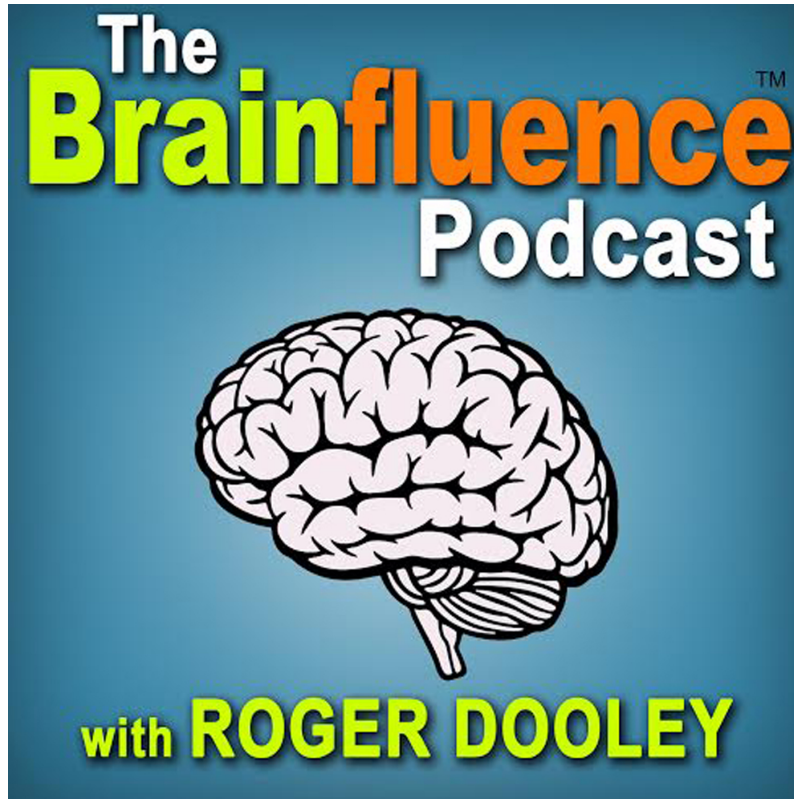


## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host



# Roger Dooley

The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker Roger Dooley has weekly conversations with thought leaders and world class experts. Every episode shows you how to improve your business with advice based on science or data.

Roger's new book, *Friction*, is published by McGraw Hill and is now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and bookstores everywhere. Dr Robert Cialdini described the book as, "Blinding insight," and Nobel winner Dr. Richard Clainer said, "Reading Friction will arm any manager with a mental can of WD40."

To learn more, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Friction), or just visit the book seller of your choice.

Now, here's Roger.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to Brainfluence, I'm Roger Dooley.

Today's podcast is a little bit different. I recorded this episode in video format, as well as the customary audio one, so if you prefer, you can watch it on YouTube. You can find the link to the video on the show notes page for this episode at [rogerdooley.com/podcast](https://www.rogerdooley.com/podcast). By all means, let me know if you like the video format and would like to see more episodes done that way.

On to today's show. Our guest needs no introduction, but I'll do a short one anyway. Tom Peters might be the first real management guru, and his first book, *In Search of Excellence*, turned business books into a serious genre. If it weren't for Tom, you probably wouldn't have

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<https://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Brainfluence or FRICTION, or, for that matter, this podcast.

Today's episode is very timely. Tom has been observing how businesses are operating in the current pandemic crisis with both alarm and occasional admiration. He's created two new manifestos: Excellence 2020: The 27 Number Ones, and Excellence 2020 Observations: Leading With Compassion and Care in Troubled Times. You can download either or both of these directly from the show notes page at [rogerdooley.com/podcast](http://rogerdooley.com/podcast). I hope you enjoy this slightly different episode format, and I know you'll enjoy Tom's thinking. He's one of the most direct, blunt experts you'll hear from. So let's go right to our conversation.

So Tom, welcome to the show.

Tom Peters: Thank you very much. I'm coming directly from the dentist chair to this interview.

Roger Dooley: That is dedication to the cause, and I really appreciate that extra effort, Tom. I'm not sure I would have been able to do the same.

