

Preview

The Little BIG  
Things  
With Tom Peters

Discussion Guide

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**Preview**

# Introduction

Several years ago, Tom Peters began to write and post ideas at [tompeters.com](http://tompeters.com) on how to thrive and survive the world of work. He called these ideas "Success Tips." These "Success Tips" have grown over time into hundreds of ideas. Now, Tom has decided to consolidate them into his book called, "*The Little Big Things: 163 Ways to Pursue Excellence.*"

As the book was being written, Tom also decided to put some of these ideas into a video series that directly explains his ideas for personal and organizational excellence. Now, you can share in Tom's enthusiasm by viewing "The Little BIG Things." Most of these videos are short and to-the-point.

"The Little Big Things" included in this video series cover a wide range of topics. We have put them into five categories:

- Excellence – Along with his recent observations of the business world and the people who have made it successful, Tom revisits some of the original lessons from "In Search of Excellence," his best selling book with co-author, Bob Waterman.
- Leadership – Advice for anyone in a leadership or supervisory position.
- Service – Tom shares his thoughts on customer service.
- Strategy – Ideas for improving organizational strategy.
- YOU – Tom shares thoughts that will benefit your personal and professional excellence.

Many of Tom's ideas also touch on other areas. As you listen to the programs, Tom will share ideas that cover topics from innovation to customer service and sales. You'll hear advice that can be of help whether you are a manager, salesperson, customer service representative, supervisor, doctor, employee, or customer.

This guide is designed to give you an overview of Tom's presentation. There are questions for discussion, room for personal notes, a PowerPoint presentation for each segment, and a reference list of the titles and the names of some of the companies and organizations mentioned.

# How To Use The Videos

The 91 individual video clips that Tom has created are short (between 2 to 4 minutes long) and categorized under 5 different topics; Excellence, Leadership, Strategy, You, and Service. Although they are organized under different topics, all of the clips are what Tom considers to be interesting and instructive as part of a strategy to achieve "Excellence."

Designed to be flexible, the clips can be used in a variety of different ways:

- **As a meeting starter:** Before your next meeting, choose a clip that is topically tied to an issue that you and your associates have identified as critical. Use the clip to start off the meeting and then leverage Tom's idea to initiate discussion.
- **As a meeting closer:** Many of Tom's ideas are thought provoking. You can use one of these clips to set up a future meeting or to get your team to consider a topic or idea of importance to you and your organization. Let them leave with a "new thought for the day."
- **As a motivator:** Tom's presents a number of inspirational and thought-provoking ideas. Use them to motivate and inspire your team.
- **For individual development:** Let associates view the clips either at their computer or at home. Tom's ideas can help anyone who is seeking to develop their leadership, customer service and or management skills.
- **To Train:** Tom's ideas can be integrated into your current training programs – on management, supervision, customer service, and employee development. Use them throughout your session to add depth and reinforcement to your training messages.
- **For Discussion:** Many of Tom's ideas are thought-provoking. Use them to stimulate discussion and idea generation in your next meeting, off site gathering or other event.
- **Streamed on Your Computer:** These are available to stream on a computer. You can send one a day, a week, or a month to motivate all of your personnel.

You will probably come up with many creative ways to use these clips. Take advantage of their short length and variety of topics to add thought-provoking context to your employee communication. Use them for personal and professional development.

# How To Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you in a variety of ways, but the primary goal is to give you an overview of each of Tom's "Little BIG Things." Over the years, Tom has developed an extraordinarily wide and deep understanding of business, excellence, and success. We hope that you can use this guide as a navigation tool for all of Tom's thinking.

Here are a few ways you can use this guide:

- **Recap Key Lessons:** We have recapped the lessons (along with the key quotations) from each of Tom's clips. Hold onto this guide as a reminder of the individual lessons and refer back to them in the future.
- **Discussion Questions:** We have provided questions for discussion as well as space to add your own notes.
- **Develop your own ideas:** As you listen to Tom, you will see applications that may have particular relevance to your own organization. Each clip has a "Your Notes" section. Use this space to develop your own ways to use Tom's ideas to communicate and reinforce organizational priorities.
- **Cross Reference:** The guide can be used as a cross-reference. We have provided a spreadsheet that lists the title, length of each program, as well as organizations and individuals mentioned and other topics. These video clips can be used in a variety of ways. A specific idea may be listed under the "Excellence" section, but may also have other uses (such as leadership, sales, service, or strategy). Check out the spreadsheet to be sure you're maximizing the full use of all of the video clips.

