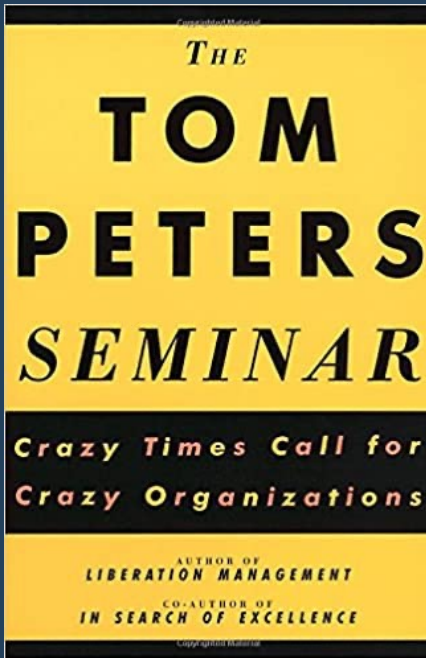


The Tom Peters Seminar



Year of publication: 1994
 Author: Tom Peters
 336 pages

Do you believe that the company you work for is innovative enough to stay alive in an increasingly dynamic and competitive environment? Or do you realize that creativity is suppressed by inflexible and outdated processes and methods?

In a structure of global markets and high demanding consumers, companies need to constantly adapt.

With that in mind, author Tom Peters, american writer and researcher on business management practices, presents in his book "Tom Peters Seminar" some thoughts and strategies to foster constant innovation within businesses.

Got curious? Keep reading our summary to learn more!

Main ideas of the book

- The main problem that companies face is the mismatch between the way business works and the reality of society and market;
- Major management theories ignore creativity and personal satisfaction;
- In practice, most companies strangle creativity and nullify pleasure at work;
- Innovation and well-being within the organization are main factors for economic growth;
- Empowerment of employees is essential for business development;
- In a crazy world, stable and sensible companies don't make sense;
- To thrive, it is necessary to go beyond traditional models, which are useful but not sufficient to keep up with and facilitate adaptation.

To whom is this book indicated?

The content of "Tom Peters Seminar" is relevant for people who work in the corporate environment, from leaders to employees seeking growth in their careers.

For managers, the ideas shown in the book are essential to promote innovation, creativity and evolution of the company, making it more adaptable and capable of meeting the market needs.

Overview of the book

Beyond change

Tom Peters understands that established conventions about learning to cope and thrive on change are insufficient. Therefore, he suggests "deleting" the word "change" from the vocabulary and replacing it with "revolution".

Companies capable of promoting revolution are those that accept the speed of change and comprehend that the most important asset is human imagination.

The book presents some questions to force the reader to think about his situation:

- Are you seriously interested in nurturing human imagination in your work?
- Do you spend most of your time in the office, keeping in touch only with the same people, or do you seek to look outside and exchange experiences with different and ever-changing people?
- Do you get excited by the idea of going to work on Monday?
- Is your workplace interesting?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how inventive is (a) your unit, (b) your company and (c) your main competitor?

Beyond decentralization

According to Tom Peters, it needs more decentralization as the company has to face an ever-growing volume of information.

In this way, Tom suggests going towards disorganization, getting rid of all formality and bureaucracy that cause bottlenecks and diminish the value created and offered by the company.

The liberation of this type of shackles allows the creation of smaller, autonomous, efficient and innovative teams.

In this chapter of the book "The Tom Peters Seminar", the author presents the following observations to be made by the reader:

- Do you dare admit that most of the middle management doesn't add any value?
- Can you imagine a company without a headquarters?
- Are your business units small enough, independent and focused enough to understand customer pain?

Beyond empowerment

Revolution is only possible if the company goes far beyond the empowerment of employees, it is necessary to transform every job into a business, the so-called "businessification".

This means making all employees entrepreneurs in their areas, promoting the attitude of ownership and the pursuit of excellence in the company.

For this, the author suggests the following practices:

- Cross training on most of the skills needed to do the job;
- Carrying out budgets;
- Quality control;
- Autonomy;
- All teams understand they have clients (internal or external).

In addition, Peters indicates some considerations:

- How does your organization stand with regard to "businessification" practices?
- Does everyone have full and timely access to business information (financial, strategic, etc)?
- Would you feel able to properly perform any task, with the information that employees have?
- Is everyone trained in the basics of the business?

Beyond loyalty

Forget about corporate loyalty. Focus on loyalty in relation to your agenda, your network of relationships. You have to get used to thinking like a self-employed person, which curiously increases your chances of remaining employed in large companies.

Author Tom Peters explains that job security and stability must come from the individual, through planning what they can learn from each job and executing projects outside their comfort zone.

