way, I want to be Demosthenes.]

[So ... **MARCH.**]

I posted my [insane] travel schedule at tompeters.com, and asked rhetorically why I did it. Here was one thoughtful reply:

“You obviously go to these places for only one reason: You believe that if even one person ‘gets it’ and uses your ideas to change their world you have spent your time well. I send my hopes that you find at least 2 on each visit.”—[Comment/Paul Davidson/ September 26, 2005](#)

TAKE #2: PhotoShop

I am haunted by two “photos” in my mind—day and night:

Photo #1: Business as Usual

Dickens way back when. (Dawn of the Industrial Revolution.). William Foote Whyte’s *Organization Man* yesterday. *Dilbert* today. (HAS ANYTHING REALLY CHANGED?)
Drab. Dull. Dreary. Pastel. Gray. **Wan. Insipid. Stultifying. Heartless. Emotionless. Soul-less. Spiritless or worse—sucks the spirit from within.** Know your place. It’s the numbers—forever the numbers, stupid. Think indentured servitude. Think “cubicle slave”—entombed in a white-collar tower. Think: bureaucracy, bureaucrat, overhead, cost center. Do what you’re told. Park your imagination at the door. Don’t rock the boat. Old White Guys Rule. “Fail” is indeed a four-letter word. **Play it safe. “Me too” rules. “Different” is death. “Lovemark” is looney.** Fight for the promotion ... not the product.

Photo #2: Business Unusual for Unusual Times*

Colorful. **In pursuit of Grand Human Accomplishment.** Worthy cause/s. Hot! Wow! Hot language tolerated—nay, encouraged. Fun! Soul! Spirited. Energetic. Enthusiastic. Quest! Explorers! Mission! More than myself. **GOING PLACES WHERE NO ONE HAS GONE BEFORE.** (Think: Adams, Hamilton, Jefferson, Gandhi, Einstein, Venter.) Entrepreneurial. **Deviants welcome! Brand You/CEO of Me Inc.** Independent-minded. 100 percent leaders. Merry (laughter abounds). Joyous. Appreciative. Engaged. Adventurous. Failing is normal—get back on the horse and try again (now). Performance fanatics! Action rules! MBWA the norm. We care. **EXCELLENCE!** Brag to your kids about what you do/have done/aim to do/where you work/

*A “chimera of a moonstruck mind”? (That’s what critics called Jefferson in re “his” Louisiana Purchase!) No! Cf: Cirque du Soleil. London Drugs. Whole Foods. Starbucks. Wegmans. Apple. Google. Microsoft. eBay. Commerce Bank. Mollies. Zingerman’s. John Robert’s Hair Studio & Spa. Infosys. FBR/Friedman Billings Ramsey. Griffin Health Services/Planetree Alliance. The Met/Big Picture schools. Four Seasons. Sewell. Northshire Bookstore.

who your colleagues are. Women more often than not in charge. Diversity is a religion. Focus on accomplishment, not position. **HUSTLE! IMPATIENCE!** Inclusive. “Different” beats “better.” No “growth for growth’s sake.” **Numbers are important—but are derivative of Great Work.** Aim to deliver awesome experiences to our customers—to become a “lovemark.”

**My aim: Town Crier/Cheerleader/Enthusiast-in-Chief/Energizer Bunny/Wild-eyed Maniac for Photo #2!
From any pulpit, anywhere, anytime! Join the MOVEMENT! Your/our very soul is at stake!**

TAKE #3: Passions!

Inventory of TP Passions [worthy of the “hard sell”]

Passion!

Energy!

Enthusiasm!

Technicolor!

Freaks!

“Leaders ‘Do’ people.”

Talent*

[* ... is a lovely word.]

Grace. Appreciation. Respect.

EXCELLENCE!

Wow!

Gasp-worthy!

MBWA [still rules.]

Marketing to women.

Women rule!

Boomer & Geezers have all the dough!

Healthcare must be re-oriented toward ... WELLNESS & PREVENTION!

GREAT DESIGN ROCKS!

GREAT EXPERIENCES RULE!

Obsess on Value Added!

Obsess on Dramatic Difference!

“Department” to Rip-roarin’ PSF!

Become a ... Lovemark!

INNOVATE ... OR DIE. [#1, #2: Decentralization. Accountability.]

Brand You [CEO of Me Inc.] [DISTINCT OR EXTINCT.]

