

We published the beginning to an empowering list three years ago—
Tom Peters' "100 Ways to Help You Succeed/Make Money."
We now update it here with his newest success tips #51-100 (&1).

100 Ways ... 51 to 100 (&1)

FOUR days a week (if humanly possible), 25 weeks running. That's my promise.
(Or, at least, my Goal.) One hundred short but (hopefully) sweet Blogs, collectively titled:
100 Ways to Help You Succeed/Make Money.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #51: BOOMERS RULE!

Go after Boomers!
Consciously!
Obviously!
Now!
Forget "halfway"!
Strategic!
Become a "Boomer Lovemark"!
(It's Virgin Turf—thanks to Idiot CEOs.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #52: WORK LIKE A DOG AT YOUR WRITING!

I'm an Engineer.

Tops at all things mathematical.

(Comes naturally.)

Writing didn't come easy to me.

I'm still not worth a damn—but at least I'm articulate. And perhaps I've found my “voice.”

Wanna know why?

Because I worked my ass off!

(“Worked my ass off” = Wrote a lot.)

Good writing matters!

(It can move mountains.)

(Odds are, neither you nor I will challenge Graham Swift, but we can damn well be much, much better than we are ... which matters.)

So: Work your ass off on your writing, from emails to Blog Posts to Letters to your Mum.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #53: IT'S RESEARCH, STUPID!

Never “ally” with a “vendor” not in the Top Decile of their industry on R&D spending!

Never!

Never!

Never!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #54: GET YOUR DAMN SIGNS RIGHT!

Spend like the proverbial Drunken Sailor on signage, in the most Generic Sense!
MAKE YOUR MANUALS ... GLORIOUS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #55: GO DIGITAL! SAVE LIVES!

I've had it with hospital "execs."
GO DIGITAL BIG TIME ... DAMN IT!
(No excuses!)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #56: LAUNCH PROJECT "RAY FILE"!

Watch *Ray*.
(Preferably with close colleagues.)
Make a detailed chart of his Re-imaginings.
(They will stagger you!)

Re-visit your "Lovemark."
Is it Clear?
Is it (per Ray) ... You?
Does it make you "chuckle" ... it's so Cool?
Does it make you "Gasp" ... it's so Audacious?
Does it embarrass your friends? (Always a good sign.)
Is it where you wish to ... Post Your Claim to Immortality?

Start a “Ray File” ... or a “Re-imaginings File” ... or a “Lovemark File.”
Scribble musings about your Lovemark/Re-imaging.
Cut out pictures.
Save Posts.

“Ray File” is a ... LIFELONG VENTURE/ADVENTURE!
(But why not start today with a simple DVD rental?)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #57: MAKE “DECENTRALIZATION” YOUR MANTRA!

No!
No!
No!

“Decentralization” is not a “CEO Thing.”
It’s an “everybody thing.”
Decentralization is an ... ATTITUDE!
A Willingness (DESIRE!) to “delegate” (give Others their head.)
Be a “genetic” “decentralizer”—age 18 or 88!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #58: PUT ART IN YOUR LIFE!

I'm no artist.
Not an artistic cell in my body.
But Great Art inspires me!

Put ART in your Life!
Put ART in your Workspace!
Inspire Yourself!
Inspire Others!

A Hearty Art Budget is a (BIG DEAL) form of R&D, for the 1-person or 1,000-person outfit!
(TRUST ME.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #59: INSANELY GREAT?

I've stuck through thick & thin with Steve Jobs ... and never lost faith. How can you lose faith with someone who incessantly aims for "Insanely Great"?

I'm writing about the ubiquity of the Professional Service Firm *idea* at the moment ...
in a world where every "ordinary" job & project is at risk.

My mind is on (obsessed with):

WOW!
Insanely Great!
Excellence!
"GASPWORTHY" Outcomes!
Lovemarks!

Dreams Come True!/Dream Merchants!
Scintillating EXPERIENCES!
“Game-changer” Customer Solutions!

So here is my challenge-for-the-day. Before you knock off work ... TODAY ... make one, small move with your current project in the direction of ... INSANELY GREAT!

Okay?

(Am I “out to lunch”/“OUTTATOUCHWITHREALITY” with a challenge like this! Or is it, as I see it, a ... Survival Issue? Remember Tom’s Fav Phrase: **DISTINCT** ... or **EXTINCT!**)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #60: “HUMANE” DESIGN/DO THE ... WABI-SABI

Become a Design Fanatic!
Design for Humans, not robots!
(All Great Design is ... HUMANE.)
(Another Great Word: Graceful.)
(Other great words: Pleasant ... Engaging ... Surprising ... Fun ... Joyful.)
(Not “sterile.”)
(This is as true/more true for the design of Systems and Experiences than for products per se.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #61: EXPERIMENT WITH/ADOPT THE “SELF-ORGANIZING” MODEL

Customers do a lot of the heavy lifting at eBay, Amazon, Wikipedia, Linux. Are you fully utilizing your customers’ talents? Fully engaging your customers in a joint cause? (Damn few can answer “Yes.”)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #62: SUPPRESS “NORMAL”!

