

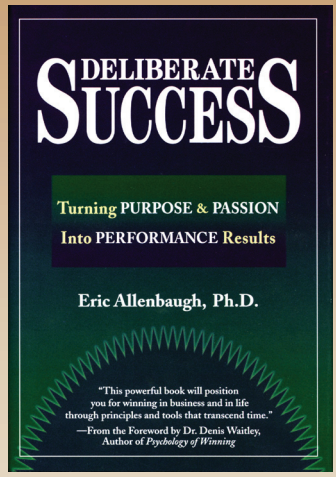
Revised 2015

ARTICLE 8

THE 3R'S FOR RENEWING YOUR COMPETITIVE EDGE: *Release – Reaffirm – Reinvent*[®]

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ADAPTED FROM
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Your deliberate success is our business!

THE 3R’S FOR RENEWING YOUR COMPETITIVE EDGE:

Release – Reaffirm – Reinvent[®]

***“As our case is new,
we must think and act anew.”***

Abraham Lincoln

Maintaining the status quo in a changing environment is not a viable option. Dinosaurs tried this strategy – and it didn’t work. Similarly, if *you* merely stayed at your current state of development for the next several years, you might likewise become an “extinct species” in your own career. Ask yourself: “Am I lagging behind in my field, am I just keeping up, or am I one of the innovative leaders?” Even if you are moving ahead, the speed you are moving must be faster than the speed global business advances – otherwise, you will still be trailing behind. A strategic focus on your continued *employability* reaps far more rewards than merely achieving current *employment*. Any way you look at it, reinventing yourself at a fairly good clip is indispensable in today’s highly competitive global environment.

***“Even if you’re on the right track,
you will get run over if you just sit there.”***

Will Rogers

Futurists estimate that fifty percent of the jobs available in the next ten years have not yet been invented. To sustain your competitive edge and assure your employability, you must commit to a continual process of reinventing yourself – or suffer the consequences of possible obsolescence. Change comes with the territory, and adaptable, learning individuals and organizations will clearly prevail over those that have fallen in love with their current status. Tom Peters, the prolific management author and esteemed management consultant, succinctly communicates this message in his typically provocative way:

***“Somebody is going to do you in.
The only question: Who will it be?
A competitor – or you?”***

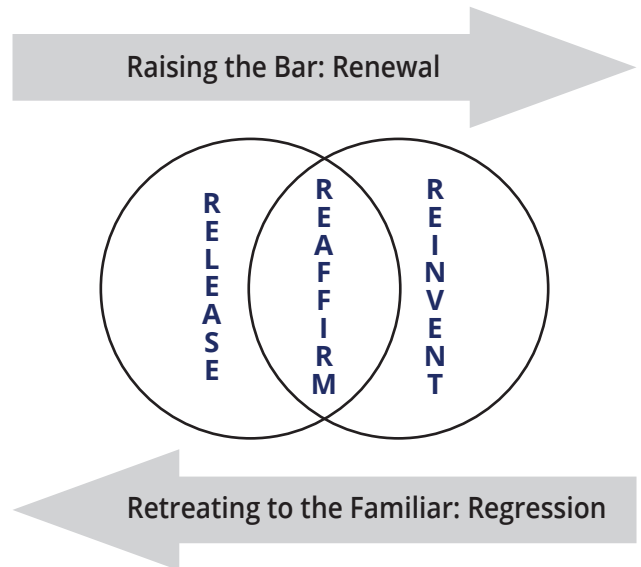
In a 2014 interview of Tom Peters by Allen Webb, Editor In Chief of the *Quarterly*, Peters said “*Relentless experimentation was probably important in the 1970s—now it’s do or die.*” Only a few years earlier, Peters felt as if he were falling behind – even though he was considered by many as *the* cutting-edge management consultant. Given that, Peters cleared his calendar for eighteen

months and spent that time reading the most recent business books – *reinventing* himself in a strategic effort to provide current and continuous value to his clients. He practices the very principle he advocates: “*You are only as good as your talent.*”

Deliberate success – getting from where you are now to where you want or perhaps, need to be – requires a conscious process of working through the “3R’s” of renewal:

- 1. Release:** What must you release or let go of to provide room and resources to support your growth? (Consider, for example, *releasing* anything that no longer provides value, such as obsolete products and services, yesterday’s technology, negative behaviors and attitudes, limiting beliefs, unhealthy relationships, and bureaucratic policies and practices.)
- 2. Reaffirm:** What existing strengths and resources do you need to reaffirm and intensify to support your next growth steps? (Consider such factors as *reaffirming* your commitment to stellar customer service, honoring your current talents and strengths, empowering employees, continuing lifelong learning, and engaging in practices that promote fiscal viability.)
- 3. Reinvent:** How might you reinvent yourself to assure that you are at the cutting edge in your field while simultaneously contributing to your career fulfillment? (Consider, for example, increasing your value by *reinventing* your products and services, delighting your customers, expanding your knowledge, building new skills, and developing new markets.)