The last time we chatted, we were discussing your book, The Excellence Dividend. And at the time, I kind of got the impression you are a man on a mission. Now you've got two new documents here, they're sort of manifestos, and we'll link to those on the show notes page so people can get copies of those. But this convinces me even more that you are indeed on a mission. Would you agree with that characterization? And if so, how would you describe it?

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Tom Peters: I hate words like that, but I think it's fair. The stuff that I care about is, in two words, three words, focusing on people. Organizations are people, period. And as I said to somebody, I made a list of the five things I cared about most, and I said here's the deal. In order to understand what I'm talking about, you've got to be really well educated. And what I mean by that is you have to definitely have a certificate of completion of the fourth grade. I've got four quant degrees, for God's sake, I'm not somebody who came from a philosophy degree, God, I wish I had one. But this is straightforward stuff.

I mean, look, I came from the dentist office. I know the dentist pretty well. We were shooting the breeze, and we were talking about people who don't need to have raised prices unrealistically. There's some kind of mask that he buys by the gillion, and they were \$1.50 before the coronavirus, and now the guy's charging \$11 for them. And I just think that stuff is appalling.

My one-liner has been that, probably to a significant degree, the quality of your reputation will be dramatically correlated with the way that you have behaved in the last two months and the next four months. And part of the fourth grade thing is, if you treat people incredibly well, funny things happen, like you make more money. It ain't altruism.

I love John DeJulius, I don't know if you know him, but he's kind of a sales guru and has a chain of, I think, salons. And he said, "Remember that your customers will never be any happier than your employees." There are a lot of one liners that sound a little bit cheesy, whatever,

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

but that's profound. That's as good as anything any other Greeks could have said.

And so I've focused on people, and we could talk about work-from-home stuff. I've focused on managing by wandering around, which to me is a metaphor rather than a technique. It's people who want to be in touch, and can't live if they're not in touch with their folks. I wrote something, I've been talking about MBWA for 40 years practically. My wife and I, until this year, go to New Zealand for a month or so every winter. And I said, "How pathetic to be a 75-year-old walking on the most beautiful beach in the world, in New Zealand, and thinking about MBWA. That's pathetic."

But I had this breakthrough which is associated with the question you asked. I thought, "Why do you do MBWA? You do it to learn about what's going on at the frontline." And then I thought to myself, "That's a crock of crap. The reason you do MBWA is because it's fun." If it is not fun to be in the distribution center at 1:00 AM with the crew of 40 who are working in the distribution center, if that's not fun for you, then I have a suggestion: go home directly, break the speed limit if you need to, sit down at your desk, get out a piece of paper, get out a pen, and resign your job as a leader.

If you don't get off on people ... I've got a little quote in my most recent book. I did a lot of work years ago, and now they've got some problems, as do most retailers, with ye olde Nordstrom. And there's a woman, first name is Betsy, can't remember her second name, who I just kind of fell in love with.

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

She said, "As a store manager, I would come in, and if you're a store manager, you've got 1,000 problems that are on your desk that are new every morning, and I would spend about 30 minutes on them, I'd get so frustrated I wanted to pull my hair out." Then she said, "I always did the same thing. I shut my office door and I went out on the floor in the store, and just chatted with our folks for half an hour." And she said, "I came home, came back to my office with a big grin on my face, and suddenly all these problems looked like they were easy to solve."

That's kind of the spirit of all this. The two other things that have been incredibly important to me, one that's been a centerpiece for the last 25 years, to quote Nicholas Kristof in the New York Times, who was quoting a big McKenzie study, "If you want to get ahead in your business, promote women." I think for a ton of reasons, and we can maybe discuss some of them, the evidence is pretty clear that women are better leaders, and particularly ...

I use Twitter, as you know, because we have exchanges. And one of my Twitter exchanges when something really shitty had gone down in a hospital is I said there should be a law that does not allow males to be CEOs of hospitals. And you don't want to characterize a male or female as being exactly one thing or another, it's like a normal distribution. Women pay more attention to people than men do, particularly in things like the caring professions, which are all of them as far as I'm concerned, that's important.