Measure Weirdness!

Cherish Weirdness!

Hire Weirdness!

Stomp out “Normal”!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #63: Q1 = “TOP LINE” CONSIDERATIONS

You ain’t gonna beat China on cost. Hence you’d better focus on Innovation-Experience-Top Line. Make this your automatic Question #1:

“HOW WILL THIS PROJECT ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN A WAY THAT WILL IMPLEMENT ‘DRAMATIC DIFFERENCES’ FROM OUR COMPETITORS SO THAT WE CAN CAPTURE NEW CUSTOMERS, RETAIN OLD CUSTOMERS & GROW THEIR BUSINESS, BUILD OUR BRAND INTO A LOVEMARK ... AND KICK-START THE ‘TOP LINE?’”

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #64: **ADOPT THE CdS STANDARD!**

Make each day a masterpiece!

Is your “next act” (presentation, goal statement for your current project) up to the Cirque du Soleil Standard? Is today a “Masterpiece”?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #65: **ANGER UN-MANAGEMENT!**

Stay “furious.” Turn your “fury” into your next WOW Project ... or the basis for your Super-cool Biz Plan!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #66: **RETIREMENT SUCKS!**

Stay angry!

Change the World!

Never give up!

Never give in!

Die trying!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #67: DEMO MANIA!

To succeed with “new stuff,” you must find ... Kindred Spirits ... those who will ... Play with You (and your “cool stuff”) ... which in turn provides you with ... “Demos” ... that you can Tout Far & Wide.

I call “it”: THE WAY OF THE DEMO.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #68: DIVERSITY MANIA!

“Do” diversity.

Get rich.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #69: DO UNTO OTHERS ...

The goal of *every* action, *every* meeting, *every* project:

MAKE OTHERS SUCCESSFUL!

Can you honestly say that the questions you asked at the very last meeting you attended were ... directly & unequivocally ... about making others successful? (As opposed, say, to protecting your department’s turf ... or your own turf.) When considering your next meeting, work assiduously on others’ successes. Evaluate each comment-suggestion you make in that direct light.

Consider this advice in the exact terms it is stated: I EXIST TO MAKE OTHERS SUCCESSFUL ... AND THIS IDEA ANIMATES MY EVERY WEE & GRAND ACTIVITY.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #70: SPRING RENEWAL & CLEANING!

Use the First Week of Spring as a ... Formal Springboard for Renewal.

This week: Revisit each project you are working on. Does it Clearly & Unequivocally aim to be ... “Gasp-worthy”? (My fav new term.) Are you searching Far & Wide for “crazy” advisors/input to notch the project up on the WOW Scale? Have you got “crazy customers” (users) lined up who will help you/force you to take the project to another level? Use the Spring Cleaning metaphor: Perform a K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple, Stupid) Audit on your project. Are the Goals & “Deliverables” & Processes ... Crystal Clear & Beautiful & Uncluttered?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #71: BEGIN THE HUNT FOR HYPOMANICS!

Reread: “These men were outrageous—arrogant, provocative, unconventional, and unpredictable. They were not ‘well adjusted’ by normal standards but instead forced the world to adjust to them. ... Without their irrational confidence, ambitious vision, and unstoppable zeal, these outrageous captains would never have sailed into unknown waters, never discovered new worlds, never changed the course of our history.”

To survive competitively in the turbulent decades ahead we need to find & cherish such people. What—exactly—is your “Hypomaniac Recruitment Plan?” (No kidding. It may be the most serious question you ever try to answer.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #72: BEWARE THE SOUND OF LAUGHTER!

In his autobiography General Norman Schwarzkopf takes us through his career. At one point he explains that he simply cannot tell a joke effectively. Forgets stuff. Timing off. Screws up the punch line. Etc. But then a funny thing happens. He becomes a general. And the minute he pins a star on his collar he apparently becomes hilarious—associates start laughing uproariously at his jokes.

The message is obvious, and has to do with all who manage, not just General Officers. And that message: Beware underlings who laugh at your jokes. Writ large, as is my habit: Once you become a boss you'll never hear the unadulterated truth again. And that's almost as true for a 20-year-old shift boss in a Dunkin' Donuts outlet as for a senior middle manager or business owner.

You are a power figure. Moreover, others' success at work is tied to your whims and fancies—as well as straightforward proof of performance.