## A Bias for Action

One of the original concepts from "In Search of Excellence," *A Bias for Action* is just as relevant today as it was then. The lesson here is quite simple: Too much talk, too little do!

Mike Bloomberg, the billionaire founder of the financial information company and cable channel Bloomberg said, *"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."* (From Bloomberg by Bloomberg)

Michael Schrage said, *"Effective prototyping may be the most valuable core competence an innovative organization can hope to have."* You need to try lots of stuff and be willing to fix lots of things. You'll always be ahead of the competition! LENGTH: 3:17

### Questions for Discussion

- Are you trying enough "stuff?"
- What gets in the way of experimenting (and prototyping) in your organization? What can you do to change this?

### Your Notes

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## Angry People Make Change

Tom says that change and innovation comes primarily from "pissed off people" who are frustrated with the status quo. These angry and upset people are determined to make a change. Part of the reason that people become frustrated and "pissed off" is that when they attempt change, they almost always meet resistance.

One example of a "pissed off" person who initiated huge innovations is the founder of Pan Am (and commercial airline pioneer) Juan Trippe. As Harold Evans said in the Wall Street Journal (2/24/2005),

*"What drove Trippe? A fury that the future was always being hijacked by people with smaller ideas – by his first partners who did not want to expand airline routes; by nations that protected flag carriers with subsidies; by the elitists who regarded flight, like luxury liners, as a privilege that could be enjoyed only by a few; by the cartel operators who rigged prices. The democratization that he effected was as real as Henry Ford's."*

Whether it is Juan Trippe with an airline or a 28-year old in a department in your organization, innovation can come from irritation and anger. If you want to succeed you need to channel that anger into new ideas.  
LENGTH: 2:57

### Questions for Discussion

- Are people in your organization frustrated or angry over a process, program, or service in your organization? How can you channel that frustration into ideas for innovation?
- Discuss Tom's premise that "pissed off" people are the source of innovation. Do you agree with Tom? How does innovation work in your organization? Does it arise out of frustration?

### Your Notes

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# Cross Functional Communication

Many people would say that the most significant problem in their organization is lousy cross-functional communication. Tom knows that cross-functional communication is critical to success. Tom thinks that great cross-functional communication can boil down to one main variable: Lunch! Use your lunch to interact with people in other departments in your organization. It will help you socialize cross functionally. And socialization is a critical way to build a relationship that will help you in the future – and it’s fun, too! Make it a strategic priority to get to know people. Measure it! LENGTH: 2:56

## Questions for Discussion

- How many lunches in the past month have you had with someone in a different division in your organization? How many lunches in the past year have you had cross functionally? How many lunches have you had with other companies that you do business with?
- Open your calendar and set aside at least two lunches a week to meet with someone in a different department or division or company. Discuss other ways that you and your team can socialize cross functionally.

## Your Notes

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## Excellence Can Happen Anywhere

Some people think that excellence in “people practice” can only happen in large corporations or high tech companies. But can it be found in the service business or in a small company? Yes, it can be found anywhere! A perfect example is the small regional grocery store chain Wegmans, which is consistently one of Fortune Magazine’s “Best Places to Work” in the United States. LENGTH: 2:18

### Questions for Discussion

- What do you think of “excellence?” Do you assume that it can only happen with HP or Google? Why?
- What can you do to bring a higher level of excellence into your organization? List and discuss these ideas and specific ways to implement them. Choose your top 5 and put them into a timeline for implementation.

### Your Notes

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## Fail. Forward. Fast.

If, as Tom believes, trying a lot of stuff is key to excellence, then failure, too, is key! Remember, whoever makes the most mistakes wins. One high tech CEO said to Tom that their philosophy was *"Fail. Forward. Fast."* That is, fail fast. Learn from it fast. And try again... fast! Samuel Beckett said, *"Fail. Fail again. Fail Better."* Each failure leads to a better solution.

Tom asked David Glass, the former CEO of Wal-Mart, what Sam Walton's top lesson as a leader was? It was this: *"Sam was not afraid to fail. Sam would try something; he would blow it... the next day, he'd come in laughing and say, 'We got that one out of the way. What do we try next?'"* " LENGTH: 3:30

### Questions for Discussion

- Does your organization try a lot of stuff? What is the culture around failure? Do you learn from failure?
- Are people punished for failure? If so, how can that be eliminated or parameters set so that people don't live in fear of failing?
- Discuss Sam Walton's quote. What do you think of Sam's approach to innovation? How can you be more willing to experiment? How can you change your culture to be more open to learning from failure?