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Roger Dooley: Well, even country leadership, Tom. You mentioned New Zealand, it seems like in this pandemic crisis, the countries with female leaders have, in general, fared better than others.

Tom Peters: Yeah, at the level of wow. But Jacinda Ardern, the New Zealand prime minister, has been just off the charts. I will put in a little plug for the Kiwis in general. We were there when there was the big Christchurch mosque bombing.

Believe it or not, even New Zealand has a couple of motorcycle gangs. They don't do much abusive. The motorcycle gangs broke themselves up into small groups, and put it upon themselves to patrol outside every mosque in New Zealand when services were going on. That's the motorcycle gangs. And I thought that was just the sweetest, dearest, most humane thing that maybe I've ever heard in my life.

But I love the people stuff, the women's stuff. The third area is I've been really passionate about design for about 30 years. Design not meaning cool stuff, but stuff you really connect with. Whether it's a retail service, whether it's a little program like this, or whether it's somebody who is selling Peterbilt trucks, it's all of a piece. It's the emotional connection.

My description of an organization is people serving people serving people. People called leaders, serving people called employees, serving people called customers and communities. That's all it is, people in service. And if you haven't gotten that by the last day of your fourth grade education, can't help you.

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>



## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Roger Dooley: You mentioned managing my walking around, that's something you've been talking about for decades, Tom. I'm curious, how are people adapting to this when much or most of the team is working remotely? How do you accomplish that in this sort of new world, at least a new world for many people and many businesses?

Tom Peters: Well, I want to say two conflicting things. I'm going to perhaps give a suggestion or two, but the most important point, Roger, which you know as well as I do, is with these changes, it's a learning curve. You're not going to read a book, by you or by me or anybody else, that's going to give you the seven steps to doing MBWA in a WFH environment, and sometimes books kind of seem to promise that. But MBWA is a desperate need to be in touch with people and help people.

And your goal, if you are a manager having a Zoom meeting, your goal is not to see if we can get through all nine agenda items in the next 45 minutes. The goal is to say, "Hey Roger, how are you doing? How's the family doing, are you guys adjusting? Shelley, who works for me, is working from home with two teenage daughters who are living at home full-time." It's just being a human being, and that, I'm sorry to say, doesn't necessarily come naturally.

When I think of leaders, incidentally, and I have a vague idea of who's paying attention to you and I, there's only one leader who matters, and that leader is the first line leader. I've argued in my writing that the full portfolio of first line leaders, three people in a car dealership, and

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>



## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

three gajillion of it's General Motors, they are the number one corporate asset. Because the first line ...

75 to 85%, with no variation around the world, of employees are disconnected from their work, and the number one reason is their boss. It's not that it's an immoral company or a moral company, but it's their boss. You can look at the research, and everything correlates with effective first line leadership: quality, honesty, productivity, you name it. And so that's the only leader I care about in the institution.

That old one liner, "the biggest mistake in the world is to promote the best salesman to sales manager". It's a little exaggeration, but it's also got some truth associated with it. The most important attribute in promoting somebody to first line leadership is empathy. Period, all stop. And there is nothing, I hate the term, there's nothing soft about empathy. It's people who give a shit about other people. I'm an old Navy graduate, so I use language which is rather plain, I call it the practice of give-a-shit-ism.

And I also said that the definition of an effective manager is that she or he is literally desperate for every one of the eight or nine or 10 or 12 or three employees who quote-unquote "report to" her or him, desperate for them, to succeed. And that's your measure.

David Brooks, the New York Times columnist, wrote a column a while back, and I think it's as profound as anything Socrates or one of the big dudes said. It was about résumé virtues versus eulogy virtues, and he said the résumé virtue is, "I graduated from Harvard, then I

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

stuck around and got an MBA, and in my first nine years I was promoted six times, and I'm doing 18,322 philanthropic activities. Look at me, I'm God." And he said that's the statistical stuff.

