

100 WAYS

TO HELP YOU SUCCEED/MAKE MONEY

This is the first half, success tips # 1-50,
of a two-part installment. *continued* ►



by Tom Peters

In the interest of getting these success tips into your hands more quickly, we're releasing the first 50 before all 100 are written. Numbers 51-100 will be published at a later date.

100 WAYS ...

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. "It" was all triggered by a "trivial" experience this past Saturday ...

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED/MAKE MONEY #1:

THE CLEAN & NEAT TEAM! (TEAM TIDY?) ...

I've been preaching the "Experience Thing" for a few years. ("Not just a 'Product' or a 'Service,' but an 'Awesome Experience.')" I believe my act. **But ...**

I was in a giant retail mall last Saturday. Visited a renowned retailer's space. "Experience Marketing"? No one does it better. **But ...**

THE PLACE WAS A MESS.

Got me thinking. I "go off on" various tacks, like the Experience bit. But let's not forget the Boring Basics along the way! Such as: Clean-Neat Rules! (Or, at least, Messy-Sloppy-Dirty is a Top 5 Turnoff.)

I'm not a "neat freak." To the contrary, I'm a slob. But that's home. Not my profession. I select hotels in large measure based on whether or not they have 1-hour, 24-hours-per-day

pressing services. I get paid (very) well for what I do. I don't get paid to show up for a speech looking like I slept in my clothes!

The retail space in question was crowded with customers and visitors. (Good for them.) But it'd gotten very messy in the course of the day. Goods scattered, or at least untidy stacks of goods. Trash on the floor. Boxes stacked unattractively near the checkout desk. Etc. (Etc.) To me the space ... SCREAMED ... "We Don't Give a S___." (I started to use "We don't care." Or: "We don't give a hoot." But that's not it. It is: "WE DON'T GIVE A SHIT.")

There's a lot to Great Retailing, or great whatever. But right near the head of the line is: "WE CARE!" And near the head of the "We care" line is "Looks like a million dollars."

Hence ... THERE IS NO EXCUSE WHATSOEVER FOR SLOPPINESS, UNTIDINESS, LESS THAN S-P-A-R-K-L-I-N-G RESTROOMS, ETC., ETC.

Money-maker Message #1: KEEP IT CLEAN! Kudos to ... TEAM TIDY. Brickbats to ... the Dirty Dozen.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #2:

PRONOUN POWER

Was editing a trainer's manual, replete with suggested dialogue, for a friend today. Good stuff! (Content: A+) But one "small" thing caught my attention. Most of the scripts for trainers addressing their charges read like this: "I [Trainer] suggest that you [Client/Student] approach the Objection as follows ..." What's my problem? Simple. I/trainer am the Subject, the teller of truth. And the Student/Client is the Object, the recipient of my pearls of wisdom.

NO! NO! NO!

Here's the Big Word I want us to obsess on in today's Tip: **WE!** (And: **US!**)

Here, for example, is my re-write of the above script: "**We** often hear the following Objection blah blah blah. What if it weren't an objection at all? What if it provides **us** with an Opportunity to get **our** oar in about this blah blah blah [product benefit, say]. ..." Note, obviously, in my rewrite the three uses of "we" and "us." From long experience, I suggest that this changes the Fundamental Nature of Community-Interaction between the Instructor and the Student. Instead of being an imparter-of-knowledge to the Unwashed, I/trainer am now a fellow-toiler-in-the-trenches hunting for a fruitful solution to "our" shared dilemma. Right?

Student and teacher are now—via Pronoun Power!—engaged in a Joint Venture toward Excellence. (Or some such.)

This trick (more on who gets "tricked" in a moment) was taught me by my first McKinsey partner-mentor back in 1974. "Tom," he said, none too gently, "when you address the Client, never fail to use the word 'We.' As in 'The way **we** might get at this blah blah blah.' The idea is that it's us and the Client foraging mightily as a Team in hot pursuit of the truth."

I'll be the first to admit that this is indeed a "trick." But beginning in those McKinsey days, I contend that it was me who was mostly tricked! Use "we" and "us" enough ... and I began to feel that I was on the Client's Team, not vice versa.

To this day, 30 years later, by instinct, I religiously use "We" and "Us"—and a team of wild horses could not elicit an "I" or "You."

It is a trick ... and it is a Fundamental Value concerning Groups on Joint Ventures in Quest of Better Understanding.

We agree, right?

NB #1: Also observe, Trick #2, the “religious” capitalization of Client. Another McKinsey fruit that makes a big difference to me.

NB #2: Back to Success Tip #1 on cleanliness. I mentioned in passing, regarding Team Tidy, “sparkling restrooms.” I simply want to underscore the idea ... worthy of status as #1 of my 100, in fact. There’s no greater giveaway to the I CARE (or don’t) query than the status of the Restroom. Movie theater, Gas Station, McDonald’s, \$75–an–entrée restaurant ... check out the Restroom. “Messy” gets a C–. “Dirty” gets a D. “Foul” gets an F. (I’d guess 70% of Restrooms get a D or F in my experience.) Give a B– to a “clean” Restroom. And a B+ to a “squeaky clean” Restroom. And reserve the rare A/A+ for the squeaky clean Restroom that becomes “an experience” in and of itself. Great furnishings! Flowers! A (Great) chair in which to take a 30–second respite! Etc.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #3:

THE RAREST OF GIFTS

The rarest of gifts: THANK YOU!

Alas, it (a nod of appreciation, a hastily penned, 2–line T–note) is so rare. (And thence ... ever so powerful!)

Among TP’s favorite quotes:

“The two most powerful things in existence: a kind word and a thoughtful gesture.”

—Ken Langone, VC and Home Depot founder

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

—psychologist William James.

“ We look for listening, caring, smiling,
saying ‘Thank you,’ being warm.”

—Colleen Barrett, president,
Southwest Airlines, on hiring criteria

Think: THANK YOU POWER! (And “power” it is!)

Hints:

- 1.** Make it “permanent”—send a note.
- 2.** HANDWRITTEN notes beat emails!!!!!!
- 3.** This applies equally at age 18 in a “powerless” job, as well as at age 48 as Honcho.
- 4.** Do this especially when you “don’t have time”—at the end of a stressful day.
- 5.** Make it a “formal” habit—do it at the end of the day, say, every 2 or 3 days.
- 6.** If you can’t think of anything or anyone to say “Thank you” to—
I suggest you go see a shrink.

(Remember: “Performance” stems from Engagement ... Encouragement ... Passion ... Appreciation ... Public recognition ... Respect. “Thanking” is a big part of that.)

Uh, Thank You for taking the time to read this!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #4:

MAKE THE CALL! TODAY! NOW!

Only a sad few seek out contention. Then there’s another group (I’m a Charter Member) that goes to almost any length to avoid it ... and routinely lets little, salvageable messes fester into big, intractable ones.

Answer: MAKE THE CALL! TODAY! NOW!

In short, a 5-minute call made right now to deal with a “slightly bruised” ego or a “minor” misunderstanding can avoid a situation tomorrow that leads to divorce court, a lost (major) client, an employee lawsuit, etc.

I’ve learned that invariably “there *was* a moment” when the situation (DAMN NEAR ANY “SITUATION”) was reversible. In fact, easily reversible. But pride or embarrassment or unwillingness to further mess up an already nasty day led to “just one more day’s” evasion & delay ... and that day became a second day ...

No, I’ve not joined a Busted Relationships 12-step Program. But I have done one, for me, little Big Thing. As part of my morning priority-setting meditation I go to an item on my desktop labeled “NOT TOMORROW!” It’s simply a list of names, or perhaps situations, that I must remain conscious of ... and work on in the course of the day. I try to confront myself brutally about what I’m putting off. AND ADD TO MY LIST ONE (no more than one ... do-abil-

ity is paramount) UNPLEASANT CALL I MUST MAKE TODAY. We're all different, but I've found that just having the damned "NOT TOMORROW!" de facto flashing at me is a spur to action. (Incidentally, it's right next to another doc/icon labeled "VITAL SIGNS"—that's the one, a PP slide, with red on black, that heralds the results of my most recent weigh-in and the number of consecutive days I've exercised.)