The “remedy” is clear, too. For example, MBWA (Managing By Wandering Around) allows you to get far more direct “on the ground” information—Starbucks founder Howard Schultz is surrounded by very smart assistants and executives, yet he religiously visits at least 25 stores a week. A second strategy is making end runs around your own hierarchy. As President of PepsiCo, Andy Pearson would visit an operation such as Frito-Lay, and after an obligatory nod to the CEO, he would head directly to the bullpen where the junior sub-brand managers lived. He'd pick one at random, sit down with her for an hour and discuss what was going on in her neck of the woods. Not only would he be judging Frito's bench strength, but also zeroing in on un-masticated data. A third strategy, if you're well up the hierarchy, is to have a trusted “good cop” nearby. Call this spying if you must, but the idea is someone at hand who is friendly whom you ask to sniff around and give you some direct feedback on how things smell where the rubber meets the road.

So I remind all bosses, courtesy General Norm: Beware the sound of laughter!

(As always in the real world, there are a host of caveats. To cite one example, when “MBWA” becomes a State Visit, not only will nothing be gained, but quite a bit may be lost. Etc. Etc.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #73: “MS./MR. AMBASSADOR”

While walking in Manchester Center (VT) I saw a couple of folks, middle-aged, pulled over on the side of the road—looking at a map. Went up and asked if I could help. Turns out they were hunting for an old family homestead, built in the early 1800s, that they weren’t even sure was still around. I could have given them directions, as they roughly knew where it was, but I (running gear & sweat) told them that if they wanted to give me a short lift, we could see if a nearby pal of mine was in who is a local history buff (nut, actually). They were keen, and he was around. I went on my way, and last I saw of them he and they had headed for his prodigious in-home library.

I don’t recount this tale in pursuit of your brownie points. But I did get thinking, and without dislocating my shoulder patting myself on the back, I realized I had been one hell of an Ambassador for my more or less home town—and, indeed, Vermont.

Which in turn got me thinking about the word AMBASSADOR per se. Among other things, my *Rodale’s Synonym Finder* (Bonus tip: *Rodale’s* is by far the pick of the litter—and William Safire agrees with me) gives us “herald” and “proclaimer” among the synonymous picks.

What if we used the word “Ambassador” in lieu of “receptionist,” “customer service rep,” or even “salesperson”? I was doing my all+ to represent Manchester-VT as a wonderful place with wonderful people. Moreover, I am very, very conscious of my “ambassadorial” role (didn’t use the word per se ’til day before yesterday) when I’m out of the U.S.A.—especially these days and especially when I’m in the likes of Botswana, Siberia, or Dubai or Oman. I am a full-scale representative of my country as much as if I had the Black Passport.

My point here, if we thought of ourselves as “ambassadors” when in contact with customers in particular, maybe it would make us think much harder about what we were doing and how we were doing it. While we’d still be in the “sales mode” (and I do understand that! I’m an “ideas-attitudes traveling salesman”!), we’d also be thinking more about our demeanor.

Just an idea.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #74: C(I) > C(E)

This one waltzed into my life when I was speaking to GE Energy sales folks earlier this year. I've long said that "forming relations inside our own company is almost as important as the external ones." While it may not be a Universal, it struck me that in many cases "C(I)"—our Internal customers—are in fact ... MORE IMPORTANT ... than C(E)—our external customers. In the GE case, systems sales, often to "foreigners," the salesperson (my GE informant who's a very successful salesperson) wants "an ... UNFAIR SHARE" ... of a host of insiders' time—engineers, logistics folks, the risk-assessment staff, and even lawyers. Lots of GE dudes are selling lots of stuff—and need, yesterday, lots and lots and lots of Inside Help. I (salesperson) want to be at the front of the queue for the harried risk-assessment staffers' time & attention; I want to be head of the queue and getting an unfair share of the engineers', who must customize the product, time and imagination and attention.

Hence my full set of "internal [customer] relationships" could end up being more important, even far more important, than my "external [customer] relations." The applications of this idea range way beyond enormous GE systems sales. I, as a professional services person at the "client interface," want an unfair share—and posthaste—of the Graphics Department's attention when a hastily scheduled Presentation looms. As a junior purchasing staffer, I want an unfair share of the Legal Staff's time as I prepare even a medium-sized contract. As a White House staffer many moons ago, I wanted the various Gatekeepers to put my memo to the VP or P or Secretary of State at the front of an infinitely long cue of stuff from people who waaaaaay outranked me.