THE “3-Rs” OF RENEWAL: Release - Reaffirm - Reinvent



“When you’re not learning — someone, somewhere else, is. When you meet — guess who has the advantage?”

Bob Pritchard

The “3R’s” apply equally to both individual and organizational renewal. Recall some years ago when the computer field identified IBM as the benchmark of the industry – they were on top. When purchasing computer equipment, people typically asked: “*Is this IBM compatible?*” You don’t hear that question anymore. Why? IBM fell in love with its way of doing business, fell in love with mainframe computers, and fell in love with promoting top leaders exclusively from within. They could not let go of parts of their culture and business practices that no longer served them well and could not adapt to the current business environment.

IBM became an “endangered species” in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s as they lost significant market share to their more adaptive competitors that provided cutting edge hardware, software, and services to their customers. At the brink of extinction, their corporate “wake-up call” finally mobilized IBM to act. Market conditions forced IBM to take drastic action, including massive layoffs and reshaping their culture. Having learned a difficult lesson, IBM returned to greatness by acting, rather than reacting, and deliberately reinventing itself.

“The problem is never how to get new, innovative thoughts into your mind, but how to get old ones out.”

Dee Hock

Founder & Former CEO of Visa

In contrast, Jack Welch, who headed General Electric during its transformational period from 1980 through 2001, clearly understood the “3R’s.” Described then as one of the world’s most fabled CEOs, Welch deliberately *Released* some old ways of doing business that no longer served GE. He strongly and consistently *Reaffirmed* basic business values, yet *Reinvented* GE through and through. Under his leadership, GE transformed from manufacturing household appliances to becoming a highly adaptive, diverse, global business producing aircraft engines, providing financial services, and even expanding into television networks.

“For something new to begin, something must end.”

Kris King

The tumultuous Great Recession, emerging in late 2007 and continuing through 2009, caused government, financial institutions, investors, and corporations to take a very hard look at what wasn’t working, what was working, and what needed to change. To get the economy back on track, a number of questionable business practices needed to be *Released*, values of integrity and accountability clearly needed to be *Reaffirmed* in both the private and public sectors, and many practices need to be *Reinvented*, including revising regulatory processes, developing tighter business policies and methods, and, in some cases, changing corporate and government leadership.

“It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change.”

Charles Darwin

FOCUS ON INCREASING YOUR VALUE

The most valuable career development advice I have ever been given came from Dr. Don Murray, a friend and fellow consultant. While in my early years of consulting, Don said to me: “*Whenever you have contact with a client, customer, or your boss, make sure you provide them with something of value in that moment.*” The value in that moment might be an idea, a solution, or a relevant product or service. By so doing, you become a valued resource resulting in others seeking you out. The more value you provide, the more influential you become. Imagine the many career doors that open when people associate *you* with providing value. To assure that you are providing

present value and positioning yourself for future value, consciously seek to reinvent yourself by learning new ways, engaging in cutting edge activities, and letting go of old baggage.

***“Learning is not compulsory —
neither is survival.”***

W. Edwards Deming

Brian Tracy advocates that *“You are the President of your own Personal Services Corporation – the Chief Executive Officer of your own life. You are responsible for your own personal business. You are in charge of production, distribution, marketing, quality, finance, and research and development. You even determine your own salary.”* As “President” of your own “Personal Services Corporation,” you have a distinct responsibility to provide high value to your customers and your employer by continually reinventing yourself.

Instead of waiting for your employer to provide continuing education, pay for it yourself. (You are worth the investment.) Instead of asking for more money, ask for more responsibility. Instead of looking to how much money you are earning, look to how much value you are providing. Instead of seeking to avoid assignments, volunteer for activities that benefit your organization. When you consistently provide high value to your employer, you will – in the long-run – expand your influence, achieve greater results, and ultimately generate significantly higher income.

***“I couldn’t wait for success —
so I went ahead without it.”***

Jonathan Winters

What specific, tangible steps are you now taking to increase your value in this global economy? What talents do you offer and what benefits do you provide that will encourage both employers and customers to continue knocking at your door? What deliberate action steps are you taking to *Release* that which no longer serves you, to *Reaffirm* and enhance your intrinsic talents, and to *Reinvent* yourself to provide even higher value in the future?

***“Successful people do
what unsuccessful people
are unwilling to do.”***

Zig Ziglar

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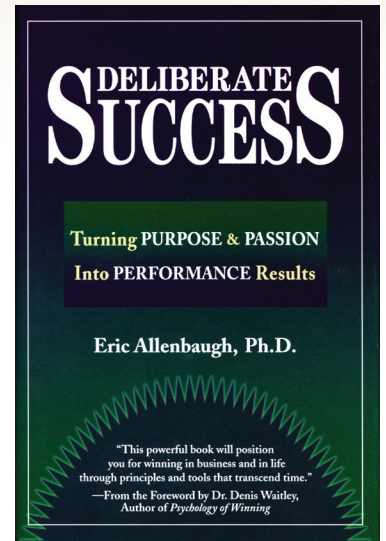
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