By the way (we all know this, too), don't let me make this sound so grim. I find that in 9 of 10 cases the call goes far better than imagined (maybe it's just relief?); not only does it "deal with" a thorny problem, but it also often launches a positive trajectory for a fraying relationship; and it always makes me feel better about myself, makes me feel a bit of a hero, actually.

MAKE THE CALL. TODAY. NOW.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #5:

TARGET #1: ME!

Stand in front of the mirror ... Smiling. Saying ... "Thank you." Doing ... Jumping Jacks. Whatever. (See below.)

Fact: "It" begets "it."

Fact: "Not it" begets "It-less-ness."

Smiling begets a warmer (work, home) environment.

Thanking begets an environment of mutual appreciation.

Enthusiasm (those Jumping Jacks) begets enthusiasm.

Love begets love.

Energy begets energy.

Wow begets Wow.

Optimism begets Optimism. (I've been devouring Martin Seligman lately.)

Honesty begets honesty.

Caring begets caring.

Listening begets engagement.

Etc.

Etc.

How do you “motivate others”? Take a B-school course on Leadership?

No! (You were joking, right?)

Answer: Motivate yourself first.

By hook or by crook.

Call it: Leadership By Unilateral Attitude Adjustment.

Are there things that can be labeled “circumstances”?

Of course.

Do bad things happen to good people?

Doubtless.

Is there such a thing as “powerlessness”?

No!

No!

No!

Take charge now!

Task one: Work on ourselves.

Relentlessly!

If you can figure out how to go to work with a smile today, I (trained as I was as an engineer, and indeed carrying the baggage of an MBA from a “quant school”) will guarantee you that you will not only “have a better day,” but will (eventually) infect others! (And, uh, “productivity” will soar ... once “they”—your boss, your peers, your subordinates—get over the shock.)

Smile!

Enthuse!

Thank!

Wow!

Win!

Now!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #6:

THINK (OBSESS) LEGACY!

Consider this a variation on a debate in the Tom Peters Weblog over the number of priorities a person can have. Well, I'm settling it.

One!

Here's the deal. It's 5 a.m. (09.28.2004) as I write. I have a day crammed full of miscellaneous (that dreaded word!) activities ahead, ending with a flight from Boston/Logan to London/Heathrow. But the ... THE ... Pressing Question is: WHAT WILL (in One Sentence) THE LEGACY OF THIS DAY HAVE BEEN FOR TP?

Yes, I believe a Single Day can have as much of a "legacy" as a lifetime. In fact that had better be the case! Why? Because the day ... stretching out before me ... filled (at the moment) with limitless opportunities ... is ... ALL I HAVE!

Right?

Just another day?

Hardly!

THIS IS IT!

All those things ... grand and mundane ... I want to do with my life will either be abetted or thwarted or put off or ignored in the course of ... THIS ONE, UNFURLING DAY.

So: What (One Sentence) will Today's Legacy be ... for You?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #7:

IF NO "WOW," NO GO!

Does "it" Pop?

Does "it" Sparkle?

Does "it" make you Grin?

Is "it" ... WOW?

If "it" (grand or mundane) isn't WOW ... re-do it! Or don't do it!

This is ... Your Day.

Not "their" day.

This Day belongs ... ULTIMATELY ... to You.

Not "them."

Cubicle slaves Unite!

Technicolor Titans rejoice!

Throw off the shackles of Conformity!

Just say/shout a throaty "No!" to Non-WOW!

So ...

WOW!

Now!

(No bull. This *is* do-able.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #8:

FOUL UP. FESS UP. FAST. FASTIDIOUSLY.

SHIT HAPPENS.

SHIT HAPPENS TO YOU AND ME BECAUSE WE SOMETIMES DO STUPID SHIT.

WE RARELY GET IN TROUBLE FOR THE SHIT THAT HAPPENS AS A RESULT OF THE STUPID SHIT WE DO.

WE OFTEN GET IN TROUBLE FOR THE STUPID SHIT WE DO TO AVOID TELLING ABOUT THE SHIT THAT HAPPENED BECAUSE OF THE STUPID SHIT WE DID.

MESSAGE.

FOUL UP.

FESS UP.

FAST.

FASTIDIOUSLY. (Tell the Whole Truth.)

TO ANYONE YOU CAN FIND TO FESS UP TO.

BOSSSES.

SUBORDINATES.

THE GUY AT THE BAR.

OR IN THE WEIGHT ROOM.

THEN GET ON WITH LIFE.

I am *not* a moralist.

I am *not* arguing that “telling the truth is a ... GOOD THING.” (Though I generally think it is.)

I *am* arguing that telling the truth ASAP is a ... USEFUL-PRAGMATIC-CAREER ENHANCING THING TO DO ... BECAUSE THE BOOGEYMAN IS GOING TO GET YOU IF YOU DON'T. (I.e. bloggers cornering Dan Rather. Rather has a habit of being chased by weird people, come to think of it.)

And, actually, people think it's “cool” when you/me tell the truth—foul up, fess up, fast, fastidiously. (Soooo Cool, that maybe you should fess up to things you haven't done?) (Just a thought.)

Seriously: PEOPLE HAVE VAST RESERVOIRS OF FORGIVENESS FOR SINS INCLUDING STUPID SINS ... AND ARE THIN-SKINNED AS ALL GET OUT ABOUT EVASIVENESS AND CONVOLUTED EXPLANATIONS.

(“It depends on what the meaning of ‘is’ is.”)

“I screwed up with the customer” beats (by a country mile): “We lost the customer because the customer's people tripped all over themselves and couldn't come to a decision ... blah blah blah.”

Or: “THE LIGHTS IN THE ROOM WERE TOO LOW BY WHICH TO SEE MURDEROUS DICTATORS.” (Hey, even, “I like the old brute, used to go water skiing with him ...” would have been better. Right?)

FOUL UP.

FESS UP.

FAST.

FASTIDIOUSLY.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #9:

“OLD” RULES!

Young is Cool.

Old is Rich.

Think about it.

I’ll speak later today to the AHCA/American Health Care Association ... the trade association that represents assisted-care centers, nursing homes, etc. Problems? Sure. Lousy rep? Alas, yes. Opportunity? YOU BET!

I’m not one to provide “market tips.” But I’ll break the rule here. The “Boomer-Geezer Market” is more ignored than the women’s market. Period.

Almost 80 million Boomers. The first turn 60 in 2 years. Tons of money. (Make that: Tons & Tons.) Not aging gracefully. Up for experiences. (Up for damn near anything, for that matter.) Long time left, given today’s life expectancies in developed countries. Add in Geezers ... and ... Kaching!!

And ... underserved. Astonishingly so. Why? “Old” is definitely not cool in America. Never has been. (Even among the old.)

Hence ... OPPORTUNITY is not “knocking.” It’s pounding on your door. Products. Services.

Experiences. Mass markets. Niche markets. International markets (Japan and Western Europe are getting older even faster than we are).

As I said: Think about it.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #10:

GET UP EARLIER THAN THE NEXT GUY.

Flying to Boston from London on Saturday morning. 7 hours. Professional woman sitting in front of me. I duly swear, she did not look up for 7 hours. She produced more on her laptop than I do in ... a week ... a month.

I'm not touting workaholism here.

I am stating the obvious.

She or he who works the hardest has one hell of an advantage.

She or he who is best prepared has one hell of an advantage.

She or he who is always "overprepared" has one hell of an advantage.

He or she who does the most research has one hell of an advantage.

I don't know about you, but I wouldn't have wanted to challenge "the women in the row in front" in whatever presentation venue she was approaching.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #11:

MBWA LIVES & RULES & IS UBIQUITOUS!

A commentary an October 2004 *Newsweek* by Jonathan Alter begins, “No wonder President Bush lost round one in Miami: He got rusty living in the bubble.”

Mr. Bush’s bubble is indeed airtight. But, reader-bosses, you’d be surprised (just as the President was apparently surprised), I’d vouch, at how little air gets into your bubble, too!

Which takes me back to 1982. My *In Search of Excellence* coauthor Bob Waterman and I were about to go on the *Today* show. We were practicing in Bob’s Manhattan hotel room. And we got into a tussle. Turns out we both most loved the same thing in the book—and both wanted to utter the words on national TV. Having no dueling pistols at hand (even though we were right across the river from where VP Burr had killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel), we flipped a coin. Bob won ... and I’m still frustrated 22 years later!