So, what have you done lately for your all-important "portfolio" of internal ... CUSTOMERS????? I(I) + C(I) > I(E) + C(E). My Investment in Internal Customers must frequently outstrip my Investment in External Customers. Think about it. Clearly. Precisely. E.g., when was the last time you took a C(I) to lunch or dinner? Or brought Flowers to the Legal Department after they'd done you even a wee favor?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #75: YOUR 2-CENTS' WORTH

Now!

Today!

What is your (personal, department, project, restaurant, law firm) “2-Cent Candy”???

Note: THIS IS IMPORTANT!

Operative word: TODAY.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #76: “DRAMATIC FRENZY”

Perhaps “dramatic frenzy of value creation” sounds abstract.

(Or unattainable.)

No!

(No!)

So: How can you alter (a) your current project, (b) your CV ... to approach the idea of “dramatic frenzy of value creation”?

I contend that this is a v-e-r-y PRACTICAL idea. Among the Most Important Practical Ideas/Tasks you could possibly undertake.

If you disagree ... you are wrong.

Sorry.

(Think outsourcing.) (“Disintermediation’ is overrated. Those who fear disintermediation [outsourcing] should in fact be afraid of irrelevance—disintermediation is just another way of saying that you’ve become irrelevant to your customers.”—John Battelle/*Point/Advertising Age*/07.05) (Relevance = Dramatic Frenzy of Value Creation.—TP What else?)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #77: IN THE MOMENT

Your workteam today is not your workteam yesterday. Take a quiet moment or two or three BEFORE you go to work (not in the middle of your commute) to go through your up-to-date mental file on each person, where they are personally, where they are professionally, etc.

Among other things, this might result in a 90-second stop at two or three workstations to talk about what's up with a kid's school problem, etc. Or ask about an online course that so-and-so is taking, or why (women do this soooooo much better—and if that's sexist, so be it) “you seem to be a bit gloomy lately”—whatever. Maybe it means quick lunch plans. A 10-minute walk in the park mid-morning. Whatever. I'm hardly suggesting that you be a snoop—just that you are, after all, trying to work with your team to get something done and help each one develop and contribute in the process.

Think like Coach Mike Krzyzewski (Coach K): Each practice-game-day is different. Act accordingly. (On the women's thing—to keep beating this horse—I read another Coach K article, I think in the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, which says his wife sits in on almost every team meeting—she is indeed attuned to important signals he misses.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #78: SPEAK NOT ILL OF THINE COMPETITORS

Does this require more explanation than the Golden Rule (“Do unto others ...”):
Badmouthing competitors diminishes you. Period.

“Win” with better product.

“Win” with better relationships.

“Win” when your industry is prospering and has a good reputation. (Think consultants, ad agencies, lawyers, for example.)

Build up your competitors!

Build up your entire industry!

(And if a competitor is missing deadlines, etc., instead of piling on, say “Yes, I do hear they’re going through a rough patch, but they’re a good company and a good competitor and I’m sure they’ll sort things out.” Or some such.)

Decency rules!

Decency rules! (And, paradoxically, the more “dog eat dog” the competitive situation, the more the “decency advantage” matters.)

Consider this Comment to my recent Post on supporting one’s competitors from Nathan Schock:

“This is especially important for those of us who work in professional services located outside major metropolitan areas. As our entire industry improves in our city, the large companies are less likely to look outside our city for those services.

“Our advertising agency believes that anything that makes the industry better in our city, improves our position. That’s why we devote so much time and energy to professional organizations like AIGA, PRSA, and the AAF.”

Amen.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #79: KINDNESS. ALWAYS.

Take the time! Listen! Increase your self-awareness of the “great, unseen battles” that most of your mates are fighting. Show consideration and humanity ... and, per Philo of Alexandria, “kindness.”

Your reward will be a better-functioning and more productive team—and points as a thoughtful human being who, in appropriate circumstances, can call herself/himself a true leader.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #80: The 1% “No-Brainer”

A strategic consultant taught me this years ago: “In the early afternoon, right after lunch, tell your participants, ‘We’re going to do a 30-minute breakout. Your task: Cut your current budget by 1%, no more and no less. Then we’ll spend 15 minutes reporting back so that we all can get the hang of it. Anyone can do it. You will thus pay my fees 10 times over—and do yourselves a big favor.’”

Wow.

I know all the arguments about the problems with budgets, across-the-board cuts, rolling budgets, etc, etc. Still, we all have cost issues. So whether you run a 2-person firm (or a one-person firm, for that matter), or a 723-person unit, this afternoon ... gather your leadership team, or everyone in the department, and take 1% (no more and no less) out of your budget-projected annual costs. As my colleague said, anyone can indeed do it—and it must not absorb more than an hour. Repeat now and again.

You’ll be surprised how powerful this is—with a \$100,000 projected cost, you can reap a \$1,000 reward rather easily. (I do it with personal finances in particular.)