The eulogy virtues are what do people say to you at your memorial service, or about you at your memorial service or at your funeral. What they say, maybe not the Navy version, but they say he really cared about people. He really gave a shit. He really was always determined to help people. And obviously, in the middle of our COVID-19 madness, all of that stuff gets multiplied by 100 or 1,000, or what have you.

There's just no excuse for misbehaving at this point, none whatsoever. I'm going to personally talk to the spirit of old Dante, and I'm going to say, "Add a 10th ring to hell, and put bosses who misbehave during a crisis like this, put them out there and let them boss each other."

Roger Dooley: You know, that reminds me of a quote from Warren Buffett, one of my favorites, that you only see who's naked when the tide goes out. And for me at least, this pandemic crisis has been a tide-going-out moment where companies are showing some different aspects of themselves.

I have held up Amazon as being an example of one of the best-managed, most customer-centric companies ever. They lead off my book FRICTION, they're exhibit one. Jeff Bezos has said that he is not worried about his shareholders, that if the company takes care of their customers, the shareholders will be fine. And they have,

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

and the shareholders have been fine. To me, this is really a lot of your kind of thinking, don't focus on the shareholders, put the customer first.

But in this pandemic, we've seen a little bit of a fraying at the edges, I think, on the employee experience there, where folks are feeling like maybe they've been put in more dangerous conditions than they should be. We've had some random protests and stoppages. Now, it's pretty hard to tell how deep that runs and how much is just being blown up by the media looking for a story. But it seems like there is something going on there. I'm wondering what your take on this is. Are we seeing companies in a different light now in some cases?

Tom Peters: I think so. And from what I can tell, which is with the same amount of data you have, what we read, that problem goes pretty deep at Amazon. You know, I live in a town called Dartmouth, Massachusetts, which is 15 miles from a town called Fall River, Massachusetts, which happens to have a 900-person Amazon warehouse. And they're driven pretty hard. I was talking to somebody actually, if you have 900 people, you're going to have outliers and some people who just ... it's not a very pretty picture in terms of how hard that they have been pushed.

My wife and I have some wonderful hummingbirds on a hummingbird feeder outside the kitchen window. And the feeder blew down, it's made of glass, it was broken and we were desperate to get a new feeder. It is now Wednesday, and we're going to have a new feeder via Amazon on Friday. Well, you know, I would have been

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

happy to wait till next Friday. Lighten up a little bit on the employees in that warehouse 15 miles down the road.

Bezos has got got a pretty big ... I agree with everything you said in your introductory remarks, and right now he's got a real big question mark hanging over his head as far as I'm concerned. Plus, I lived in Silicon Valley for years. People have great ideas, I'm really happy for him to be wildly successful financially, I'm a good capitalist.

But I think Warner brothers, I think Bezos just bought Jack Warner's house for 165 million bucks. I'm not a Scrooge, and I'm happy with people who make a lot of money, and compared to the lower middle class I came from, I made a lot of money, but I just have trouble understanding why you need a \$165 million house. I'm sorry, if that makes me a communist or a Bernie Sanders socialist, well, I'll have to live with that.

But thinking about this, I saw somebody wrote this, and they said, "It's really nice to go to Carnegie Hall, and there are some wonderful libraries that Mr. Carnegie donated to it. Wouldn't it have been cool if he'd given his workers two bucks an hour more?" Stuff like that is true. Thank God for Carnegie Hall, but I'd rather that it not have come out of the hides of the people who were working in the sweatshops that Carnegie had.

By the way, if we are recording my coughs, it is a cough that I got in the middle of the winter, which has nothing to do with the current time. In fact, it's become a psychological tick, what can I tell you?

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Roger Dooley: And you've got to be careful what you say, Tom, because I'm a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, which was originally Carnegie Tech. So I have a soft spot in my heart for old Andrew, because a good part of my education is due to him. But no, certainly it's true. I guess to his credit, he did give away a lot of us fortune, most of his fortune. But could it have been better for the workers? Undoubtedly. In fact, he obviously had a lot of strife, which we don't have to get into all those details now, but he had some of the worst labor conflicts of the era.