The bragging rights at stake? MBWA. Remember? Managing By Wandering Around. (Courtesy a much smaller, more intimate Hewlett-Packard.)

Well ...

Welcome to 2004. MBWA would have helped Pres Bush ... and it will help you. And the absence thereof will ... DOOM ... you.

The nice thing about MBWA is: “What you see is what you get.” The ... BIG IDEA ... is ... uh ... to ... WANDER AROUND. I.e., stay intimately in touch. I could go on for countless words (I have gone on in the past), but I’ll keep it simple here:

GET THE HELL OUT OF THE CUBE!

DESERT THE TERMINAL! (“Terminals are terminal”? Not all bad.)

CHAT UP ANYBODY WHOSE PATH YOU CROSS ... ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE NOT AMONG YOUR NORMAL CHATEES.

GO STROLLING IN PARTS OF THE ORG WHERE YOU NORMALLY DON'T STROLL.

SLOW DOWN. STOP. CHAT. (“Stop. Look. Listen.”—a shrink’s advice to me, courtesy railroad crossing lingo.)

NB: Email ... DOES NOT COUNT ... as “chat.” “Wander” = WANDER. One foot in front of the other.

Okay?

Extended Idea: *Wander Writ Large*. Put “wandering” on your permanent agenda! Consider: I was recently giving a speech to retailers. I had studied my butt off. Read a ton. Hung onto the Web for dear life. Phoned a dozen experts. My data was analyzed. My speech was locked into PPFinal status. I was in my hotel room in Chicago, at 3 p.m. On a lark, I decided to take a stroll. I’m not ordinarily much of a shopper, but this day I strolled the streets and “wandered” into shops, apparently aimlessly, for a little over two hours. Got back to my room. Unlocked my PPFinal. And started all over again. (Outcome: Speech was a roaring success.) I actually can’t tell you “precisely” what I gleaned on that 2-hour excursion-wander. I can tell you it “changed everything.” That is, I got “in the zone” re retailing; I physically inhabited my Client-of-tomorrow’s world ... and it infused almost every sentence of what I subsequently presented.

Message: I am a zealot. I SWEAR BY MBWA. In any and all circumstances. Wanna join me? One last tip-idea: “Aimless” “wandering” takes discipline! And one *truly last* digression: Mr. Bush

also serves us a reminder to “Mind your body language,” especially “when no one is looking.” Those “little” cutaways could have cost the Commander-in-Chief and World’s-Most-Powerful-Human dearly.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #12:

MICROMANAGE FIRST & LAST IMPRESSIONS!

First & Last impressions are your and my personal-career keys, and the keys to a company’s customer service report card. We both get that, of course. But: I don’t know about you, but I need ... *Constant Reminding*. For example, my wife rags on me semi-constantly for not looking people directly in the eye when I’m introduced. At first, I thought she was nuts, especially as I get paid sometimes to attend post-speech “G & G” (Grip & Grin) sessions with execs or top salespeople or key customers. But she’s right, I belatedly had to admit—I think it’s my soul-deep shyness. (No baloney; a lot of people who sparkle at a podium are withdrawn in more intimate settings—and vice versa.) Upshot: I’m working on it—and work it is; but worth it.

Back to the overall issue. Fox News’ and uber-spin doctor Roger Ailes claims I/you/we have ... 7 SECONDS ... to make a first impression. And he gives us this advice: *First*: “Amp up your attitude.” Some people radiate energy, some don’t. But the don’ts at least can square their shoulders, and pump themselves up a bit. (“Energy” is not to be confused with aggressiveness. Energy is, in my opinion—I don’t know about Roger—mostly seen in the eyes.) *Second rule per Ailes*: “Give your message a mission.” That is, if you’ve got something you want to get from the interaction ... STAY ON MESSAGE. President Bush gets some low scores on oral presentation—but one and all agree he is the all-time master of staying precisely on message. *Ailes #3*: “Recognize ‘face value.’” A “poker face” works well in poker—but is a disaster in more normal human interaction, including in professional settings. Call it “animation” or

“engagement” (my terms, not Ailes’); but it is different than raw energy; it’s something about being in the moment. And again, the idea is not to do jumping jacks—animation to me is mostly the intensity of concentration. (My wife—this time I think it’s a positive—claims my intensity of listening–concentration scares her half to death if it’s aimed her way. I wouldn’t know.) The “bottom line” here is more important than the specific points: PAY MINDFUL ATTENTION TO HOW YOU ENGAGE!! IT’S AS IMPORTANT AS “CONTENT”—LIKE IT OR NOT. (Idea: Imagine that Karl Rove and Karen Hughes were looking over your left and right shoulders respectively, as you approach an interaction. Think about what they’d be whispering in your ear right before ... contact.)

Organizationally, the notion is essentially the same. See the blog entry “Kindness Is Free,” 10.05.04, on www.tompeters.com that included kudos to Griffin Hospital. Griffin says the first impression begins with ... Driving Directions! Prospective patients are already in a tizzy; lousy directions will only fuel their angst—and reinforce the idea that they are not in charge of their circumstances. Winners like Griffin obsess on driving directions, signage, music choice for the lobby, etc., etc. Of course Disney, no surprise, is the quintessential player here. My simple advice: BEGINNINGS AND ENDS ARE OVERWHELMINGLY IMPORTANT—AND SURELY COUNT AS “STRATEGIC SUBSTANCE” IN ANY INTERCHANGE. Think through “B & Es” very carefully. Invest Time & Money & Training in “B & Es.” Hey: How about a new “C-level” job? Chief of Beginnings and Ends? Chief Start ’n Stop?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #13:**MAKE THIS DAY MATTER.**

If ... “My life is my message”(Gandhi) ...

Then ... what will you/I do today to clarify and amplify your/my message?

Choose wisely. (WHAT *IS* YOUR MESSAGE?)

Review (and report ... to yourself) at the end of the day.

Repeat.

Daily.

Forever.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #14:**READ (AND ACT ON) THESE THREE BOOKS ...**

I think 99 out of 100 self-help books offer prescriptions that are too good to be true—or require commitments that are implausible. But as to the 1 in 100, or 1,000: I think the following three (ALL METICULOUSLY RESEARCHED) self-help/how-to books are worth 100X their weight in gold—and are as good as Dale Carnegie’s *How to Win Friends and Influence People* and Napoleon Hill’s *Think and Grow Rich*.

Namely ...

GETTING TO YES ... Roger Fisher, William Ury, Bruce Patton.

LEARNED OPTIMISM ... Martin Seligman.

CRUCIAL CONFRONTATIONS ... Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler.

I avoid such books like the plague. HOWEVER: I HAVE BENEFITED ENORMOUSLY (personally & professionally) FROM EACH OF THESE THREE. They “fill a compelling need” ... AND ARE DO-ABLE!

NB: Each of these authors/co-authors has produced a consistent body of work—c.f., Seligman’s *Authentic Happiness*—that is worth the price of admission; I’ve simply chosen my fav of each lot.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #15:

YOU MUST BE ABLE TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION!

And the question is: **WHAT’S THE DREAM?**

Plan.

Vision.

Brand statement.

Animating idea.

Beliefs.

All 5 of these notions are important. (Very important.) But none compare with: WHAT'S THE DREAM?

Great Performances are the result of a DREAM. (And, to be sure, a helluva lot of hard work and good luck and ... and ...)

But “it” begins with and is sustained by a ... DREAM.

A DREAM is “required” for an Awesome Business Process Re-definition project. For a training course. For a Great Night (\$300 in tips) ... Waiting Tables.

I will go so far as to say that any dream-free project/performance will be less than memorable. “Efficient”? Quite possibly. “Useful”? Quite possibly. “Entertaining”? Quite possibly. But ... RATTLES THE EARTH? Not without the ... DREAM.

Can DREAMS be ... “worked on”?

Absolutely!

