

Tom Peters

Re-imagine!
Business Excellence in a
Disruptive Age

Re-imagining The Customer Experience at
Jordan's Furniture

An Enterprise Media Production

PREVIEW VERSION
For purchase evaluation only.
Not for Training use.

Contents

Introduction	3
The Story.....	6
Key Lessons	7
Discussion & Reflection Points	8
Training Notes & Suggested Uses	10
Exercises:	
1: Brainstorming Customer Experiences.....	14
2. Responding to New Ideas.....	16
About Tom Peters.....	17

© 2004 Enterprise Media and tompeterscompany!

ISBN 1-56106-201-4

All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this program may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the written permission of the publisher.

Publisher: Enterprise Media, 91 Harvey Street, Cambridge, MA 02140, 617-354-0017

Introduction

ABOUT THE TRAINING SERIES:

In the revolutionary training program **In Search of Excellence**, Tom Peters described the approach he and Robert Waterman took to the research behind their best-selling book and video. In the introduction to the program, Peters said, "Looked at another way, [excellence is] nothing less than a 180-degree shift in the way we think about managing and leading. The models and metaphors of the past have been the manager as a cop, as a referee, as a devil's advocate, as a naysayer, as a 'pronouncer.' The words we found that seem much more appropriate at the excellent companies are the manager/the leader as a cheerleader, as a coach, as a facilitator, as a nurturer of champions. The drumbeat (and the drumbeat that has been so sadly missing) is it all comes from people."

Today, while much has changed in the world of work, much has remained the same. The critical importance of people remains unchanged, yet the way that successful companies march to that beat has shifted. In this new series of training programs entitled **Re-imagine! Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age**, Tom Peters will explore the ways that leading organizations are meeting the new challenges. As each program unfolds, viewers will gain an understanding of what drives success in this "new world of work."

Each program in this series is designed to focus on a set of skills. This specific program is designed to give viewers new insights into creative ways to deliver great customer experiences and service!

ABOUT THIS PROGRAM:

Tom Peters has been a passionate advocate of great customer service for over three decades. Today, he says, being great at customer service isn't enough. You must deliver great service, but you also should give the customer a great experience.

Jordan's Furniture is one of the leading furniture retailers in New England. They are known for great service and for giving their customers a unique experience. The video shows how Jordan's has made every aspect of the experience of shopping for furniture fun and different.

In this fast-paced and fun video, you will gain insights into delivering good customer service -- and a unique experience, too! The video is meant to be motivational and fun. The key lessons that come across in the program are:

- Give The Customer a WOW Experience
- Deliver Outstanding Service -- Before, During, and After the Sale
- Know How Your Product Fits the Customer's Needs
- Have Fun!

These lessons, however do not tell the full story. Jordan's is a fun place to work, and Barry and Elliot Tatelman are very committed to hiring and motivating their team. Their approach to customer service is all-encompassing and unique. This video will give you an example of how well this could work in your organization.

ABOUT THE LEADERS GUIDE/WORKBOOK:

There is a three-part learning structure for this video and workbook:

- 1) Learning key concepts
- 2) Reviewing and discussing them in a group
- 3) Applying the concepts to your own organization

ACTION AGENDA: The video presents the key concepts behind dealing with change and responding to competitive pressures.

DISCUSSION: We have provided discussion questions as well as observations for debate to help participants reflect on the core lessons.

APPLICATION: Application exercises are included to allow participants to develop strategies for putting key lessons from the program to work in their own organization.

Learning from Jordan's Furniture -- The Story

In the business world today, competition has become fiercer than ever for both the consumers attention and loyalty. Everyone is getting better at customer service and quality. In fact, delivering great customer service no longer means your organization will stand out from the crowd.

But, if you can WOW them with an unforgettable experience, you'll win unprecedented loyalty. That's exactly what Jordan's Furniture does. This Boston-based furniture retailer has achieved huge success by combining the process of shopping for furniture with entertainment. The two owners, Barry and Elliott Tatelman, are known for their colorful advertising and for treating their employees well and empowering them.

Jordan's Furniture has moved beyond delivering great customer service. They deliver a full customer experience. At Jordan's, the store focuses on entertaining, feeding, and amusing their customers -- and in the process achieves one of the largest sales per square foot of any retailer in the United States.