It adds up.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #81: P > C

There's a convenience store near me. They just finished what I'd guess is a \$500,000 renovation. It sure helps! Bravo!

Whoops!

The previously crappy staff attitude is as crappy as ever. (All the more obvious because there's a Starbucks just a block away. For that matter, I guess there's pretty much a Starbucks within a block of everything these days.) Frankly, I feel they pretty much pissed away the \$500,000! I'll trade a paint job for attitude any day!

It calls to mind a big issue, which holds for the receptionist in the 3-person, walkup accountancy as well as it does for the U.S. military. It's so easy—and so visible—to get caught up with the capital budget. It's "permanent" and you can take a picture of the result, often as not. The people budget is far more intangible—and far more important. Money isn't everything, but when you're almost finished your planning exercise this year, I urge you in the strongest words I can muster to cut the projected capital expenditures by 5% or 10% ... and put the savings into the people budget, penny for penny or billion for billion!

(Hint: This is a very, very big deal!)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #82: OF SERVICE!

Ask.

Daily.

“What did I specifically do to be of service to my group? Was I fair & truly a ‘servant?’”

Think on this (exactly!) for 5–10 minutes before you go to work.

As I reflect on the past 3, 6, 12 months, can I answer the following in a positive manner?*

(*Be specific!) That is:

1. Do those served grow as persons?
2. Do they—while being served—become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #83: DON'T FORGET WHY YOU'RE HERE!

I was talking with a young lawyer, Harvard trained, now putting in her time at a big firm. She thought life was just a whirl of mostly trivial activities. On the one hand that's very normal, and part of the time-honored apprenticeship process. But it's also true that in the midst of all the BS, you often lose sight of why you followed this apparently hallowed path to begin with. I've heard doctors and other professionals say the same thing. At the top of the pyramid, former Secretary of State George Schultz mused on how you come to public service with the highest of ideals, but "you get so caught up in the Power Game, that you forget your worthy aspirations." God knows, on many a long plane delay and the (constant) like, I've wondered the same thing.

(Alas, many CEOs epitomize this. They get so caught up in the earnings game that they forget the fact that they are meant to be "of service" to some worthy, Olympian objective. Perversely, I'm pleased to report, this loss of attention to the basics is the wellspring of earnings that don't measure up.)

I have a little ritual I follow to help get back on track. I take a moment or five and skim either *In Search of Excellence* or my Stanford dissertation—and remember what I aimed to do in the first place. And how far I have strayed; it helps me get centered, or re-centered.

I suggested to my newfound lawyer acquaintance that she invent some like ritual. And I suggest the same to you: "Why did I take this assignment, or choose this profession? Am I doing everything possible in my current project to hold to the principles that got me into all this? Is my time here up?" Or some such. It's the ritual review rather than its form that's important.

(My suggestion: Do it every 90 days. Better yet, every evening!)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #84: IF THE ENVELOPE DOESN'T FIT, FORGET IT!

(So Check on the Envelopes.)

My local Starbucks stayed open a few minutes late—and fetched something already put away—to fill my order.

When I handed my other local Starbucks my thermos yesterday morning, they filled it up without question, even though that's a non-standard order. (I think they under-charged me—a two ventis price for what doubtless was three ventis in quantity. Oh, and they thoroughly washed the thermos before filling it without request.)

My local Whole Foods opens at 8:00 a.m. Several of us were waiting. They opened at about 7:45. And those folks define helpful—I got a full-bore dissertation on various cuts of beef, among other things.

Stanford sent me a questionnaire in prep for my MBA reunion. (# ???) I took some pains to fill it out. When I got ready to mail it, I discovered that it didn't fit into the envelope they'd enclosed—I tore the questionnaire up and tossed it in the recycle bin. (Ever wonder what's wrong with MBA programs? Lack of attention to mis-fitting envelopes! Think I'm kidding?)

Do you bend over backwards to go “beyond the book” to help customers? Do you open earlier than advertised? Are your envelopes the right size?

The 25 companies that made *BusinessWeek*'s first “Customer Service Champs” list are very, very, very, very, very serious about the “little things.”

And you?
Personally?
Your team?
Your company?

How do you know?

For sure?

What are you doing about it?

Today?

Now?

“Big aims” (I believe in them religiously!) are plain silliness without the “little” things executed to perfection—and constantly beyond the “best practices” you designed yourself.

“Little things”—I love the word “fanatic.”

(“Big” keys to “little” things: great hiring practices emphasizing “soft” factors, great and extensive and enjoyable training, fun, celebrations, routinely using words like “Wow,” managers who are out and about, etc., etc.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #85: R.O.C(I): “THEY” ALL WORK FOR ME!