I give about 75 speeches a year. Each begins and ends with ... THE DREAM. I start by imagining myself in the conference room-auditorium a month hence, facing 60 or 6,000 people. I AM (I truly am!!) DESPERATE TO MAKE A MARK, LEAVE A MEMORABLE, STARTLING, UPLIFTING CALL TO ARMS BEHIND. I cogitate and meditate on ... THE DREAM. An image eventually begins to appear (based on a boatload of research and an eon of enforced intuitive reflection). As the image sharpens (THE DREAM), I work like the devil over the next several days or weeks on the details (95% of my effort). When I’m “finished,” I ask myself if the PowerPoint I’ve prepared as my skeleton ... Measures Up To The Dream? (And then I adjust and adjust and adjust ... and sometimes start over ... if The Dream has become blurred by too many “clever distractions.”) Finally, it’s a few minutes to show time. As I meditate back stage, I am working internally on only one thing: AM I CLEAR ON THE ... DREAM? IS THE DREAM CLEAR?

And it begins. NOW I MUST CONNECT!!! I must ... CONVEY THE DREAM ... one person at a time!!! ... even in that audience of 6,000. (Message: Dreams are “sold” retail, not wholesale. ONE-AT-A-TIME. UP-CLOSE-AND-PERSONAL. Aside: That includes Blogging?!)

So ... imagine your current project.

WHAT'S THE DREAM?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #16:

HAVE YOU SOUGHT CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FROM ... ONE CUSTOMER ... TODAY?

Never.

Ever.

Get Out Of Touch.

With Customers.

Easy to lose touch.

G.W. Bush.

Me.

You.

BigCo.

WeeCo.

Must not happen.

Stop.

Now.

Call a Customer.

Out of the Blue.

Ask (use these words): “How’s It Goin’?”

Listen.

LISTEN.

Take notes.

Meticulous.

(Record in Special Notebook.)

Follow-up.

FAST.

Repeat.

48-hours hence.

Hint: This applies to 100% of us. Not just “bosses.”

We.

All.

Have.

Customers.

Hey, tompeters.com Clients (Ye, the Beloved!) ...

How's It Goin'?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #17:

WORK ON YOUR STORY!

He/she who has the best story wins!

In life!

In business!

The White House!

Consider the following:

“A key—perhaps the key—to leadership
is the effective communication of a story.”

—Howard Gardner, *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership*

“Leaders don’t just make products and make decisions.
Leaders make meaning.”

—John Seely Brown, Xerox PARC

“Management has a lot to do with answers. Leadership is a function of questions. And the first question for a leader always is: ‘*Who do we intend to be?*’ Not ‘What are we going to do?’ but ‘Who do we intend to be?’”

—Max De Pree, Herman Miller

“The essence of American presidential leadership, and the secret of presidential success, is storytelling.”

—Evan Cornog, *The Power and the Story: How the Crafted Presidential Narrative Has Determined Political Success from George Washington to George W. Bush*

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

—Isabel Allende

“We are in the twilight of a society based on data. As information and intelligence become the domain of computers, society will place more value on the one human ability that cannot be automated: emotion. Imagination, myth, ritual—the language of emotion—will affect everything from our purchasing decisions to how we work with others. *Companies will thrive on the basis of their stories and myths.* Companies will need to understand that their products are less important than their stories.”

—Rolf Jensen, Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies

“The last few decades have belonged to a certain kind of person with a certain kind of mind—computer programmers who could crank code, lawyers who could craft contracts, MBAs who could crunch numbers. But the keys to the kingdom are changing hands. The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind—creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers and meaning makers. *These people—artists, inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers, consolers, big picture thinkers—will now reap society’s richest rewards and share its greatest joys.*”

—Dan Pink, *A Whole New Mind*

“In Denmark, eggs from free-range hens have conquered over 50 percent of the market. Consumers do not want hens to live their lives in small, confining cages. ... [They] are happy to pay an additional 15 to 20 percent ... for the story ... about animal ethics. This is what we call classic Dream Society logic. *Both kinds of eggs are similar in quality, but consumers prefer eggs with the better story.* ... After we debated the issue and stockpiled 50 other examples, the conclusion became evident: Stories and tales speak directly to the heart rather than the brain. In a century where society is marked by science and rationalism ... the stories and values ... return to the scene.”

—Rolf Jensen/*The Dream Society: How the Coming Shift from Information to Imagination Will Transform Your Business*

(FYI: Look on www.tompeters.com for a “Special Presentation”: “The Power Is the Story.”)

I have concluded that “the brand” is encompassed by “the story.” There is a slide in the Special Presentation that simply reads: Story > Brand.

Storytelling is a refined art. Maybe it comes naturally to your or my 79-year-old Grandpa, but it didn't/doesn't to me! I WORK LIKE HELL AT IT!

Do you ever make “presentations”?

I bet the answer is, “Yes.”

Well ... STOP.

NO MORE PRESENTATIONS.

EVER AGAIN.

I stopped years ago.

I NEVER GIVE PRESENTATIONS.

I DO ... for pay, no less ... TELL STORIES.

As I prepare I am conscious ... 100 PERCENT OF THE TIME ... of the evolving story, of the plot, the narrative that unfolds.

For example: Regardless of the intensity of the urging, I never submit my presentations ahead of time. That's because I rework them—keep refining the plot, the flow, the rhythm—until moments before I go on stage. I suspect that in the last few hours before a speech, I go through my “script” well over 100 times.

Your task—TODAY—is a short story.

Your current project is ... a story.

Your career is ... a story.

HE/SHE WHO HAS THE BEST STORY WINS!

SO ... WORK ON YOUR STORY!

MASTER THE ART OF STORYTELLING/STORYDOING/STORY PRESENTING!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #18:

“LUNCH MANAGEMENT”

We're all in sales! That's one of my recurrent themes. Or, to make it more personal: IF YOU CARE, YOU'RE IN SALES. That is, if your project Matters to you, if you have a Burning Urge to get it done ... then the Only Route is the ... Sales Route.

Which brings me to #18. I'm not begging you to become workaholics. (Whoops, maybe I inadvertently am. Since my work is my love, I'm a “Love-a-holic”—not a “workaholic”—when I spend another hour blogging. Right?) At any rate, Loveaholics–Workaholics–SalesFanatics ... DON'T WASTE A LUNCH! (Or, at least not many.)

Work is Love.

Work–Love implemented is Sales.

Sales is Relationships.

Relationships is ... LUNCH.

Clear enough, eh?

Consider each lunch an “at bat.” (Hey, it's playoff time.) Four workweeks at five days each (I'm going lite on you) adds up to 20 “at bats” each month.

20 opportunities to ... have lunch with your pals.

20 opportunities to start New Relationships.

20 opportunities to nurture Old Relationships.

20 opportunities to patch up Frayed Relationships

20 opportunities to “Take a Freak to Lunch”—and learn something new.

20 opportunities to test an idea with a potential Recruit–Alliance Partner.

20 opportunities to ... MAKE A SALE.

No, I’m hardly urging you to ignore your pals. And if you “used” all 20 monthly “opportunities” to the utmost I’d think you were over the top. (Or determined to become the next Donald Trump. Or President in 2016.) I do urge you to consider Lunches as a Precious Resource. Each lunch gone is gone for good ... or some such.

20 per month. 240 per year. To a Major Leaguer, each At Bat is Precious. To a Loveaholic ... committed to her–his project ... each lunch is equally Precious.

Agree?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #19:

ZEN & THE ART OF SPOON-BANGING CHANGE.

“Some people look for things that went wrong and try to fix them. I look for things that went right and try to build on them.”

—Bob Stone, Mr. ReGo

Bob Stone was Al Gore’s point man for reinventing government—hence the Mr. ReGo moniker. He got an amazing amount done in a short space of time. And in the process he rewrote the book on “corporate” change. (And he kindly wrote a book to explain what he’d done: *Polite Revolutionary: Lessons from an Uncivil Servant.*)

Bob, as I see it, was a Zen master, a Sumo wrestler—a Master of Indirection. (Ha! Maybe that would be an apt substitute for the ever-questionable MBA!?) He full well knew that he could not force change on the Federal bureaucracy; even the President rarely succeeds by frontal assault. And as a Pentagon refugee, he knew the silliness of producing ever-to-be-unread, always-to-be-ignored encyclopedic “White Papers” and fat manuals.

So he turned to the art of storytelling—and resurrected the always faithful “accentuate the positive.” Hence the Gospel According to Stone: “I look for things that went right and try to build on them.”