Tom Peters: Well, again, this stuff ... Self-interest turns out to be good for the P and L. There are some black marks on Henry Ford's record, but he did the unheard of, which pissed off every Robert Baron in America, and he paid his workers five bucks a day, which was unheard of. And somebody said, "Well, why are you doing that?" And he said, "It's obvious, so they can all afford to buy Model T's." It's a wonderful throwaway line, but it also has some deep meaning at the same time.

Roger Dooley: Right, and that's important. Even getting back to Bezos for just a second, he has at least been apparently quite fair in his pay with his workers. He was one of the first to go to \$15 an hour for his hourly workers.

Tom Peters: Yeah.

Roger Dooley: So he's been transactionally quite good with them, but I'm not sure that the company has the emotional loyalty or engagement that some better employers do.

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Tom Peters: Well, I would agree with your implicit point, and that is, it's not the kind of story which lends itself to one-liners. Because, relative to this place that's near us, Amazon has spent a lot of money working with local community colleges to create courses, for which they need not pay, for a lot of warehouse employees. A lot of the warehouse employees did not exactly come from wealthy backgrounds, and obviously none of them want to spend the next 40 years of their life plucking packages from shelves. It's helping them get ready for a better life. So there are certainly pluses there.

Roger Dooley: Actually, that's a great segue into your 27 Number Ones, because you've got this great document, 27 different areas that you have a number one priority in. Interestingly enough, you have, much like in The Lord of the Rings there was one ring to rule them all, you have one number one to rule them all, and that's training. Now, I would not have guessed that. If you would have given me a list of one-liners about the 27, I doubt if training would have been in my top three. Explain why it is your number one rule among all the number ones.

Tom Peters: Have we got an hour? Well, first of all, I would quote, which is always easy, Richard Branson. One of the saddest one-liners in business is, "If you train them, they'll leave." And Branson's one-liner is, "Train them well enough so that they can leave, treat them well enough so that they won't want to leave." Some serious ... And there's a lot of stuff like this around, some serious Oxford folks wrote a piece, or a book, and it said that, forgetting the dislocations going on now, which are just earthshaking, 50% of white collar jobs are at threat to

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

automation, meaning mainly AI when it's white collar jobs, over the course of the next 20 years.

What that says to me in part is, and I said this in different terms before, anybody who goes to work for you for 90 days on a project, or nine years, should be better prepared for tomorrow when they leave than when they arrive. Plus, effective training, you can spell it in five letters with a break between the first and the next four, effective training is called "I care." And effective training, again, like the line I quoted from John DeJulius, is that your customers will never be any happier than your employees. I just think that learning and growing is the essence of David Brooks' eulogy virtues, it is the essence of effective performance, it is the essence of effective teams.

This is related maybe not quite one-to-one, I was at a social party near where I live, and one of the people who were here in the summer was there. It was not Warren Buffett, but it was somebody who would be on kind of the top 25 list of Buffett-like people. So you're just shooting the crap during dinner, and he said to me, "Tom, what do you think the number one failing is of CEOs?" And since I was apparently born a smart-ass, my response was, "I can tell you 50 failings of CEOs, not sure I can narrow it down."

So he looked at me and he said, "The number one failing of CEOs is they don't read enough." And that's one of those things, Roger, where ... What's the one-liner? You could knock me over with a feather. But with all the change that's going on, you've got to keep informing

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>



## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

yourself, and you've got to keep sharpening your mind, you've got to keep listening and watching people like you and me. But education is everything. I think it's good for the world, and I think it's the best ...

It's not staying off AI, but there's this wonderful term, or pair of terms, it is AI versus IA. AI is artificial intelligence which aims at displacing people. IA is intelligence augmented, which makes it possible for people to do amazing things that they couldn't have done before. And again, life doesn't really break itself down into just two simple points, but it's a big deal. It's giving our customers stuff they fall in love with.

I mean, my biggest problem ... My wife is not an environmental fanatic, she's an environmental madwoman. And I said to her, "Larry Page, Sergey Brin, Sergey Brin, I don't know the pronunciation, Mark Zuckerberg, and Jeff Bezos are devoting their entire lives into selling us shit that we don't need and making the environment worse."

