

1/47: Action Rules! The **1** Thing (Only) I've Learned (For Sure) in **47** Years!

A Bias for Action. (No. 1/"Basics of Excellence"/*In Search of Excellence*/1982)

Ready. Fire. Aim.

(H. Ross Perot on EDS; as compared to GM's "Ready. Aim. Aim. Aim. Aim. Aim. Aim. ...")

Just do it! (Nike.)

Move fast, break things. (Facebook.)

Experiment fearlessly. (Trait #1/Great innovator companies/*Bloomberg Businessweek*)

Relentless trial and error. (Corporate Survival Trait #1 in crazy times/*Wall Street Journal*)

"You miss 100% of the shots you never take." (Wayne Gretzky.)

Fail. Forward. Fast. (Tech exec/Philadelphia)

CAN YOUR BUSINESS FAIL FAST ENOUGH TO SUCCEED? (*Economist* conf. title)

Fail faster, succeed sooner. (David Kelley/IDEO.)

No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better. (Samuel Beckett)

Reward excellent failures. Punish mediocre successes. (Phil Daniels/Australian businessman)

Whoever Makes the Most Mistakes Wins. (Richard Farson/book title)

"The Silicon Valley of today is built less atop the spires of earlier triumphs than upon the rubble of earlier debacles." (Paul Saffo/tech futurist/Palo Alto)

"The secret of fast progress is *inefficiency*: fast/furious/numerous failures." (K. Kelly)

S.A.V./Screw Around Vigorously (TP: only possible success strategy for crazy times)

Demo or die.

(MIT Media Lab credo)

"Don't 'plan.' Do stuff." (David Kelley/IDEO)

"Effective prototyping may be the most valuable core competence an innovative organization can hope to have."/"Minimize 'mean time to prototype.'" (M. Schrage/MIT)

"This is so simple it sounds stupid. You only find oil if you drill wells." (J. Masters/wildcatter)

"We have a 'strategic plan.' It's called 'doing things.'" (Herb Kelleher/Southwest Airlines)

"Can do!"

(Motto/U.S. Navy Seabees/My starting point in 1966 in Vietnam)

"Execution is strategy." (Fred Malek)

WD40 (Water Displacement, 40 tries to get it right.)

BLAME NO ONE. EXPECT NOTHING. DO

SOMETHING. (NFL coach Bill Parcells/locker-room poster)

"Quality is a probabilistic function of quantity." (M. Gladwell/"Creation Myth"/re J.S. Bach)

"Ever notice that '*What the hell*' is always the right decision?" (Anon. screenwriter)

W.T.T.M.S.W.

./Whoever Tries The Most Stuff Wins.

WTTMSASTMSUW/Whoever Tries The Most Stuff And Screws The Most Stuff Up Wins.

WTTMSASTMSUTFW/Whoever Tries The Most Stuff And Screws The Most Stuff Up The Fastest Wins.

**Ready.
Fire.
Aim.**

H. Ross Perot/EDS founder, former GM board member *“The first EDSer to see a snake kills it. At GM, the first thing you do is organize a committee on snakes. Then you bring in a consultant who knows a lot about snakes. Third thing you do is talk about it for a year.”*

“We made mistakes, of course. Most of them were omissions we didn’t think of when we initially wrote the software. We fixed them by doing it over and over, again and again. We do the same today. While our competitors are still sucking their thumbs trying to make the design perfect, we’re already on prototype version #5. By the time our rivals are ready with wires and screws, we are on version #10. It gets back to planning versus acting: We act from day one; others plan how to plan— for months.” —Bloomberg by Bloomberg

“When assessing candidates, the first thing I looked for was energy and enthusiasm for execution. Does she talk about the thrill of getting things done, the obstacles overcome, the role her people played—or does she keep wandering back to strategy or philosophy?”

—Larry Bossidy, from *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*

**A man approached J.P. Morgan, held up an envelope, and said,
“Sir, in my hand I hold a guaranteed formula for success, which
I will gladly sell you for \$25,000.”**

**“Sir,” J.P. Morgan replied, “I do not know what is in the envelope,
however if you show me, and I like it, I give you my word as a gentleman
that I will pay you what you ask.”**

**The man agreed to the terms, and handed over the envelope.
J.P. Morgan opened it, and extracted a single sheet of paper.
He gave it one look, a mere glance, then handed the piece of paper back
to the gent.**

**And paid him the
agreed-upon \$25,000 ...**

The formula:

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

2. *Do them.*

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