He knew there were astonishingly effective, renegade Civil Servants (Uncivil Servants?) dotting the landscape. The trick was to ferret them out, certify (via Mr. Gore) their heretofore shunned approaches, applaud them in public, cast their results in Monuments of Documentary Film ... and shame scores of others into following the lead of their obstreperous peers.

There’s much more to the tale—see Bob’s book, or my précis of it in Chapter 17 of *Re-imagine!* (“Boss Work: Heroes, Demos, Stories). The point here: I urge you to become ...

An organizational Zen master.

A sumo wrestler.

A Master of Indirection.

An “accentuator of the positive.”

Jill Ker Conway played the same game with matchless skill. Ms. Conway, though appointed as the first woman president of Smith College, found herself not only surrounded by skeptical tenured (mostly male!) profs, but also without budget to implement the very programs she needed to make her reign different from that of the feckless old boys who had preceded

her. Enter Zen. She nosed around the campus (like Stone) and discovered a robust Change Underground. She met with them, encouraged them—and urged them to begin the process proclaiming their views publicly. As to the absent money, she concocted the Mother of All End Runs. JKC became The Tireless Traveler. The hell with standard budgetary sources of bucks. There was a Change Overground of Smith Alumnae who were beside themselves with glee at the belated appointment of this first female prexy. She met and met and met some more—and cajoled and cajoled and cajoled. And soon had enough “external,” off-balance-sheet funding to Pilot (Demos again!) several programs that eventually became the hallmarks of her wildly successful term of office.

All hail the Sumo wrestler from Northampton, MA!

Message: Powerlessness is (mostly) a state of mind!

Message: With a dab of Zen here and a shudder of Sumo there ... Mountains Can Be Moved!

Message: We can all become Uncivil Servants!

Start today!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #20:

WORK, WORK, WORK ... TO CONNECT!

Always Make It Personal!

I gave 5 speeches last week, in 5 different countries–cultures. Watching (one can—*must*—learn to watch intently as one speaks!) audiences respond, I’ve re-learned a few lessons. None more important than ... CONNECT ... MAKE IT PERSONAL.

For one thing, I'm a nut about reading local papers, or chatting up anyone I can grab to get a flavor of what's afoot, or just hitting the pavement. So in Sweden, for example, I began by talking about my trip the day before to the giant local department store, NK, and shopping a long list foisted on me by my wife, who did 4 years of professional training in Sweden—in fact I described being on my cell phone to her, as she directed me around the store by memory from 3,000 miles away. (It didn't hurt that I called NK “the world's best department store”—which I think it is. Appreciating someone else's turf nabs mega-points! Duh!) (On the other hand, I've screwed up on this. I once offhandedly criticized a Tampa hotel I was staying in to a Tampa audience. My remarks were not perceived as generic “customer service lessons”—as I had intended; but as a frontal assault-insult aimed at Tampa, Florida, and each-and-every audience member!) In Germany, I played shamelessly to my German blood and my “Germanic” engineering background—and teased incessantly about the need for them, and me, to overcome some share of what we'd heretofore thought of as strengths (e.g., rigid adherence to the “one best way”). In Italy, I showed up in a gorgeous Italian shirt and tie, purchased the afternoon before, joked about the price—and then tied the whole thing to my spiel on design and new approaches to value-added.

Bottom line: A speaker is always ... even in a 10-minute interchange ... attempting first-and-foremost to form a common heritage with the audience. Any speaker worth her or his salt wants to move an audience to act. That is only accomplished, in my experience, when “they” are converted into “we.” WE ... are confronted with this challenge or that. WE ... must get beyond the places we are ... JOINTLY ... stuck in today. WE ... are frail and battered ... but ... WE ... must act with dispatch. And so on.

For George Bush or John Kerry or me—in-Frankfurt ... it's all about ... Making Common Cause! The argument may be airtight, the data unassailable, but if it's not ... UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL AND “SOLD” AS A JOINT CHALLENGE ... AND OBVIOUSLY FROM THE HEART ... then it is perceived, especially in another culture, as an ... Assault By a Thoughtless Stranger!

BTW: To state the obvious, the tougher the sell (and mine are pretty tough ... as in “forget everything you thought you knew and that made you successful”) ... the Tighter the Human Bond must be!

BTW: This is hard, conscious work!

And, on a related subject ...

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #21:

IT'S ... SHOW TIME! ALL THE TIME!

Joe Pine and Jim Gilmore gave us the Great Gift ... the book *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theater & Every Business a Stage*. OH HOW I LOVE THAT TITLE! As well as the Fundamental Hypothesis: “EXPERIENCES ARE AS DISTINCT FROM SERVICES AS SERVICES ARE FROM GOODS.”

Or, in TP lingo: IT'S ALWAYS SHOWTIME!

“Showtime” =

Every speech!

Every PowerPoint presentation!

Every individual slide!

Every Client phone call!

EVERY INTERCHANGE WITH A “FOURTH-LEVEL” CLIENT “ADMIN ASSISTANT” ... who may make a negative (or positive!) comment to her boss's boss (who signs my check!) about an off-the-cuff comment I hastily made.

Every employee interaction ... especially when I'm stressed and/or grouchy.

Every Post at tompeters.com!

Every 7(!)-second eye contact with someone who asks me to sign a book!

And so on.

And on.

Am I hopelessly uptight about all this?

Sure. (Why do you think I revise the font-choice on a single slide 15 minutes before an A/V check?)

But no, too; "it" (being on) has become a way of life, as natural as breathing. (My beloved wife says it takes me 2 or 3 days, after I've been on the road, to quit "preaching to 4,000 people.")

Is this "no way to live"?

Hell, no!

I love it!

I love what I do. (Remember ... Love-a-holic!)

I am ... Desperate to ... Make a Difference!

I hope you are too.

SHOW TIME ... ALL THE TIME ... is Very Cool!

NB: "Experiences" are as distinct from "services" as services are from "goods"!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #22:

A “MISSION STATEMENT” THAT MATTERS!

I hate “mission statements.”

Or “vision & values” statements.

Especially when they appear on plasticized cards.

Why?

I totally support the notion of the importance of ... Clear Values. (Hey, Bob Waterman and I practically invented the whole thing via *In Search of Excellence*, 22 years ago.) Like all good things, the idea has been attenuated beyond recognition. A Tepid Top Team goes “offsite,” to someplace warm in February, produces 6 insipid statements that (1) differentiate them/the company from no one; and (2) they have no clue as to what it really means to live up to these statements, assuming they were serious in the first place, and not just following the herd. (No one has absorbed Gandhi’s “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”) Then they (3) return home, have their gin-soaked “gem” immortalized in plastic ... and hand it out ceremoniously to 20,000 of the Unwashed as Holy Writ.

Yuck!

But all that’s changed ... for me!

In a flash!

Now I’m a fan!

Bring on the plastic!

I was at a WooWoo resort last week in (Warm Place), giving a speech. Got up, as usual, at 4:00 a.m. Alas, room service not open 'til 6 a.m.—pretty crappy, but I can't expect everyone to share my strange habits. So at 6 a.m. sharp (6:04, actually ... I took note) I call and place my complex order: a pot of tea. (Period.) I'm told it will be “about 30–40 minutes.” I think to myself it's outrageous, but I hold my tongue. (I want—NEED!—the tea.) Some 45 minutes later ... NO TEA. I call room “service” ... and ... IT HAPPENS!

The guy says he's sorry but ...

But ... “IT'S NOT MY FAULT.”

(You know, the Gremlin stole the teapot, we're outta hot water in Arizona, or some such.)
(That's when I ... lost it ... and no amount of “right breathing” helped in the least.)

But ... IT WAS A GOOD THING!

Now I—finally!—realized I'd “seen” (it was almost religious) an inkling of a “mission statement” I could imagine & live with & publish & plasticize & champion!

I immediately put it on a slide, and used it to tee off my remarks a few hours later ... to vigorous applause.

Herewith the “slide”/idea/Supreme Mission:

XYZ Corp: Complete Vision & Values & Mission & USP Statement
Any Service or Product is yours
for absolutely NO CHARGE
if any employee
including the CEO
ever says or implies
at any point ...
“It's Not My Fault.”