### Your Notes

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## Hard is Soft, Soft is Hard

Tom goes back to the basic lessons from "In Search of Excellence" again and recaps the importance of people and relationships. It's as true today as it was when the book was published. Tom believes that the so-called "hard stuff" (budgets, strategy, etc.) was the easiest stuff. The "soft stuff" (people, relationships, etc.) is the most difficult – AND the most important. It is the hardest to get right, but if you want a company that will be successful long term, focus on the people and the relationships.  
LENGTH: 1:54

### Questions for Discussion

- Do you agree with Tom? Do you think that the "people stuff" is harder than the budgets, numbers, and strategy? Why (or why not)? Discuss this in a group.
- If you agree that the "people stuff" is hard to deal with then talk about ways that you can make it easier. You might consider ideas like additional training, brainstorming, or more collaboration with the professionals in Human Resources. Put a team together where their sole mission is to work on building relationships with staff, vendors, and or customers. Put together a plan to accomplish that includes a start date for implementation.

### Your Notes

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# Leadership

## American vs. Southwest Airlines

On the same day in Dallas, two airlines (American Airlines and Southwest Airlines) were each having their annual meetings. The difference between the two couldn't have been more pronounced. Members of the pilots union were picketing the American Airlines meeting. The same day, across town, the same pilots unions had purchased a full two-page advertisement in USA today thanking Herb Kelleher for his extraordinary 37 years of service and leadership of Southwest Airlines. Herb Kelleher always said that the secret of his success was "you have to treat your employees like customers." LENGTH: 2:31

### Questions for Discussion

- Herb Kelleher is arguably one of the most successful CEO's of our modern time. His philosophy was to "put the employees first" and the customers and shareholders will be taken care of. Do you agree? Discuss Herb's philosophy?
- What are you doing to put employees first in your organization?

### Your Notes

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## Answer These Questions

Promotion is critical to your success as a leader. Your job is to develop your people. Here are some questions that can help you in evaluating performance in this critical job of developing and promoting people:

*In the last year, name the three people whose growth you have most contributed to. Please explain precisely where they were a year ago, where they are today, and where they will be heading in the next twelve months. Please explain your precise development strategy in each of these three cases. Please tell me your biggest disappointment of the last twelve months and looking back, could you or would you have done anything differently?*

*Please tell me about your greatest development triumph and your greatest development disaster in the last 10 years. What are the three "big things" you have learned about people development in the course of those last ten years?*

The goal here is to be precise in asking people about their record and performance as a developer of people. These questions will help you with promoting people and can reveal how excellent people are as leaders.  
LENGTH: 3:37

### Questions for Discussion

- Tom believes that your life and legacy revolve around your ability to hire, develop, and promote people. Do you agree? Discuss Tom's ideas with your associates. Think about how you value this skill in yourself and in others.
- How can you be better at recognizing and rewarding the people in your organization who are the best at developing their subordinates? Develop a plan to promote people development and set a timetable to implement your plan. Meet with your staff and explain what you are doing and gather input from them.
- Share Tom's thoughts (and the questions) with everyone on your team. Ask them to use these questions in their own interviews with subordinates.

## Answer These Questions (continued)

### Your Notes

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## Ask Why

It may sound overly simple, but the question, "Why?" is a very powerful tool for any leader. By using this word, you will be able to get to the heart of issues. You will learn more about problems and you will be able to be a better leader. Use the word "why" and you'll be amazed at the results. LENGTH: 2:51

### Questions for Discussion

- How often do you ask the question "Why?" in your interactions with your associates? If you don't use this word, why not? If you do, do you ask it repeatedly as needed?
- Are you willing to ask what Tom calls a "dumb question" like "why"? If you aren't, think about how you can become more comfortable with the question. Try listening carefully to your co-workers at your next meeting and ask the question "why" when you have a concern or question. This will become easier as you try it more often.

### Your Notes

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## Build Success

Dave Liniger, founder, RE/MAX believes that his "primary customer is the person who works for me and serves the buyers and sellers". He feels that making the people who work for him successful has, in turn, made his business successful. He translated this into a very simple sentence, "*We are a 'Life Success' company.*"

Great leaders are ones that help individuals who work for them grow, learn, and achieve higher levels of success through constant employee development. LENGTH: 2:02

### Questions for Discussion

- Are you a "Life Success" company? Do you focus on the success and development of your people?
- Discuss in your group how you can be more proactive in focusing on the success of your associates. How can you become more of a "life success company?"