Key Lessons:

Having fun at work and entertaining customers with great experiences isn't that easy. Jordan's works hard to achieve this with these core principles:

Give The Customer a WOW Experience. Jordan's Furniture is an extreme example of a company that gives customers a unique experience. Not every company can turn themselves into a theme park, but every company can take a lesson from Jordan's. If you give your customers a memorable experience, you can build long-term customer loyalty.

Deliver Outstanding Service -- Before, During, and After the Sale. It is one thing to make the experience memorable and unique, but you still have to get the basics right. Jordan's gives more than remarkable experiences. They back them up with reliable quality and great customer service. Think about how your customers shop. Are you delivering great service every step of the way?

Know How Your Product Fits the Customer's Needs. The core of delivering great customer service is found in this principle. You need to listen to your customers and make sure that your products fit their needs.

Have Fun! It is important for people to have fun at work. Customers know when employees are enjoying their work. More importantly, customers respond to employees with a positive attitude.

Re-imagine The Customer Experience

Discussion & Reflection Points

Jordan's has turned the experience of shopping for furniture into real entertainment. Discuss ways you can enhance the customer experience. It doesn't need to be expensive or elaborate -- but it should be memorable. Think about some great experiences you have had as a customer and list the ideas below. Then discuss them in your group.

Barry Tatelman discusses that the customer needs to have everything go right. The experience is important. The delivery needs to be right. The salespeople must be knowledgeable and the product must be high quality. Are you paying attention to every aspect of the customer interaction? Are you missing any part? Do you follow up on the sale? Discuss ways you can improve the entire process!

What do you do to have fun at work? Do you celebrate successes? Do you thank and reward employees for great jobs? Do you celebrate your big accomplishments? Discuss ways you can add more celebration, rewards, and fun into the process.

One of the key elements to Jordan's success is to make sure that the products fit the customers. This is done through listening. The salespeople make sure that they have the right product for the customers. It is not about selling the most expensive product; it is about making the best fit and satisfying the customer's need. Do you listen to your customers? Do you know how your products can meet customer needs? Think about the kinds of questions you should ask your customers to get to know their needs better. List your ideas for possible questions below. Share your ideas with the group.

PREVIEW
VERSION

Trainer's Notes

This is your guide to use with the video **Re-imagine The Customer Experience**. The program shows how Jordan's Furniture has improved sales by delivering a unique experience to its customers. This workbook and the accompanying trainer's notes should provide you with additional ideas for creating great experiences for your customers.

The video is divided into three parts:

INTRODUCTION: In the opening, Tom Peters introduces himself and sets up the business challenge.

CASE STUDY: The Jordan's case study shows great customer service and experiences in action. It is designed to be both engaging and funny so people will remember the lessons.

LEARNING POINTS: In the conclusion, Tom Peters comes back on camera and provides the key lesson.

How to Use **Re-imagine The Customer Experience**

This video and print package includes a number of elements to help you meet your training and teamwork goals.

The following is a list of action steps you can take in planning and conducting a course using **Re-imagine The Customer Experience**. You may want to modify these items to accommodate time constraints, intended audience needs, and training goals.

Advance Preparations

1. View the program in advance of the training session at least once and review the key learning points in the program (listed in this workbook). Think about how the Jordan's story can be applied to your organization. Use the space below to write down your observations:

2. Arrange to have a VHS videocassette player and a monitor available for this training session. If you have more than 20 people attending, be sure to order at least a 25-inch monitor.
3. Remember to encourage participation. The management issues presented here can trigger concerns as well as good ideas. Getting

everyone involved will help build consensus on the issues and encourage audience members to feel that they share "ownership" of the solution.

- Obtain one guide for each participant.
 - Test your equipment in advance and adjust color, sound, etc.
 - Bring writing materials for each participant.
4. Try to let everyone go home with a concrete "to do" list of ideas and actions so the lessons from your discussion can be put to work.

PREVIEW
VERSION

Sample Training Session

PRE-SCREENING PREPARATION. Welcome people to the training session and give them an overview of the program. You may want to address the concepts presented in this program in the context of your own organizational goals.

SCREENING. Show **Re-imagine The Customer Experience**. You can watch the program in its entirety or focus your training session on one or several specific segments in Tom Peters' presentation.