– V. Big Cheese, Founder, CEO & Dictator

If we could flatly & finally eliminate “It’s not my fault” from the explicit or implicit vocabulary (“life style”) of room service clerks—and CEOs!—many of the world’s woes would be instantly righted.

If ... ACCOUNTABILITY ... and ... SELF-RESPONSIBILITY ... were our routine practice, well, how fabulous! How effective! How profitable!

So I invite you (Way to Succeed #22, remember) to fully adopt for yourself and your tiny or huge enterprise, temporary or permanent, my ... COMPLETE VISION & VALUES & MISSION & USP STATEMENT!

Eh???

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #23:

DESIGN MEANS YOU!

Sure, “design” means DHL spending Gazillion\$\$\$\$ on ... YELLOW. IT’S THE NEW BROWN.

But that’s not all.

Design means ... me obsessing on line breaks and “...”s in the presentation of this Blog.

Design means ... me ... at age 61 and somewhat successful ... going through more than 25 drafts of a mere update of my Official Bio ... that will be circulated to Clients for the next several months.

Design means ... me worrying equally about presentation style as content ... 365/6 days-per-year.

Design means ... my abandoning a Great Publisher (Knopf) to go to Dorling Kindersley so I could get the sort of design treatment for my books (e.g., *Re-imagine!*) that added up to Marshall McLuhan's famous "The medium is the message."

Design means ... that every action I take is Consciously Mediated by my implicit-explicit "design filter": That is ... HOW DOES THIS COME ACROSS? COULD IT BE CLEARER? CRISPER? MORE EXCITING?

(My last Client ... London Drugs ... "got it." The president told me that my goal/minimum success standard was to "make the audience gasp." Nice, eh?)

I "am" design!

It works for me.

I invite you aboard!

It's a daunting journey ... and an exciting one.

It's near the Heart of the Matter in a BrandYou World.

(Hint: We live in a BrandYou World ... like it or not.)

You = Desire to Survive = BrandYou = Branding Fanatic = LoveMark Fanatic (thanks, Kevin Roberts) = Design Fanatic.

Q.E.D.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #24:

AGENDA-NOTETAKER-NOTES PUBLISHER "SPIN" POWER!

He/She who writes the Agenda and Summary Doc (innocently called “Meeting Notes”) wields ... Incredible Power!

Believe it!

The question is innocent, “What should we cover at the Weekly Review Meeting?” The response is not. The “agenda” is in and of itself a Group “To-Do” list. (More important than any pretentious “strategic plan.”) And: A “To-Don’t” list. (What’s left off ... to the Supreme Annoyance of many Power Players.) Moreover, some stuff will be at the Top ... some at the bottom (and probably won’t get covered, or be given short shrift). Hence a “mere” agenda Establishes & Determines the Group Conversation for, say, the week, or even the Quarter. And ... the lovely catch ... concocting the Agenda by soliciting members is typically a “crappy task,” unwanted by one and (almost) all.

My message: **GRAB IT!**

(And chortle as you do.)

Of at least as much importance is the grubby-demeaning “Notetaker” (and Publisher thereof) task. Talk about ... UNVARNISHED POWER! Everybody is so damn busy preening, interrupting, bullheadedly pushing their pet peeve, etc ... that they seldom hear what actually goes on. Only the meek & quiet Notetaker knows the story; and long after the participants have washed the memory of the meeting clean from their crowded lives, the Notetaker’s Summary comes along explaining what transpired ... Carefully Edited.

You get my drift, I presume. The “powerless” soul who agrees to “develop the agenda,” “take the notes,” and “publish the notes” ... may just be the ... TRUE POWER PLAYER!

(I believe this so strongly and fear it so greatly that I religiously publish my own version of notes, in summary form (never more than 4 or 5 lines), within minutes of the end of a meet-

ing—just to try and co-opt the damned notetaker. I call it ... Spin!)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #25:

HUSTLE!

Hustle!

Noticeably!

Now!

And evermore!

(Msg: Hustle begets hustle! And, of course, the converse. Duh.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #26:

HIRE SUNNY! FIRE GLOOMY! Q.E.D.

Hire/Promote those with ... Sunny Dispositions.

Fire those with perpetually ... Gloomy Dispositions.

(Hint: The farther Up the Organization you go, the more important this gets.)

(Rule: Leaders are not permitted to have “bad days” ... especially on Bad Days!)

(Rule: One Sad Dog can Infect a group of 100.)

(Rule: One Energetic, Optimistic, Sunny Soul can motivate an Army to Move a Mountain.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #27:

OUT-STUDY THE BASTIDS!

Tennis coach Brad Gilbert was once the #4 ranked pro in the world. He was not a natural. His breakthrough, after a very spotty career about to tank, came when he acknowledged to himself that he wasn't a natural. His response could have been to turn in his racquet. Instead it was to hit the books. Or, rather, write one.

Gilbert was the guy, who when the other guys went for a beer after a match, hung around watching more matches, talking tennis with anyone and everyone ... and writing it all down. He began his black book, and took notes on everything, especially other players he'd faced, or might face. The result: that eventual #4 ranking, and then a superb coaching career, working with the likes of Andre Agassi and Andy Roddick.

No surprise, one of Gilbert's coaching secrets is continuing his own studies, as well as converting his players into Students (sometimes no mean feat with those "naturals"). Coach Gilbert acknowledges that there may well be a few, like John McEnroe, who can get away without hitting the books ... but for us mortals that's scant consolation.

Needless to say, all this translates one-for-one, to the World of Work you and I participate in. I loved the line from *New York Times* columnist Tom Friedman: "When I was growing up, my parents used to say to me: 'Finish your dinner—people in China are starving.' I, by contrast, find myself wanting to say to my daughters: 'Finish your homework—people in China and India are starving for your job.'" Age 12, 22, or 62 ... tennis or finance or engineering ... this "simple" lesson bears repeating.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #28:

REMARKABLE POINT OF VIEW/R.POV8!

I suppose I've said this before, but I'm willing to suffer the charge of repetition. I've just finished seminars with 500 law partners, then a couple of hundred investment bankers. The people I addressed are what I call "scary smart." And they've missed some kids' soccer games ... that is, 12-hour days are the norm. But "talent" and outrageously hard work are not enough! Why? Because there are a lot of talented people around who work long days.

So what's the secret-differentiator? Marketing guru Seth Godin said, "If you can't describe your position in eight words or less, you don't have a position." I choose to interpret this not as a "marketing tip," but as a profound statement. I spent my two seminars hammering on "Remarkable Point Of View" ... or R.POV. Or, stealing from Seth, R.POV8 ... a Remarkable Point Of View ... captured in 8 words or less.

Seth, however, must make room for Jerry Garcia: "You do not merely want to be the best of the best. You want to be considered the only ones who do what you do." And for founder Tom Chappell, of Tom's of Maine: "Success means never letting the competition define you. Instead, you have to define yourself based on a point of view you care deeply about."

The problem: Developing, maintaining, and refreshing a R.POV is excruciatingly difficult. I'll leave that to later; right now my point is simply to insist that smarts and hard work, even effective hard work, is not enough. The query that must never be far from your consciousness: IS WHAT I'M UP TO REMARKABLY DIFFERENT, AND CAN IT BE CAPTURED IN SIMPLE, COMPELLING LANGUAGE?

What we're talking about here may explain in part John Kerry's loss. A few weeks before the election, a *Washington Post* analyst, Kenneth Baer, penned: "To win this race, Kerry needs to stop focusing on Election Day and start thinking about his would-be presidency's last day.

What does he want his legacy to be? When sixth-graders in the year 2108 read about the Kerry presidency, what does he want the one or two sentences that accompany his photo to say?"

Presumably those two sentences would have maxed out at eight words!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #29:

GET THE STORY!

Everybody has a story! It's your job-opportunity ... consultant, boss, project-peer ... to get it!

In her remarkable book *Respect*, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot wrote: "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."

Likewise, in London I was driven around by a fellow who sometimes drives Richard Branson. Branson is famous, among other things, for his hundreds (literally) of notebooks in which he meticulously records what he hears from Virgin clients, and damn near anyone else he buttonholes. This driver confirmed Sir R's habit, and said a trip with RB is non-stop conversation about the world as seen through the driver's eyes. "He bloody well interviewed me, for 90 minutes, non-stop," this chap said with clear admiration, "as we crawled to town from Gatwick." There was nothing or no one beneath RB's abiding, compulsive interest. As we chatted, the driver (himself a Richard) allowed as how "the whole bit made me feel as though I had something important to say."