### Your Notes

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## Clean Up Your Brand

Tom has a vendor that he works with on his farm in Vermont. This company meticulously cleans up after they do their work. The signature of this vendor is that their work is done with incredible tidiness and orderliness. It is one of the things that make their "brand" stand out from the crowd.

Everything you do is your brand. It is your signature. In some ways, this is an extension of the idea that you "dress for success." Think of everything you do in this context and make sure you are making a great impression all the time. Pay attention to *all* the details. LENGTH: 2:23

### Questions for Discussion

- Tom thinks that everything you do is your "brand." You have to "dress for success" and in fact, "dress" everything for success. Think about all the ways that your customers "see" you. It could be a delivery truck, manufacturing plant, or a store. It could be the packages you send out to customers or your catalog. Everything you do is part of your brand. Identify some components of your brand. How can you improve how your customers perceive you?
- Another aspect of "dressing for success" is in the form of communication. How do you answer the phone? How do you handle customer questions or complaints? What are your e-mails like? Everything you do should be in the context of "cleaning up your brand." In your group, create a short list of action items that can be done in the next week to "clean up your brand". Regroup next month and create another short list.

### Your Notes

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# Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty used to be a novel idea (it's not so novel these days). One of the people who first explained the power of long-term customer loyalty to Tom was the Cadillac car dealer, Carl Sewell. Carl Sewell said that when a customer walks in the door, he thinks about the value they can bring over a period of three, four, or five years... or even a lifetime, not just about the potential sale that day. In the long term, that customer could represent hundreds of thousands of dollars for the dealership. As a result, Sewell is obsessed with building long-term customer loyalty. In your organization, you should think about what a customer could mean to your business over the long term. LENGTH: 2:17

## Questions for Discussion

- Think about how much money your customers can mean to your organization over a lifetime. For Carl Sewell, a customer could mean as much as a million dollars over a lifetime. Try to add it up for your organization. How much could a customer bring to you over five years? How about over a lifetime? Share this information with everyone on your team.
- Discuss Tom's idea with everyone who serves customers. Share stories of loyal customers who come back again and again. Work to create a culture where people think of building customer loyalty.

## Your Notes

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## Invest in Your People

It may not be worth fixing the look of a store if you don't also offer great service. Tom spoke about a store near his home where the company had spent a lot of money improving the store – but failed to invest in training the sales associates in service. The experience was worse than disappointing. Now there was a beautiful store with the same lousy service. How can you avoid similar problems? Here is Tom's advice: Everyone has a budget. Once you lock your budget down, cut capital expenditures by 25% and put that money into people. It will make a difference. LENGTH: 2:44

### Questions for Discussion

- Can you think of a business that you have visited where the store (or company) looked wonderful, but the service was substandard? Do you agree with Tom that it might have been better if that business had invested in people instead of the physical plant? Share your stories with your group.
- Tom speaks about investing more in your people. How would your organization achieve that? It could include service training for your associates or an on-going continuing education program for all of your employees. Think about this and share ideas with you associates. Take note of some of the best ideas and act on them!

### Your Notes

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## 20x12=240 - Lunch Opportunities

Try this formula: 20 (working days in a month) x 12 (months) = 240. 240 is the number of potential useful lunch opportunities to connect with someone in your organization. Use it to build relationships. Use it to mend relationships. Use it to connect with people. It's a powerful tool.  
LENGTH: 2:17

### Questions for Discussion

- Look at your calendar. How many lunches in the past month did you have with customers, associates in other departments, or vendors? How close is that number to the 20 that Tom says is the ideal number? Try to schedule more proactive lunches next month and then check on your score. Bring the number up!
- Think about a relationship that may have been frayed in the past few weeks or of a valued customer. Schedule a lunch with them in the next two weeks.

### Your Notes

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## A Bias for Action – Wayne Gretsky

As Tom regularly goes through his master encyclopedia of slides, he often pulls out one of his very favorite slides that speaks directly to this “bias for action.” It’s a quote from the hockey player, Wayne Gretsky, that says, “*You miss 100% of the shots you never take.*” Or, as Tom says, “If you aren’t trying it; it isn’t going to happen!” So try things! LENGTH: 1:42

### Questions for Discussion

- Are you always trying new things? Are you “taking shots” in your work? Think about how you can be more proactive
- It takes extra effort to find new things to try. Does your organization encourage this? What can you do to encourage your associates to try new things and take some extra shots?