POST SCREENING DISCUSSION. Use the themes from the program as a catalyst for discussion, including:

- Give The Customer a WOW Experience
- Deliver Outstanding Service -- Before, During, and After the Sale
- Know How Your Product Fits the Customer's Needs
- Have Fun!

SECOND SCREENING. You may find it valuable to re-screen the program after discussion.

Exercise 1:

Brainstorming Customer Experiences

Goal: To brainstorm ideas to enhance the customer experience.

Materials: People should have pads and papers, and a flip chart or board should be available for listing group ideas.

Description: Jordan's has transformed the chore of shopping for furniture into a fun experience. They have created a New Orleans street that forms the initial experience for customers entering the store. They have even turned the process of selling mattresses into a sleep lab. Employees in the mattress department are sleep technicians and they wear lab coats.

Step One: Watch the Tom Peters program **Re-imagine The Customer Experience**.

Step Two: Following the screening, break the group up into smaller groups of 5 to 7 people.

Step Three: Give people the following assignment: Barry and Elliot Tatelman have transformed the shopping process into a fun and unique experience. Think about how you can improve the customer experience in your organization. Discuss all ideas -- they don't have to be elaborate. List all your ideas below or on a flip chart. Try to list the ideas in order of effectiveness.

Step Four: Consider some of the lessons from Jordan's in your discussion. Particularly:

- Are you thinking of the customers needs when you sell to them?
- Is there a way that you can improve the experience of shopping in your store?
- What can you do to make the process more fun -- for employees and customers?
- Do employees in your company understand the culture and the service philosophy as well as the specific product features?

Step Five: Re-form into the larger group and share your ideas. Try having several teams work on these challenges and propose ideas to address any necessary changes before they become critical issues. Make a master list of these ideas and print it up for all participants.

Exercise 2: Responding to New Ideas

Purpose: To create a framework for responding to new ideas.

Materials: People should have pads and papers. A flip chart or board should be available for listing group ideas. Also, have a couple of nerf balls.

Step One: Accumulate all of the customer suggestions on a sheet of paper and give them to each attendee in the group.

Step Two: Have your group break up into small working groups. Using the customer suggestions and using the ideas generated by people within the group, have each mini-group discuss and come up with a list at least five ideas for new product or service or propose product or service improvements.

Step Three: Reassemble in the larger group and have each mini-group present their ideas. Your goal should be to agree on at least three ideas to develop further for innovations.

REMEMBER: Avoid negativity -- in this phase of the discussion, everything should be on the table. List phrases like the ones below on a sheet of paper. If people say these phrases, have people throw a nerf ball at them to stop negativity. Here are some sample phrases:

- Yes, but...
- I don't think...
- We can't do that
- It isn't done that way

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

"In Tom's world, it's always better to try a swan dive and deliver a colossal belly flop than to step timidly off the board while holding your nose."

Fast Company

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 Tom as "business's 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 (2002).

Tom followed *Search ...* with a string of international bestsellers: *A Passion for Excellence* (1985, with Nancy Austin), *Thriving on Chaos* (1987), *Liberation*

Management (1992), *The Tom Peters Seminar* (1993), *The Pursuit of WOW!* (1994); *The Circle of Innovation* (1997); and, in 1999, a series of books on Reinventing Work: *The Brand You50*, *The Project50*, and *The Professional Service Firm50*.

In October 2003, Tom and publisher Dorling Kindersley released *Re-imagine: Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age*; the revolutionary book, an immediate No. 1 international best seller, aims to do no less than re-invent the business book through vibrant, energetic presentation of critical ideas.

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).

Tom presents about 75 major seminars each year, about 50 percent outside the U.S., and has also authored hundreds of articles for various newspapers and popular and academic journals.

Tom is an engineering graduate of Cornell (B.C.E., M.C.E.) and Stanford (M.B.A., Ph.D.); he holds honorary degrees from several institutions, including one from the State University of Management in Moscow, awarded in 2004. In the U.S. Navy from 1966–1970, he served two tours of active duty in Vietnam (a Navy Seabee) and a tour in the Pentagon. He was a senior White House drug abuse advisor in 1973–74, and then worked at McKinsey & Co. from 1974–1981, becoming a partner in 1979. Tom is a Fellow of the International Academy of Management, The World Productivity Association, the International Customer Service Association, and the Society for Quality and Participation.