

Tom Peters'

EXCELLENCE!

“THE WORKS”

A Half-Century's Reflections/1966-2016

Chapter SEVENTEEN:

AVOID MODERATION

01 January 2016

(10+ years of presentation slides at tompeters.com)

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This—circa January 2016—is my best shot. It took 50 years to write! (From 1966, Vietnam, U.S. Navy ensign, combat engineer/Navy Seabees—my 1st “management” job—to today, 2016.) It is ... **“THE WORKS.”** THE WORKS is presented in PowerPoint format—but it includes 50,000++ words of annotation, the equivalent of a 250-page book.

The times are nutty—and getting nuttier at an exponential pace. I have taken into account as best I can (there really are no “experts”) the current context. But I have given equal attention to more or less eternal (i.e., human) verities that will continue to drive organizational performance and a quest for EXCELLENCE for the next several years—and perhaps beyond. (Maybe this bifurcation results from my odd adult life circumstances: 30 years in Silicon Valley, 20 years in Vermont.)

Enjoy.

Steal.

P-L-E-A-S-E try something, better yet several somethings.* ** *** *****

*Make no mistake ... **THIS IS A 17-CHAPTER BOOK** ... which happens to be in PowerPoint format; I invite you to join me in this unfinished—half century to date—journey.

**My “Life Mantra #1”: WTTMSW/Whoever Tries The Most Stuff Wins.

***I am quite taken by N.N. Taleb’s term “antifragile” (it’s the title of his most recent book). The point is not “resilience” in the face of change; that’s reactive. Instead the idea is proactive—literally “getting off” on the madness per se; perhaps I somewhat anticipated this with my 1987 book, *Thriving on Chaos*.

****Re “new stuff,” this presentation has benefited immensely from Social Media—e.g., I have learned a great deal from my 125K+ twitter followers; that is, some fraction of this material is “crowdsourced.”

***** ***I am not interested in providing a “good presentation.” I am interested in spurring practical action. Otherwise, why waste your time—or mine?***

Note: There is considerable **DUPLICATION** in what follows. I do not imagine you will read this book straight through. Hence, to some extent, each chapter is a stand-alone story.

Epigraphs

“Business has to give people enriching, rewarding lives ... or it’s simply not worth doing.” —Richard Branson

“Your customers will never be any happier than your employees.” —John DiJulius

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

“You miss 100% of the shots you never take.” —Wayne Gretzky

“Ready. Fire. Aim.” —Ross Perot

“Execution is strategy.” —Fred Malek

“Avoid moderation.” —Kevin Roberts

“I’m not comfortable unless I’m uncomfortable.” —Jay Chiat

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it.”
—John DiJulius on social media

“Courtesies of a small and trivial character are the ones which strike deepest in the grateful and appreciating heart.” —Henry Clay

“You know a design is cool when you want to lick it.” —Steve Jobs

“This will be the women’s century.” —Dilma Rouseff

“Be the best. It’s the only market that’s not crowded.” —George Whalin

First Principles. Guiding Stars. Minimums.

*** EXECUTION! The “Last 99%.”**

GET IT (Whatever) DONE.

*** EXCELLENCE. Always. PERIOD.**

*** People REALLY First! Moral Obligation #1.**

*** EXPONENTIAL Tech Tsunami.**

GET OFF ON CONTINUOUS UPHEAVALS!

*** Innovate or DIE!**

WTTMSW/Whoever Tries The Most Stuff Wins!

*** Women Buy (EVERYTHING)!**

Women Are the Best Leaders! Women RULE!

*** Oldies Have (All of) the Market Power!**

*** DESIGN Matters! EVERYWHERE!**

*** Maximize TGRs!/Things Gone RIGHT!**

*** SMEs, Age of/“Be the Best,**

It’s the Only Market That’s Not Crowded”

*** Moderation KILLS!**

NEW WORLD ORDER ?!

0810/2011:

Apple > Exxon*

0724/2015:

Amazon > Walmart**

***Market capitalization; Apple became #1 in the world.**

****Market capitalization; Walmart is a “Fortune 1” company—the biggest in the world by sales.**

Phew.

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Chapter SEVENTEEN



It took two years—no kidding—to get to this. But my company (tompeters

company) logo is ...  ... a red exclamation mark. “Red exclamations” are what I’ve been about for decades.* And as the madness around us increases, the

more important a  gets.

(*As one colleague described me to a member of the press: “*A human exclamation point who no longer needs his last name*” —Nancy Austin)

17.1 AVOID

MODERATION!

Kevin Roberts' Credo

- 1. Ready. Fire! Aim.***
- 2. If it ain't broke ... Break it!***
- 3. Hire crazies.***
- 4. Ask dumb questions.***
- 5. Pursue failure.***
- 6. Lead, follow ... or get out of the way!***
- 7. Spread confusion.***
- 8. Ditch your office.***
- 9. Read odd stuff.***
- 10. AVOID MODERATION!***

Kevin Roberts is CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide—and a good friend.