And I'm not saying we don't buy things ... Don't get me going on Zuckerberg, we'd have to take an hour. There's a person who is involved with running our country who I don't love very much, and I said to somebody, "320 million Americans, that person and Mark Zuckerberg are at the bottom of my list of 320 million." But that's another story.

Roger Dooley: Now, that's-

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Tom Peters: But part of it is what I said, I totally believe in marketing. I'm marketing, I've always marketed myself, and I started the brand new thing and so on. But the only reason for the existence of Facebook is to sell you stuff that you didn't know you needed to be sold until you went on Facebook. If I was a mom and dad who had sacrificed everything in the world to send my kid to Stanford, to get a computer science degree, and his contribution to humanity was to sell people shit they don't need, that wouldn't make me very happy.

And I'm being a little extreme, that's what advertising has always done at some level, but ... I've read a million things on this, and you've probably read 2 million, the subtlety ... It's that one-liner, if you took 20% of Facebook's data about you, then if I had those 20 and I message them accurately, I would know more about you than your wife does and your best friends do. The ability to overdo it with data is truly frightening.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, I think there was actually a study about that, that, given some data scraped from Internet sources, researchers are able to better predict certain things about individuals' behavior than their spouses. I don't have a reference on that at the moment, but I do recall, that's-

Tom Peters: I think you wouldn't need much of a reference because I bet you, if you use that full sentence on Google, you would get 100 confirmations with 100 different studies, 90 of which were worthwhile.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, probably. What it seems like, you mentioned reading, and how important that is, and that is one of your

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

other 27 number ones, number 19 or something like that, read, read, read.

Tom Peters: I'm glad you memorized the numbers, Roger, I appreciate that. That's the kind of readership-

Roger Dooley: No, that was a guess, it was somewhere in the final third I think.

Tom Peters: Absolutely.

Roger Dooley: But anyway, I have no problem reading, I am forced to read, I do a weekly podcast which means there's probably 50+ books right there, plus I read other books outside that. But I'm curious if you have any tips for how to, then, actually effectively use that knowledge, how to put it to work for you. Because I'm sure it all goes into some database that informs my decisions when I make them, I have some dim recollection, oh yeah, that book gave me some little snippet of information that might be useful.

I think that if you've read just a few books, but actually implemented what they told you, if you said ... Heck, I think you could probably take one chapter of The Excellence Dividend, if you said, "Okay, I'm going to act this out in my life," you would be a far better leader. But do you have any tips for how people can sort of bridge that gap between the reading and the doing?

Tom Peters: Well, a couple of responses. One of them is you should never believe any idea in my book. If you think it's a positive idea relative to this reading thing, then triangulate, find seven other books roughly on the same

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

topic, and you do not have to read all 317 pages. But to me, Edward de Bono, who was the creativity guy, said the magic of creativity is, he didn't use the word reading, reading horizontally. It's not the depth of a narrow topic for a PhD, it's the breadth of what you read.

And I think you said it perfectly, I'm more than willing to answer your question, but you said things come to mind, and that's really the point. It's having a broad bucket of stuff from which those things come to mind. That's really what creativity is all about. I've seen one too many self-help books on the shelf that said "these seven things will make you rich, these seven things will make you a great leader". The thing I owe my mother most at some level is she made me a reader by the age of five, and it was horizontal reading.

I don't find anything uninteresting, for all practical purposes. And I think it helps, I think it helps when I'm writing, it helps when I'm speaking. It's just what you said. I'm in the middle of a sentence, and some little lightning bolt of an article that I read in the Washington Post, speaking of good things Jeff Bezos has done, or what have you, it just zips into your head, and somehow or other it influences you.

Roger Dooley: One final tip here before we go, I want to be respectful of your time, Tom. We've been talking a lot about-

Tom Peters: Yeah, I'm going back to the dentist as soon as I hang up, so ... Just kidding.

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogendooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Roger Dooley: Do you have any tips for the work-from-home world that you've discovered? I assume that you've been working from home office for quite a while, at least part of the time. But do you have any tips for 2020?