Message/s:

The Driver/Richard II *did* have something to say!
(AXIOM: EVERYBODY HAS A STORY, DESPERATE TO ESCAPE!)

The Driver/Richard II *is* important!
(AXIOM: CONNECT!)

Richard I /Branson doubtless learned a thing or seven, duly recorded.
(AXIOM: JUST ASK!)

Richard I/Branson made a friend–informant–confidante for life!
(AXIOM: GET A STORY, MAKE A FRIEND.)

Richard II/driver will pass on the story of Richard I/Branson to 100, if not 1,000 people ...
 and thus willfully extend the brand–enhancing mythology surrounding Richard I/Branson.
(AXIOM: CONNECT, JUST ASK, GET A STORY, MAKE A FRIEND, CREATE A “BUZZ-GENERATOR.”)

All because Sir Richard was determined to ... Connect & Get the Story!

So ... Get the Story!

(And, if you're wise and of a mind, take pages from RB and record it as well. Someday, you may be on notebook #600—about RB's tally, I'm told—and counting your Billions.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #30:

GET CHINA ON YOUR MIND!

Read up on China.

Read books.

Troll the Web.

Talk to people about China.

Initiate a China Study Group.

Ponder China.

Visit China.

Make China “meditation” part of your day’s ritual.

This applies whatever you’re about. This is not a “call to action” so much as a “call to awareness.” Ignorance about China (India) (Asia) is ... simply ... NOT ACCEPTABLE.

Hint (per me):

China is not a “problem.”

China is not a “threat.”

China may not be an “opportunity.”

China is a Reality ... a Part of Our Lives. (Period.)

Act accordingly.

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #31:**BETTER WORLD, BETTER BUSINESS!**

Most acts of conservation save money rather than cost more. (Just ask 3M about its 3Ps: Pollution Prevention Pays.) See the blog entry “Tip of the Hat,” 11.29.04, on <http://www.tompeters.com> about hotel water conservation in Arizona.

Conservation is everybody’s business. The Great News: Conservation is not only everybody’s business, it’s good business ... helping the world, helping the bottom line, making you a more attractive place to work, and scoring community citizenship points all at once. Some deal!

So, become a Conservation Champion ... and Bolster the Bottom Line along the way!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #32:**MIMIC LORD NELSON!**

Another book about Horatio Nelson? I’ve read 10, and assumed I didn’t need another. But as I wiled away the time in Heathrow, I thumbed through a new one, Andrew Lambert’s *Nelson: Britannia’s God of War*. It looked fabulous; and, incidentally, I was to give a speech on Leadership in Dubai 48 hours hence. So I made the purchase, devoured the book during the subsequent 6-hour flight ... extracted 13 Lessons ... and devised this Success Tip #32: Mimic Lord Nelson.

Of course it’s far easier said than done! Still, aim high! Try to compass as many of the Nelsonian Traits as possible!* (*Maybe you’ll have your own Square—as in Trafalgar—someday!)

- 1.** Simple scheme.
- 2.** Noble purpose!
- 3.** Engage others.
- 4.** Find great talent, let it soar!
- 5.** Lead by Love!
- 6.** Trust your gut, not the focus group: Seize the Moment!
- 7.** Vigor!
- 8.** Master your craft.
- 9.** Work harder than the next person.
- 10.** Show the way, walk the talk, exude confidence! Start a Passion Epidemic!
- 11.** Change the rules: Create your own game!
- 12.** Shake of the pain, get back up off the ground, the timing may well be right tomorrow!
- 13.** By hook or by crook, quash your fear of failure, savor your quirkiness and participate fully in the fray!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #33:

OUT-READ 'EM!

Read!

Read Wide!

Read Deep!

Read Often!

Surprise Yourself With Your Reading Picks!

Out-READ the “Competition”!

Take Notes!

Summarize!

Share With Others What You Read!*

(*Not to impress them, but to practice what you’ve learned.)

Create/Join A Reading Salon!

Cultivate A Learning-Curiosity ADDICTION.

Read!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #34:

MAKE 2005 “PLAYTECH YEAR”

Regardless of what you “do for a living” promise yourself to “play” with technology this year. We had a lovely session at our ManchesterSummit, introducing one and all to Blogging. (Thanks, Halley Suitt!)

DO YOU BLOG?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #35:

LOVEMARK OR BUST!

1. Enjoy your Holiday Season!
2. Between now and 1JAN2005, invent 10 actions, solo or with pals, to Launch Your “Lovemark Journey2005.”
3. A. Focus directly—Architect or Lawyer or Realtor—on the following “KRWs”/Kevin Roberts Words: Mystery ... Magic ... Sensuality ... Enchantment ... Intimacy ... Exploration.
B. The words in #3a above Do Apply to You!
4. Develop a “No Bull” Action Schedule that includes 2 Hard First Steps by 10JAN05, 5 Hard First Steps by 01FEB05.
5. Report back to our Website, <http://www.tompeters.com>.

Pronunciamento: I HEREBY DESIGNATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POWERS GRANTED TO ME (the Inalienable Right To Blog) THAT 2005 IS PROCLAIMED AS “THE YEAR OF THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE LOVEMARK.”

Welcome aboard!

NB: Can we start a Continuing Dialogue around ... Becoming A Lovemark?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #36:

DO YOUR PART, BOYS!

Males: TAKE PLEDGE2005!

I PLEDGE ... THAT I WILL NEVER ENGAGE IN ANY SORT OF DISCUSSION OF PRODUCTS–SERVICES–EXPERIENCES THAT INCLUDE WOMEN AS CUSTOMERS–CLIENTS, UNLESS ONE THIRD OR MORE OF THOSE PRESENT AND IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY ARE WOMEN. IN SUCH SETTINGS, **I PLEDGE** ... THAT I WILL WORK TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE THAT WOMEN’S VIEWS ARE HEARD FIRST & LAST AND ARE CLEARLY INCORPORATED IN A COMMANDING WAY IN ACTION PLANS. **I PLEDGE** ... THAT I WILL NOT SIGN OFF ON AN INITIATIVE AIMED PRIMARILY AT WOMEN UNLESS WOMEN ARE ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY IN AGREEMENT. **I FURTHER PLEDGE** ... THAT I WILL BECOME A “PIONEER” IN GETTING WOMEN–CENTRIC VIEWS CLEARLY INTO THE MAINSTREAM.

Any takers?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #37:

TO LIVE IS THE RAREST THING IN THE WORLD

“Nobody can prevent you from choosing to be exceptional.”

—Mark Sanborn, *The Fred Factor*

Call this Success Tip #37, and NYResolution2005 #1.

Okay?

(Hint: I have tried using this as a Right Breathing **Mantra: NOBODY CAN PREVENT ME FROM BEING EXCEPTIONAL**. It works wonderfully.)* (*And is still worth repeating at age 62.)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #38:

RE-VISIT/RE-IMAGINE YOUR VA PROPOSITION.

Due date: 15 January.

Hyundai. Home Depot. *BRANDsense* (*BRANDsense: Build Powerful Brands through Touch, Taste, Smell, Sight, and Sound*, by renowned futurist Martin Lindstrom). And another wonderful little manuscript-book I received, *BEYOND CODE*, by Rajesh Setty. Mr Setty, founder of the IT services firm CIGNEX Technologies (and a published novelist at age 13), makes an impassioned plea for each & every IT professional to pursue dramatic difference in his or her approach to projects and career. Hence *my* “demand”: Before you tear off (electronically erase, no doubt) 2005 calendar page January 15 ... *mercilessly* (alone or with one or two close pals and/or, say, a Client) examine–challenge–evaluate your Value–added Proposition. Is it ... Compelling? Does it represent ... Dramatic Difference? And remember: “If you can’t describe

your position in eight words or less, you don't have a position"—Seth Godin. (Time Inc. CEO Ann Moore is even tougher: "I make all the launch teams tell me what the [new] magazine's about in five [!!] words or less. You cannot run alongside millions of consumers and explain what you mean. It forces some discipline on you.")

A paragraph.

8 words.