QUESTS!

“Free to do his or her absolute best/“Discover their own greatness.”

HARD IS SOFT.

SOFT IS HARD.

The First step in a ‘dramatic’ ‘organizational change program’ is obvious—dramatic personal change!”

TAKE #4: EXCELLENCE. Then. And Now.

I looooooove “the word” ... EXCELLENCE. Wow! Conjures up so many wonderful things!

This is what we (Peters & Waterman) “pushed” in 1982 ... quite “right” for the times:

Excellence1982: The Bedrock “Eight Basics”

- 1. A Bias for Action**
- 2. Close to the Customer**
- 3. Autonomy and Entrepreneurship**
- 4. Productivity Through People**
- 5. Hands On, Value-Driven**
- 6. Stick to the Knitting**
- 7. Simple Form, Lean Staff**
- 8. Simultaneous Loose-Tight Properties”**

Here’s what I’m hawking today:

Excellence2005: The Bedrock Baker’s Dozen

- 1. A Bias For Action Is Job One! (Construct a Discipline/
Culture of EXECUTION!)**
- 2. DECENTRALIZATION! ACCOUNTABILITY! (Tom’s “Top Two”,
1965-2005.)**
- 3. Fail. Forward. Fast. (“Reward Excellent Failures, Punish
Mediocre Successes.”)**
- 4. “Metabolic Management” Matters! Tempo Matters.
(Hustle! Adapt! EAT CHANGE! Win the “O.O.D.A. Loop” War—
Confuse Your Competitors!)**
- 5. INNOVATE or Die. (“Game-changers” or Bust! Lead the Customer!
Just Shout “NO” to Imitation!)**
- 6. A Damn Good Product. (Pursue “Dramatic Difference.”)**
- 7. A Damn Cool Product. (Design Rules!)**
- 8. Ride the Value Added Curve to the Sky! (Sell
“GamechangerSolutions”; Provide “Scintillating Experiences”;
Become a “Dream Merchant”; Strive to Be a “Lovemark.”)**
- 9. Relentlessly Pursue the “Big Two” Markets. (WOMEN Buy
Everything. BOOMERS & GEEZERS Have All the Money!)**

- 10. Best “Talent”/Roster Wins! (HR Rules! Everyone a Leader! Women Lead Best! “Weird” Matters Most! A Workplace to Brag About! Educate for Creativity!)**
- 11. Wanted/Demanded: Radical Technology Strategies! (“Incrementalism” is for Wimps!)**
- 12. Hard Is Soft! Soft Is Hard! (People! Passion! Enthusiasm! Wow! INTEGRITY! TRUST! Good Citizenship.)**
- 13. Accept No Less Than EXCELLENCE! (Excellence, Pursuit thereof, is the #1 Thing That Vaults Us Out of Bed in the Morning. “EXCELLENT ... OR Bust!!!!!”)**

Take #5: First Draft ... 2006. Ideas for “Living,” Not Merely “Existing.”

First draft, 2006. I’m going to live & “sell” the spirit of the following “favorite quotes”:

TP’s “Top 41” Quotes

“Do one thing every day that scares you.”—Eleanor Roosevelt

As year’s end approaches, one tends (well, I tend) to think a little bit philosophically. To do the accounts of the year past—and to imagine the year to come. As I began that not (for me) very systematic process, I stumbled across the Eleanor Roosevelt remark above. And it got me thinking—the whole point. To add a little fuel to the fire I mined a few old presentations for more spurs to both reflection and forethought. What emerged, in ever so haphazard a fashion, follows. It is not a listing of “business quotes,” though 100% are applicable to business. It is not a set of “motivational quotes” (perish the thought), though most are in some sense motivational. I guess it simply is what it is ... some comments that may help you, if you’re so inclined, to ruminate on where you’ve been and where you might go in 2006:

“Do one thing every day that scares you.”—Eleanor Roosevelt

“Life is either a daring adventure, or nothing.”—Helen Keller

“Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”—Mary Oliver

“Dream as if you’ll live forever. Live as if you’ll die today.”—James Dean

“The two most powerful things in existence: a kind word and a thoughtful gesture.”—Ken Langone, founder, Home Depot

“The deepest human need is the need to be appreciated.”—William James

“Don’t belittle!”—OD Consultant, on the essence of a well-functioning human community

