

## “What have you done this year?”\*

### TAKE #1

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

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

**It’s scary!**

**It’s cool!**

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

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

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

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

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

\*Question from Jessica Sutherland, head of IIR Middle East, to Tom Peters ... Dubai ... 18 September 2005.

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

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

**Value-added Challenge 2005+:**

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

**Dare to fend off encroaching ... IRRELEVANCE.**

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

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

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

**[Successful people are those who are good at "Plan B."]  
MAKE IT UP AS YOU GO ALONG.  
MAKE IT "DIFFERENT."  
[NOT MERELY "BETTER. "]\*]  
[\*I repeat myself. It's intentional.]**

**YES: THIS IS SO COOL IT MAKES ME QUIVER.  
"COOL" IS IN.  
[My personal goal ... day in and day out: MAKE 'EM GASP.  
GASP-WORTHY ... or Bust..**

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

**“BUTTONED DOWN” IS TOAST.**

**EMBRACE FREAKS.**

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

JOIN THE PARADE.

JOIN THE RACE. JOIN THE SPRINT.

JOIN THE MARATHON.

[Become an “enterprise Tri-athlete.”]

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

**“GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH.”**

**THE ... BRAND YOU GALA ...**

**NOW.**

[IT'S NOT OPTIONAL.]

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

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

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

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

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I posted my [insane] travel schedule at tompeters.com, and asked rhetorically why I did it. Here was one thoughtful reply: *“You obviously go to these places for only one reason: You believe that if even one person ‘gets it’ and uses your ideas to change their world you have spent your time well. I send my hopes that you find at least 2 on each visit.”*—Comment/Paul Davidson/September 26, 2005

## TAKE #2/Why I Get Up in the Morning

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

### Photo #1: Business as Usual

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

### Photo #2: Business Unusual for Unusual Times\*

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

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

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

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