Suppose I work in a 201-person unit.

Suppose I’m in sales. (Everybody is—but that’s another story.)

Key #1 to success: C(I) >> C(E)

Translation: My Internal Customers/C(I) are more important, perhaps far more important, especially in the long term, than my External Customers/C(E) to whom I am officially making the sale.

Goal: I want all 200 of my mates—in every discipline—working for *me*! Starting with my CEO!

Secret to Key #1?

Obvious!

Investment!

Big time investment!

Screw the “traditional silos”—I plan to make love to everybody in every department in the Unit.

I want 200 folks *desperate* to make me successful with my External Client-Customer.

I am desperate in turn to *get rid of* my external customer. I want “my” External Customer to become not “mine,” but the customer of my mates/C(I). I want them, my C(I), to reap the pleasure and rewards of the relationship with “my” (now their!) External Customer.

(FYI: This applies to every project. The customer is not the customer. The customer is my mates throughout the enterprise who will surpass me in their effort to satisfy-WOW my “official” end user-customer for that IT project.)

So? Are you investing like a ... deranged maniac ... in your C(I)? Do all 7, 17, 170 folks in your unit work for you—and love it?

Return On Investment in Internal Customers/C(I)—nothing more important. Oh, by the way, have you ... MEASURED ... the “customer satisfaction” of your internal customers?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #86: FIGHT CORPORATE COLLAPSE! FIGHT CREEPING CENTRALIZATION!

What are your precise procedures to stop-reverse the proliferation of originally sound-procedures-become-bureaucratic cancer?

Have you exercised said procedures ... this week? Today? (Prove it.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #87: WELCOME TO WIKIWORLD!

Master “Mass collaboration”!

“Mass collaboration,” WikiScale, really is one of those (rare) things that probably merits “new thing under the sun” status.

Experiment.

Vigorously.

Now.

Pursue mastery.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #88: NON-RATIONAL BEHAVIOR, BECOMING A STUDENT OF

To grasp organizational life as it is, read novels (!) and books such as the two discussed immediately below. It is my fervent belief that we will never design rational processes that “overcome” such irregularities—don’t bother telling that to a consultant. Hence, we should embrace the real, non-rational, nonlinear world with vigor and glee—and develop enterprise and career strategies accordingly. Part of this process may involve absorbing the likes of *How Doctors Think* and *Judgment under Uncertainty*.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED/MAKE MONEY #89: THE ULTIMATE QUESTION ...

Okay, get up your nerve. No bull, scrap your “Customer Satisfaction Survey,” British Air or Joe’s Local Accountancy. Instead limit your “survey” to One Question:

“Would you recommend us to friends and professional associates?”

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #90: FOR THE SHEER HELL OF IT!

“If it’s not fun you’re not doing it right.”—Fran Tarkenton

Richard Branson does things that matter to him ... for the sheer hell of it. Personally, I think that’s a very legitimate career and business philosophy. Frankly, the reason that I take on new stuff, and keep accumulating frequent flyer miles, has long been the unadulterated joy I get from doing what I do, and the sheer pleasure from marching in the opposite direction from the crowd. The same was true, if I may admit it, to me as a builder/junior officer, age 23, in Vietnam in 1966+.

My advice?

Don’t do it unless it’s fun.

Make it fun. (Always possible, per me.)

Make it fun for others. (Which makes it fun/more fun for you.)

Tarkenton, the NFL quarterback and wildly successful businessperson, “gets it.”

Sir Richard Branson “gets it.”

So do I.

And you?????????????????

(PLEASE: Don’t dismiss this as “motivational bullshit.” Act as if your life depended on it; your professional life does.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #91: THE RULE OF REALISM

Pay for your groceries with cash next time. Your car repair, too. The office supply bill? Ditto.

By hook or by crook, bring Realism in the office door.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #92: GOT YOUR DREAMER QUOTA ABOARD?

Who, precisely, are your Dreamers?

Are their Dreams in Technicolor?

Do you allow their most Outrageous Dreams to be seen in public?

(If this sounds odd, think iPhone.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #93: BOTTOM LINE

A “Culture of Innovation” tops a “Culture of Hypercontrol.”

“Innovation Freaks” win in the Long Run.

(Or, at least, they have more fun losing.)

Please discuss: Once a month.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #94: HAIL THE DECENTRALIZATION “WARFIGHTERS”

Through every means possible, be hyper-aware of ICD (Inherent Centralist Drift).

Talk about it.

Fight about it.

Lose sleep over it.

Ensure that your Decentralists are as well armed as your Centralists.