For that, think about the following:

- What have you learned in the last few months?
- Which projects completed in the last year were remarkable to you?
- How do your projects benefit clients?
- Is your professional resumé at the end of this year different from the year before?
- Do you have a program to develop your personal skills?
- Do you devote part of your time to establishing and maintaining good relationships with your network?
- Do you consider a sideways (or downwards) move in your career, but one that teaches you something new and special?

Beyond disintegration

In the previous chapters of the book "The Tom Peters Seminar", the author indicated the decomposition of organizations into autonomous units, with minimal bureaucracy and employees who feel they are owners of the business, in order to control their own careers.

From there, the idea is to bring together the right resources (through the company's network of relationships) to establish fluid working groups focused on problem solving.

A revolutionary company is able to do its core business well, in addition to maintaining strong relationships with its stakeholders, interconnecting its administrative and production capabilities.

To help with this step, ask the following questions:

- Is the working day in your organization the most common (nine to five)?
- How many people in your unit work from home at least one day a week?
- Can you work from home? Why or why not?
- Does your business have a sector of strategic partnerships and relationships?
- Can the company create and maintain alliances?

Beyond reengineering

Tom Peters understands that leveraging knowledge serves as the foundation for economic and corporate security. For that, encouraging employee development is essential.

Going beyond disintegration also helps a lot in this regard, as networked knowledge is essential to competitive advantage.

To do more than an in-depth analysis of processes, an organizational culture of conversation and sharing of information and experiences is needed.

In order to evaluate these concepts, the author asks:

- Is there a learning culture in your company?
- Is it possible to identify development networks, which include people from outside the organization? How are these networks fed?
- Is there a sense of belonging and community within the business?
- Do you know what your organization's knowledge is and where to find it?

Beyond learning

A leading organization is formed by curious people, as they are seeking to understand the world around them (develop a larger contact network), which allows them to create extraordinary things.

In addition, Tom explains the importance of forming diverse teams with different backgrounds. This exchange is essential to bring out creativity and find innovative solutions.

A favorable interaction environment allows employees to exchange information in a fluid and organic manner, in addition to intensifying the creation and development of new ideas.

Regarding this chapter, the author presents the following questions to be answered:

- Analyze your workplace as if you were an employee on your first day on the job. How do you feel?
- Are there conditions to satisfy your curiosity in the workplace?
- Is your team made up of people who are different from each other?

Beyond continuous improvement

In an increasingly integrated and global scenario, the market is extremely competitive. For this reason, the quality present in most companies is not enough to stand out.

Most products are impeccable, but far from dazzling. In light of this, author Tom Peters says that you need to be as eccentric as possible, as only then will you be able to excite customers.

It is necessary to go far beyond satisfying customer needs. Ideally, your products must be fascinating and the entire experience around them is loved by the user.

Tom explains that the element that most influences customer perception is the way they are treated. To assess this, answer the following questions:

- Is the average product your company offers stunning?
- Does the concept of "fun" apply to the experience customers have with your organization? If not, is it possible to apply it?
- Are you fully engaged with your customers?
- Show your product catalog to people outside your business (family, friends, etc). How do they react?
- Has your organization been rethought and reinvented in recent years?

Towards perpetual revolution

Throughout the chapters, it became clear that, for the author, constant change and improvement are not enough to satisfy the trends of the modern world, only perpetual revolution will do it.

It's critical to compress years of change into a few months, leaning toward constant action and understanding that failure is part of the growth process.

This requires a lot of courage and it is essential that everyone involved understand that a radical transformation needs to take place to enable the business to evolve.

Finally, Tom Peters proposes the following questions:

- Can you imagine your company changing everything at once?
- Is there a drive for action in your business?
- Have you seen any progress without (many) failures?
- Do you help your colleagues understand and live with constant imbalance?
- How is failure faced in your company?

What do other authors say about it?

The book "**Business Adventures**", published in 1969 by John Brooks, is a compilation of 12 articles on Wall Street, analyzing renowned brands such as Xerox and General Electric. In this way, the author identifies what led to the business failures of some companies, collecting lessons so that mistakes are not repeated.

In "**Incansáveis**", Maurício Benvenuto, founder of XP Investimentos, argues that the successful execution of a project is ten times more important and a hundred times more difficult than a good idea. His teachings are a positive "reality check" for entrepreneurs who are looking for the best tips to evolve their brand.

Finally, according to the renowned American author, Michael Gerber, in his book "**Awakening the Entrepreneur Within**", facing challenges is a daily reality of the entrepreneur. Taking risks and dealing with failure is just the "icing on the cake" for those who work in this area or want to build their own company.

Okay, but how can I apply this in my life?

- Go through all the questions suggested by the author and review your answers;
- Create a form and distribute the inquiries to your team;
- From the answers, make an analysis of the perception of your co-workers about the issues presented in the book;
- Create an action plan to develop and apply the transformation concepts outlined by the author;
- Appreciate your development and foster this culture in your work environment;
- Make it a habit to update your resume periodically (every 3 or 6 months) with new projects, training and learning.



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