### Your Notes

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## Best Practices

Fundamentally your company's success will be directly proportional to the fact that you're learning new "things" and or ways to improve your company. "Best practices" are about people, departments, and companies who do "things" incredibly well. Tom *loves* "best practices." Tom also *hates* "best practices." Best practices help you learn new things and your success is directly proportional to the fact that you are learning new things, but when "best practices" become policy, they can be extremely counterproductive, particularly when they become something that you mimic. LENGTH: 2:20

### Questions for Discussion

- Do you use "best practices" to benchmark your organization? If not, give them a try. Tom loves them for a reason: they can help an organization become a more successful company.
- Are you trapped by your "best practices"? If so, then take Tom's advice. Don't let the best practices freeze you in place. Keep on changing and innovating. Discuss how you can avoid the downsides of "best practices" when they become policy.

### Your Notes

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## Big Items Need Big Carts

In a lot of Tom's research, he has found that simple things can make a big difference. For example, when Wal-Mart increased the size of their shopping carts, their sales of physically big items rose by 50%. Look for the simple, small things! They can make a difference. LENGTH: 2:01

### Questions for Discussion

- Are you enamored by "big" ideas? Think about focusing on small ideas. Maybe you can increase sales or production with a few small changes that will have a much bigger impact on your bottom line.
- The simple things that Tom describes can come from so many people within your organization. Do you have a way to collect employee ideas? Do you reward employees when their "small and simple" ideas get adopted? Try setting up a program to do this. Put these ideas to work!

### Your Notes

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## Big Red Button

Every organization has systems. They are necessary, but they can also strangle an organization. Commerce Bank has developed a way to overcome systems when they aren't working. It's this: At Commerce Bank every computer at the bank has a special red key on it that says, *"found something stupid that we are doing that interferes with our ability to service the customer? Tell us about it, and if we agree, we will give you \$50."* Smart companies are willing to go to war on their systems. Are you? LENGTH: 1:28

### Questions for Discussion

- Commerce Bank has developed a creative way to overcome systems that don't work. Their idea may seem a little crazy, but it works. Think about what you can do within your organization to remove obstacles that strangle your systems. It might not be a big red button, but you can develop ways to "go to war" on systems.
- What do you do when you have a system that gets in the way of serving a customer or innovating? Do you change the system? What do you do when someone points out a system that isn't working? Do you reward them? Think about ways you can act more quickly to change systems that aren't working – and reward people who help you on the process.

### Your Notes

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### 3-Minute Apologies

Think about setting aside some time every week to make three-minute “apology” phone calls. Tom believes that there is nothing more powerful (and difficult) than apologies. In reality, there is almost no situation where the other person is 100% responsible, although they may be 98% responsible. But in just about every case, you bear some (even if it is very small) responsibility. So, apologize for your 2%. If you fail to do this, it can create a downward spiral. But, if you do it, it can create a virtuous spiral. So be sure to set aside some time each week to make that 3-minute call! LENGTH: 2:38

#### Questions for Discussion

- Can you think of an example where an apology could have made a difference early on to improve a situation that went bad?
- Give Tom’s ideas a try. Call and apologize. See if it works. If it does, then share your success stories with others.

#### Your Notes

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## Brand YOU

About 15 years ago, Tom "invented" the term Brand You. The idea is that the labor market worldwide has become astonishingly competitive. To thrive, you need to "stand for something." Today, that idea is even more important. So what can you do? It's simple: Focus on your brand.

When Tom thinks about "Brand You" he thinks of a comment made by Nobel Prize winner (and micro lending pioneer), Muhammad Yunus. Yunus said, *"All human beings are entrepreneurs. When we were in the caves we were all self-employed . . . finding our food, feeding ourselves. That's where human history began . . . As civilization came we suppressed it. We became labor because they stamped us, 'You are labor.' We forgot that we are entrepreneurs."*

You need to find you "inner entrepreneur." Behave in an entrepreneurial fashion because no one will have a "standard" career ahead of him or her.  
LENGTH: 3:07

### Questions for Discussion

- What do you think is your "brand advantage"? What are your areas of distinction? Think about this and write down some of your ideas in the space below.
- Think about how you can behave in a more entrepreneurial fashion. How can you generate new ideas? How can you help yourself stand out?