5 words.

By 15JAN.

Dramatic Difference.

Okay?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #39:

BLOG AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT!

Blogging, I firmly believe, is the premier emergent marketing-brandbuilding-lovemark-creating tool of our times! It is the premier way to have intimate-engaging-informative-WOWing "conversations" with Clients and prospects! This all goes double for small enterprises and niche enterprises; and goes triple for the Professional Services; and works wonders in the Public Sector as well.

Do you see Blogging in these exalted lights? If not, why not? Please ... Blog-As-If-Your-Professional-Success-Depended-On-It. (Hint: I think it does.)

Begin today! Appoint yourself Chief Blogging officer. Or, better yet, Chief Intimate Client Conversations Officer!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #40:

“EXPERIENCE-TO-DIE-FOR!” OR BUST!

There is Excellence outside the NFL. And Service Excellence in 2005! Three TP Awards: Susan & I, part-time Bostonians these days, shopped Saturday at **Whole Foods Market/Boston**. WOW! Food ... AWESOME. Presentation ... AWESOME. Staff Attitude & Knowledge ... AWESOME. “Last Impression” (help with bags in an urban setting) ... AWESOME. Talk about “Experience Marketing” ... “Dream Merchants” ... “Lovemark”! These guys top Starbucks by a mile in my book! Next up: **Apple Store CambridgeSide**. What a show! The “product,” of course, is ... AWESOME. The ambience is ... AWESOME. The Staff Attentiveness & EXPERTISE & Teaching Skill are ... AWESOME. And on the Experience Front, Apple runs a blizzard of Cool Activities. (That Saturday, for instance: 9–10 a.m., “Getting Started Workshop;” 1–1:30 p.m., “iLife ’04 Presentation;” 3–3:30 p.m., “iPod & iTunes Presentation;” 5–5:30 p.m., “GarageBand Presentation.” On weekday evenings there are often advanced presentations.) Finally, another nod to my 2004MVP, **Commerce Bank** (see www.commerceonline.com); my colleague Ilene Fisher hung out at a Commerce call center last week ... trust me, it ain’t your father’s call center! Staffers are not measured on length of calls—they’re encouraged to spend all the time they need with Clients. There are no voice messages or menus—all Clients are directly handled by Human Beings all-the-time ... and yet the response time is an average of 16 seconds, half that of the industry. All this lavish service, and they manage to grow almost 50% a year ... organically! (Oh yes, and their use of “WOW!” makes me look like a little leaguer!)

I’m VERY VERY BIG (as you know) on the DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE between “service” and “experience.” These 3 exemplars are Grand Testimony to that ... DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE!!

Does your “service offering”—no matter what your environment or “degree of empowerment”—match the Whole Foods–Apple–Commerce “DD [Dramatic Difference] Experience

Standard”?

Please discuss today with a friend the parameters of your “experience provided.”

Please take one baby-step tomorrow to improve your “experience provided.”

Repeat ... FOREVER.

(Oh yes ... and use the term DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE. P-L-E-A-S-E!)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #41:

PLAN-MANAGE “LAST IMPRESSIONS-EXPERIENCES” AGGRESSIVELY!

Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman (a psychologist who won the Economics Nobel) tells us, as reported in the February 2005 issue of *Psychology Today*, that our memories are very selective. In particular, no matter how extended an event (party, commercial transaction), we form our view and make our evaluation based—with dramatic skew—on the “most intense moments” & the “final moments.”

The idea here is the opposite of “no screw ups.” Of course we don’t want, per the above, anything to “go wrong” at the Experience Exit Stage. More important, we want something ... **MEMORABLE, COMPELLING, EMOTIONAL** ... to be our Planned Exit Strategy. The way, say, the Doc walks the Patient to the door (rather than pointing distractedly to the Billing Desk, while simultaneously picking up the next Patient’s folder) is the Determining Factor in the Patient’s Impression ... more, actually, than a good or bad diagnosis.

So ... WORK ON IT ... ASSIDUOUSLY!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #42:

IS IT “GASP-WORTHY”?

Will your plan for addressing today’s “mundane” task make other’s “gasp” at its audacity? If not, re-do?!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #43:

HIRE USING THE “EYE-SPARKLE FACTOR”!

Some people’s eyes have an engaging, infectious “sparkle.” Some don’t. Hire [only?] those “have it”?

I was lecturing on “talent selection”—and the use of unconventional measures for so doing. At a break I made the following comment to a youthful Participant: “Suppose you & I were opening the restaurant of our dreams. We’d both put in \$75,000 ... effectively our life’s savings. We were “betting the farm.” We had a great idea, a very good location, a terrific chef. Now the time had come to hire waiters & waitresses. Numerous applicants had satisfactory+ “restaurant experience,” but several didn’t. One young woman [man] in particular was a rank amateur—but had the most compelling “sparkle” in her/his eye. How would that “sparkle” rank in your hire—no hire consideration? No great surprise, we both agreed, despite a 30-year experience differential, that the “sparkle” pretty much ruled. (Or some like measures—e.g., hustle, enthusiasm.) Fact is, the Participant in question ran a 40-person bit of an IS/IT department. And my real goal was to urge her to use the “eye-sparkle Factor” in IS/IT hiring almost to the same degree as in “our” choice of a waiter/waitress!

HR. IS/IT. Finance. Engineering. No matter. Hire for “eye sparkle”! Believe it!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #44:

HIPNESS!

“Hipness is the only asset that matters.”

—Paul Saffo, futurist, on Apple

Are you ... Hip? If not, what ... EXACTLY ... do you plan to do about it?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #45:

VOICE MESSAGE MANIA!

In an email, my partners at Better Life Media provided this tip:

“Fix your voice message now! If you claim to be different from your competition, a GREAT place to start is your recorded message.”

—Jeffery Gitomer, *The Little Red Book of Selling*.

(Hey, I also love the book!)

How Cool-Different is your Voice Message?

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #46:

MELDED TO YOUR CLIENT!

Are you “one with your client”? To succeed—make a Dramatic Difference—you must be. Answer, if this sounds “too much”: You must find *something* to do that you ... LOVE. If you are “in love,” then the odds go ... WAY ... up that you’ll be “as one” with your Client/s.

(Hmmm. Is there Something above “Lovemark”? Namely, “as one with”?)

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #47:

JUST DRILL!

Was on the treadmill yesterday. (Hey, it was -5F outside.) My straining eye caught the cover of a book I’d surveyed for *In Search of Excellence*; it’s *The Hunters*, by John Masters, a successful Canadian O & G wildcatter. Here are some of the excerpts I underlined 25 years ago:

“This is so simple it sounds stupid, but it is amazing how few oil people really understand that you only find oil if you drill wells. You may think you’re finding it when you’re drawing maps and studying logs, but you have to drill.”

NB: BUT YOU HAVE TO DRILL!

“I don’t know what it is that makes an oil finder. But while I can’t define it, I can generally recognize it when I see it. *Mostly, it’s attitude. Focus. Intensity.* It seems to be associated with a fierce desire to know everything, to rub your nose in every piece of information. And yet there is a playfulness about the expert finders. A sense of fun. Beware of the too serious man.”

“A really new idea at first has only one believer.”

(Selfishly, I cherish the book's inscription that I also reread, "To Tom Peters, who knows all about these ideas of how to make a company work." Thanks, John. Wow!)

Drill more wells than the next guy!

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #48:

"PLAYFUL" RULES!

Beware the "too serious man [woman]."

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #49:

FREAKS RULE!

Listen to the "one believer."

100 WAYS TO SUCCEED #50:

FLOWER POWER RULES!

On an entirely different note, there are many reasons I love the Four Seasons hotels. One, not so small, is ... Flower Power! The floral displays are mind boggling! Glorious! Imaginative! A Big Deal! (And I'm usually immune to such stuff.) In Chicago. Lisbon. And in Bangkok. I think that even in a "big business" like Issy Sharp's (Four Seasons CEO), Flower Power can truly be a Lovemark Anchor!

Law firm, hotel, IS department ... make Flower Power a ... **Main Event & Incredible Distinction** ... in your Pursuit of Lovemark status! (Trust me: it's a Big Deal!)

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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’ 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.

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| Full screen/Normal screen view | [CTL] [L] | [⌘] [L] |

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