“INSANELY GREAT”

STEVE JOBS

“RADICALLY THRILLING”

BMW

“ASTONISH ME”

SERGEI DIAGHLEV, TO A LEAD DANCER

“BUILD SOMETHING GREAT”

HIROSHI YAMAUCHI, NINTENDO, TO A SENIOR GAME DESIGNER

“MAKE IT IMMORTAL”

DAVID OGILVY, TO A COPYWRITER

**Extreme times call for extreme language—
and actions to back it up.**

Dry Basement Science

What to Have Done... *and Why*

*** Basement Systems Inc.**

(Larry Janesky/Seymour CT)

*** *Dry Basement Science***

(100,000++ copies!)

*** 1990: \$0; 2003: \$13M;**

2010: \$80,000,000

Retail SUPERSTARS

Retail Superstars: Inside the 25 Best Independent Stores in America —by George Whalin



GEORGE WHALIN

JUNGLE JIM'S INTERNATIONAL MARKET, FAIRFIELD, OH:

“An adventure in ***‘shoppertainment,’*** begins in the parking lot

and goes on to **1,600** cheeses and **1,400**
varieties of hot sauce—not to mention 12,000 wines priced from

\$8-\$8,000 a bottle; all this is brought to you by

4,000 vendors. Customers from every corner of the globe.”

BRONNER'S CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND, FRANKENMUTH, MI, POP

5,000: 98,000-square-foot “shop” features **6,000** Christmas

ornaments, **50,000** trims, and anything else you can
name pertaining to Christmas. ...”

Remember?
Extremists!

“We are crazy. We should do something when people say it is ‘crazy.’ If people say something is ‘good’, it means someone else is already doing it.”

—Hajime Mitarai, CEO, Canon

“We all agree your theory is crazy. The question, which divides us, is whether it is crazy enough.”

—Niels Bohr, to Wolfgang Pauli

***“There’s no use trying,” said Alice.
‘One cannot believe impossible things.’
‘I daresay you haven’t had much
practice,’ said the Queen. ‘When I
was your age, I always did it for half
an hour a day. Why, sometimes
I’ve believed as many as
six impossible things
before breakfast.”***

— Lewis Carroll

Words to the wise circa 2015.

**17.2 METABOLIC
MANAGEMENT**

(WTTMSASTMSUTFW!)

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

—Mario Andretti, race driver

“I’m not comfortable unless I’m uncomfortable.”

—Jay Chiat

“If it works, it’s obsolete.”

—Marshall McLuhan

I call it **“METABOLIC MANAGEMENT.”**
The leader is responsible for setting—and living
—the pace necessary for sustained
competitiveness, circa 2016.

WTTMSASTMSUTFW

WHOEVER
TRIES
THE
MOST
STUFF
AND
SCREWS
THE
MOST
STUFF
UP
THE
FASTEST
WINS



17.3

0/800

“Normal” =

“0 for 800”

ZERO

*There are ... **ZERO** ... “normal people” in the history books.

By definition: *No one normal makes it into the history books. It's not that I think you or I will make it into a history book. I'm simply suggesting that normal is—in my opinion—overrated.*

***“You can’t behave in
a calm, rational
manner. You’ve got
to be out there on
the lunatic fringe.”***

— Jack Welch

***“WHENEVER
ANYTHING IS BEING
ACCOMPLISHED, I
HAVE LEARNED, IT IS
BEING DONE BY A
MONOMANIAC WITH A
MISSION.”*** —Peter Drucker

"THE REASONABLE MAN ADAPTS HIMSELF TO THE WORLD. THE UNREASONABLE ONE PERSISTS IN TRYING TO ADAPT THE WORLD TO HIMSELF. THEREFORE, ALL PROGRESS DEPENDS UPON THE UNREASONABLE MAN."

—GB Shaw, *Man and Superman: The Revolutionists' Handbook.*

Mr. Welch (et al.) speak.

***“If I had any epitaph that I would rather have more than any other, it would be to say that I had ...disturbed
the sleep of my
generation.”***

—Adlai Stevenson

“I WANT TO BE THOROUGHLY USED UP WHEN I DIE. ... Life is no ‘brief candle’ to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.” —George Bernard Shaw

***"Life is not a journey to the grave
with the intention of arriving
safely in one pretty and well
preserved piece, but to skid
across the line broadside,
thoroughly used up, worn out,
leaking oil, shouting***

‘GERONIMO!’”

—Bill McKenna, professional motorcycle racer (*Cycle* magazine 02.1982)

GERONIMO!

(Indeed.)

(Circa 2016.)

**17.4 ARE YOU
BEING
REASONABLE?**

**“ARE YOU BEING
REASONABLE? Most
people are
reasonable; that’s
why they only do
reasonably well.”**

Source: Paul Arden, *Whatever You Think Think the Opposite*

***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

17.5

78



The last word.

This 78-year-old aims to do no less than change the world—beginning with changing dramatically the culture of a 2,000+ year old hyper-rigid institution.

I'm not comparing your or my mission to the Pope's. And my intent here is in no way religious. I am simply suggesting that aspiring to the extraordinary—at Zuckerberg's age or as a near octogenarian—is possible.

How does *your* change agenda stack up?