### Your Notes

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## Build Your Own Legacy – Every Day

The great UCLA coach, John Wooden said, *"Make each day a masterpiece."* Ask yourself "What is your legacy today." From a pragmatic standpoint you could ask yourself, "What did I move forward today?" Every day does have a legacy. Every day can be a masterpiece. We build our track record one day at a time whether we're President of the United States or someone working in a restaurant. LENGTH: 2:04

### Questions for Discussion

- Tom suggests that you ask yourself these questions: What is your legacy today? What did you move forward? How did you present yourself today? Did you reach "WOW?"
- Discuss Tom's ideas with your group. Do you agree with him? If so, discuss how you can build your legacy – and your company's legacy every day.

### Your Notes

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# Engage Your Brain Game

In the book *The Talent Code*, author Dan Coyle speaks about ways to build talent. He also explains an exercise that shows how the human brain works – and how you can engage your brain. When our brains are regularly engaged, we are better at work. LENGTH: 2:22

## Questions for Discussion

- Try Tom’s “Brain Game” exercise out with your team. Did you have the same results that Tom mentioned? If so, take this opportunity to discuss how you can all become more mentally engaged in your work.

## Your Notes

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## Five Guys From Delaware

Woody Allen once famously said, *"80% of success is showing up."* Tom explains how the Delaware delegation for the United States constitutional convention of 1787 had a huge impact because they showed up every day - with all their delegates, while many of the other delegates from other states didn't show up. In the book, *"The Summer of 1787,"* the authors explained how the Delaware delegation had a huge influence on the constitution because they showed up! Showing up matters! LENGTH: 2:16

### Questions for Discussion

- Showing up matters – and as Tom points out, it mattered with the crafting of the US Constitution. Are there times when you “blow off” something? Do you fail to “show up” on occasion? Think about how you can be better at showing up, particularly when a project is important.
- Another important aspect of showing up is that it shows that you care about an issue or project. Do you indicate to the people around you that a project is important by “showing up?” What can you do to be better at this?

### Your Notes

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# Index and Cross Reference

We have provided an index and a cross-reference for you on the following pages. Although we have classified "The Little BIG Things" under the following five categories: Excellence, Leadership, Service, Strategy and YOU, each video has many other uses. We have provided some suggestions along with the running time, page reference, and companies or personalities that were mentioned in this video.

Please use this to plan your next meeting or find new ways to use the videos or provide direction by specific title.

We are not suggesting that this is the only way to use these videos. But we think it will help you cross reference all of Tom's material since there are 91 different segments and stories. Please let us know how you have used the programs or send us your suggestions for other ways that you have used them, which are not listed here. Thank you!



# About Tom Peters

*"In no small part, what American corporations have become is what Peters has encouraged them to be."* — **The New Yorker**

*"Peters is ... the father of the post-modern corporation."* — **Los Angeles Times**

*"We live in a Tom Peters world."* — **Fortune**

*Fortune* calls Tom Peters the Ur-guru (guru of gurus) 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, and his unconventional views led *BusinessWeek* to describe Tom 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 Dilbert), corporate cheerleader, lover of markets, capitalist pig, and card-carrying member of the ACLU.

Tom & Bob Waterman co-authored *In Search of Excellence* in 1982; the book was named by NPR (in 1999) as one of the "Top Three Business Books of the Century," and ranked as the "greatest business book of all time" in a poll by Britain's Bloomsbury Publishing (2008).

Tom followed *Search ...* with a string of international bestsellers: *A Passion for Excellence* (1985, with Nancy Austin—which ousted Lee Iacocca from the #1 slot), *Thriving on Chaos* (1987), *Liberation Management* (1992: acclaimed as the "Management Book of the Décade" for the '90s), *The Tom Peters Seminar* (1993), *The Pursuit of WOW!* (1994), and *The Circle of Innovation* (1997). Tom's series of books on Reinventing Work were published in September 1999: *The Brand You50*, *The Project50*, and *The Professional Service Firm50*. In October 2003, Tom released a totally new form of the business book, in conjunction with innovative British publisher Dorling Kindersley: *Re-imagine: Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age*.

Two Tom Peters biographies have recently been published: *Corporate Man to Corporate Skunk: The Tom Peters Phenomenon*, by Stuart Crainer; and *Tom Peters: The Bestselling Prophet of the Management Revolution*, by Robert Heller (part of a four-book series of business biographies on Peters, Bill Gates, Peter Drucker, and Warren Buffet).