(Hint: This ICD holds for a 1-person biz as well as for a 10,000-person biz. When you screw up in the 1-person biz, you add controls. A good idea, a necessary one ... until it stifles creativity.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #95: NON-LINEARITY RULES. NON-LINEARITY = LIFE. IF SUCCESS [OR FAILURE] IS DETERMINED ALMOST ENTIRELY BY THE UNPREDICTABLE [LITERALLY], THEN WHAT?

“Most of our predictions are based on very linear thinking. That’s why they will most likely be wrong.”—Vinod Khosla

“The difficulties ... arise from the inherent conflict between the need to control existing operations and the need to create the kind of environment that will permit new ideas to flourish—and old ones to die a timely death. ... We believe that most corporations will find it impossible to match or outperform the market without abandoning the assumption of continuity. ... The current apocalypse—the transition from a state of continuity to state of discontinuity—has the same suddenness [as the trauma that beset civilization in 1000 A.D.]”—Richard Foster & Sarah Kaplan, “Creative Destruction” (*The McKinsey Quarterly*).

I have no tidy “tip” here, but rather an extraordinary plea that you implicitly put “non-linear” thinking atop your and your leadership team’s agenda—permanently. This may mean hiring poets and astrologers and putting homeless folks on your advisory board. It may mean sabbaticals or yoga, maybe sabbaticals *and* yoga. Or dropping out for a year or three. Or joining a rock band. Or putting 3-inch heels on one foot only. Though Rudy “dealt with a crisis” well—it’s more than such a bland prescription. It’s not “dealing well with crisis,” though that may be part of it, but more along the lines of dealing constantly and comfortably and quite happily with “very strange stuff,” or some such.

REMEMBER. REMEMBER. REMEMBER. YOUR LIFE’S TRAJECTORY WILL BE DETERMINED ALMOST ENTIRELY BY EVENTS WHICH BY DEFINITION CANNOT BE PLANNED FOR. ACT ACCORDINGLY ... WHATEVER THAT MEANS.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #96: MAKE A PUBLIC “INSANE EFFORT” UPON OCCASION

Consider it to be an “Extreme Weapon” in your Success Arsenal.

When an issue is of the utmost importance, and at a standstill or in freefall, proactively look for an opportunity to “make a statement” through a gesture that indicates great pain and engagement and urgency on your part. Often, this comes in the form of “5,000 miles for a 5-minute audience” with a key participant.

(Is this Machiavellian? Sure, to some extent—but the fact is that you must actually care to do this. The “insane gesture” simply acts as proof that you’ll go to any length to make progress.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #97: REWARD “DNK” WHEN YOU DNK

Of course you don’t want to reward “I didn’t bother to ...” laziness, but you do want to reward—Big Time—truth-telling. Hence, cheer publicly the person who admits, in front of a boss, that he or she “does not know” the facts here, or the answer to this or that. In fact, per the above, make a game (serious game!) out of identifying the “DNKs” regarding any analysis or proposed action. Frankly, good inventories of DNKs may be far more important to success than inventories of DKs.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #98: **PASSING THE “SQUINT TEST”**

When you squint at the page in the annual report featuring the Executive Team, does the gender and skin-tone roughly match the demographics of the market being served?

(Notice that I purposefully said “roughly”; I’m not looking for quotas, just very rough approximations.)

If you fail the “squint test,” what is your 6-month, 1-year, and 2-year program, including immediate “next steps” for addressing the issue?

Note of importance: This holds as much for a 23-person project team as it does for a division or company as a whole.

My opinion: Fix the “women part” first. I.e., more or less ... now.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #99: “INVESTMENT” PLAN/NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION

During his days as Goldman Sachs boss, Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson began a habit. He would call “60 CEOs in the first week [of the year] to wish them happy New Year.” During my brief White House stint in the mid-seventies, I spent eight or nine straight hours one New Year’s Eve on my office phone. I called close to 100 people I worked with—in agencies all over Washington and in embassies around the world—to thank them for their help in the prior year. In addition to enjoying the chats, which I did (I suspect Paulson did, too), I admit that I was purposefully engaging in an ADRE ... Act of Deliberate Relationship Enhancement.

While I fully buy “If you aren’t sincere, it won’t work,” I nonetheless urge you to develop some similar ritual. Moreover, I urge you to do it in the next couple of weeks!

Think ADRE. Twelve months a year!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #100: PURPOSEFULLY PRACTICE LISTENING

(And “Hearing.”)

I’m dealing with a thorny problem. Even thought of calling my shrink—he’s my “life coach” as much as my esteemed mental health advisor.

In the end I didn’t call him. And you can thank cross town Manhattan Christmas traffic for that.

I inveterately chat with cabbies—about life, not the weather. This driver-advisor-to-be had been around the circuit a couple of times, as, indeed, I have as well. I laid out my issue pretty damn directly. All issues are the same—in the end, relationship issues (see above). His thoughts were “obvious” (all useful thoughts are, in retrospect) and really turned my thinking on its ear.