Tom Peters: Well, May of 2020, in the middle of the COVID crisis. There's more to life than productivity. You do not have to drive yourself for perhaps the level of productivity you might've gotten when you were in the office. You need to spend more time with your family probably, you need to spend more time, and I don't mean outside at the bar or tattoo parlor, with members of your community. You can read it on your next ...

In that, there were two papers which you referred to, the one which is The 27 Number Ones, and then there's another one. And it has a wonderful page that I found from a community college in Oregon, in something they had sent around to all their employees and faculty members. It was sort of 10 Rules for Living Through COVID-19, and it said things like, "If you're really feeling crappy, that's okay, you don't just have to behave the way you would try to behave if you were at work. It was all about resonance, caring, taking the time.

So don't kill yourself. Remember that your family and your community is more important than your job, because that is your number one. I was raised a Presbyterian, but I'm a lowercase-R religious person who doesn't darken many church doors, so I'm not giving you the evangelical sermon of the day. Be sociable.

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

We didn't have time to talk about one of my other favorite topics, which is Susan Cain's book, *Quiet*, all about the power of introverts. During that WFH meeting, you don't have to be the one who talks the most. I talk for a living, it pays for the bread.

Six or seven of my pals and I get together for a Zoom lunch every week, and I was going hiking with about four of them the other day. One of them who I know pretty well, he said, "You know, you talk too goddamn much during these lunches." I just was dumbfounded. I know I always talk too much, but it was ... And really, we had one just yesterday, and I didn't talk. But you don't have to be the noisiest one, just be thoughtful and get done what you can do. Save time for social stuff, hopefully your boss will be part of that. Calm down, do your best to take care of your children, wear a face mask.

I was tweeting on the face mask and I said, you know, Roger, the real reality is I don't give a damn about you, and I don't give a damn about your family. The reason you're wearing a face mask is so you will not pollute 40 people who you've never met with the disease. Whatever you choose to do with your family, fine. I mean, obviously you don't want him to get sick. But I call not wearing a face mask assault with a deadly weapon, and I would say that that one-liner is not really necessarily an exaggeration. The face masks don't help you not get it very much. What they do is they help you not spread it. And I think that's a moral responsibility of the first order.

Roger Dooley: That seems applicable, but it's lost on many people. People seem to think, "I'm not afraid of this virus, I'm

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>

## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

going to show that by not wearing a mask," not realizing that it's the people around them that are affected. Anyway, we'll let you get back to your dentist, Tom.

Let me remind our listeners that we will have links to both of the documents that we talked about on the show notes page at [rogerdooley.com/podcast](http://rogerdooley.com/podcast), and I encourage you to check out Tom Peters on Twitter, where he is [tom\\_peters](https://twitter.com/tom_peters), and also at [tompeters.com](http://tompeters.com) where he has basically everything he's done for many years. So Tom, thanks so much for being on the show, it's been a blast.

Tom Peters: No, Roger, thanks for inviting me, and particularly at this time where we'd all like to help each other out a little bit, I hope. Thanks.

Roger Dooley: This is Roger again. I hope you enjoyed that conversation. Just a reminder, you can see the episode in a video format as well on my YouTube channel. The show notes page for this episode at [rogerdooley.com/podcast](http://rogerdooley.com/podcast) will have a link to the video, as well as direct links to download Tom's two new manifestos. Plus, there will be a text version of our conversation there. If you want more video episodes, be sure to let me know. Thanks for tuning in.

Thank you for tuning into this episode of Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's online writing and resources, the best starting point is [RogerDooley.com](http://RogerDooley.com).

And remember, Roger's new book, *Friction*, is now available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and book sellers everywhere. Bestselling author Dan

**The Brainfluence Podcast with Roger Dooley**

<http://www.RogerDooley.com/podcast>



## **Tom Peters: Excellence in Troubled Times**

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/tom-peters-troubled>

Pink calls it, "An important read," and Wharton Professor Dr. Joana Berger said, "You'll understand Friction's power and how to harness it."

For more information or for links to Amazon and other sellers, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Friction).