**“If you don’t listen, you don’t sell anything.”—Carolyn Marland/
MD/Guardian Group**

“It was much later that I realized Dad’s secret. He gained respect by giving it. He talked and listened to the fourth-grade kids in Spring Valley who shined shoes the same way he talked and listened to a bishop or a college president. He was seriously interested in who you were and what you had to say.”—Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, *Respect*

“What creates trust, in the end, is the leader’s manifest respect for the followers.”—Jim O’Toole, *Leading Change*

“If you can’t state your position in eight words or less, you don’t have a position.”—Seth Godin

“Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”—Margaret Mead

“Make your life itself a creative work of art.”—Mike Ray, *The Highest Goal*

“Tom, what have you done this year?”—Jessica Sutherland, Director, Institute for International Research/Middle East (TP: “Yikes!”)

**“To *live* is the rarest
thing in the world.
Most people *exist*,
that is all.”**

—Oscar Wilde

“People want to be part of something larger than themselves. They want to be part of something they’re really proud of, that they’ll fight for, sacrifice for, that they trust.”—Howard Schultz, Starbucks

“Have you invested as much this year in your career as in your car?”—Molly Sargent, OD consultant and trainer

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”—Charles Darwin

“We may not be interested in chaos but chaos is interested in us.”—Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-first Century*

“If you don’t like change, you’re going to like irrelevance even less.”—General Eric Shinseki, retired Chief of Staff, U. S. Army

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”—Gandhi

“We eat change for breakfast!”—Harry Quadracci, founder, QuadGraphics

“If things seem under control, you’re just not going fast enough.”—Mario Andretti

“You can’t behave in a calm, rational manner. You’ve got to be out there on the lunatic fringe.”—Jack Welch, retired CEO, GE

“We have a ‘strategic’ plan. It’s called doing things.”—Herb Kelleher, founder, Southwest Airlines

“The most successful people are those who are good at plan B.”—James Yorke, mathematician, on chaos theory in *The New Scientist*

A man approached JP Morgan, held up an envelope, and said, “Sir, in my hand I hold a guaranteed formula for success, which I will gladly sell you for \$25,000.” “Sir,” JP Morgan replied, “I do not know what is in the envelope, however if you show me, and I like it, I give you my word as a gentleman that I will pay you what you ask.” The man agreed to the terms, and handed over the envelope. JP Morgan opened it, and extracted a single sheet of paper. He gave it one look, a mere glance, then handed the piece of paper back to the gent. And paid him the agreed-upon \$25,000.

The Paper:

- 1. Every morning, write a list of the things that need to be done that day.**
- 2. Do them.**

“I guess it comes down to a simple choice, really. Get busy living, or get busy dying.”—*The Shawshank Redemption* (Tim Robbins)

“Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.”—Steve Jobs, Apple

“Groups become great only when everyone in them, leaders and members alike, is free to do his or her absolute best.”—Warren Bennis and Patricia Ward Biederman, *Organizing Genius*

“The best thing a leader can do for a Great Group is to allow its members to discover their greatness.”—Warren Bennis and Patricia Ward Biederman, *Organizing Genius*

“You are the storyteller of your own life, and you can create your own legend or not.”—Isabel Allende

“Nobody can prevent you from choosing to be exceptional.”—Mark Sanborn, *The Fred Factor*

“A leader is a dealer in hope.”—Napoleon

“Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm.”—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

“If you’re enthusiastic about the things you’re working on, people will come ask you to do interesting things.”—James Woolsey, former CIA director

“Before you can inspire with emotion, you must be swamped with it yourself. Before you can move their tears, your own must flow. To convince them, you must yourself believe.”—Winston Churchill

“A man without a smiling face must not open a shop.”—Chinese Proverb

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”—John Quincy Adams

*The greatest danger
for most of us
is not that our aim is
too high
and we miss it,
but that it is
too low
and we reach it.*

Michelangelo

**“A year from now
you may wish you
had started today.”**

—Karen Lamb

Tom Peters*: Leadership is all about love:

*Passion,
Enthusiasms,
Appetite for Life,
Engagement,
Great Causes & Determination to Make a Damn Difference,
Commitment to Excellence,
Shared Adventures,
Bizarre Failures,
Growth Beyond Measure,
Insatiable Appetite for Change.*

*Would have been No. 42, but it does not seem appropriate to quote oneself and count it as wisdom.