On the one hand, I was making idle chatter, as I am wont to do; on the other hand, I really wanted to get his reaction. His take on human interaction is likely to be more profound than mine—given his natural laboratory. I’m almost loath to admit it, though I don’t know why, but I actually jotted a couple of notes on my Amtrak ticket stub while he was talking. I gave him a healthy Christmas tip, but the fact is that his advice was priceless— or at least a lot cheaper than my psychiatrist’s invoice.

In the last couple of weeks, I’ve talked about Dave Isay’s book, *Listening Is an Act of Love*, and cool friend Matthew Kelly’s *The Dream Manager*. Both are books about stories and listening and hearing. As is my little “Manhattan Cabbie’s Tale.” If relationships are “everything” (they are), then listening-hearing-story collecting is Tool #1. Stephen Covey and others are wonderful instructors on this topic. I will not attempt to copy them. My suggestion is simpler: During this holiday season, you’ll likely go to cocktail parties, open presents, attend family dinners. While not aiming to spoil your spontaneity, I’d suggest that each of these occasions is an opportunity to *purposefully* practice listening-hearing-story collecting. I have no tricks, except to say tune deliberately into the process. If you want to give yourself an exam, at the end of the party or whatever, review what you heard-learned that was new about an old friend; I learn new stuff about 20-year friends when I really work on my listening-hearing. And keep in mind, as lodestar, the words from Dale Carnegie: “You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”

And a bonus:

100 (OR SO) WAYS TO SUCCEED #101: FIFTY. PERIOD.

FLASH!

FLASH!

FLASH!

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION!

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION!

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION!

OLD YEAR'S RESOLUTION!

Call (C-A-L-L!) (NOT E-MAIL!) 25-50 (NO FEWER THAN 25) people ... TODAY* ...
to thank them for their support this year (2007) ... and wish them and their families
and colleagues a Happy 2008!** *** *****

*Today = TODAY = N-O-W (not "within the hour")

**Remember: ROIR > ROI. ROIR = Return On Investment in Relationships.
Success = $f(\text{Relationships})$.

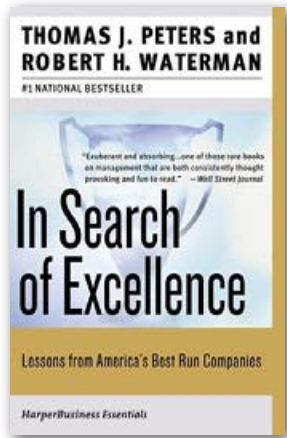
***This is the most important piece of advice I have provided this year.

****This is ... Not Optional.

*****Trust me: This is fun!!!!

*****Trust me: This "works."

Happy 2008!!!



BUY THE BOOK

Get more details or buy a copy of Peters and Waterman's [*In Search of Excellence*](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fortune calls [Tom Peters](#) the Ur-guru of management and compares him to Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman and H.L. Mencken. *The Economist* tags him the Uber-guru. His unconventional views led *BusinessWeek* to describe him as “business’s best friend and worst nightmare.” Tom describes himself as a prince of disorder, champion of bold failures, maestro of zest, professional loudmouth (as a speaker he’s “a spitter” according to the cartoon strip Dilbert), corporate cheerleader, lover of markets, capitalist pig ... and card-carrying member of the ACLU.

SEND THIS

[Pass along a copy](#) of this manifesto to others.

SUBSCRIBE

[Sign up for our free e-newsletter](#) to learn about our latest manifestos as soon as they are available.

BORN ON DATE

This document was created on February 6, 2008 and is based on the best information available at that time.

Check [here](#) for updates.

ABOUT CHANGETHIS

[ChangeThis](#) is a vehicle, not a publisher. We make it easy for big ideas to spread. While the authors we work with are responsible for their own work, they don't necessarily agree with everything available in ChangeThis format. But you knew that already.

ChangeThis is supported by the love and tender care of 800-CEO-READ. Visit us at [800-CEO-READ](#) or at our daily [blog](#).

COPYRIGHT INFO

The copyright of this work belongs to the author, who is solely responsible for the content.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs License. To view a copy of this license, visit [Creative Commons](#) or send a letter to Creative Commons, 559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, California 94305, USA.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

You are given the unlimited right to print this manifesto and to distribute it electronically (via email, your website, or any other means). You can print out pages and put them in your favorite coffee shop's windows or your doctor's waiting room. You can transcribe the author's words onto the sidewalk, or you can hand out copies to everyone you meet. You may not alter this manifesto in any way, though, and you may not charge for it.