

# Tom peters on uncertainty

Sociology



The post-bureaucratic era has introduced many new norms for institutions and businesses. While the staid structures of the clearly defined hierarchy may have served history well, they can not keep pace with the speed of change in today's world. By understanding that we are faced with continual uncertainty, organizations can restructure to take advantage of that change. Networking and team concept approaches can offer the ability of an organization to react and act in the face of sudden change. While many opportunities will exist, it is the organizational structure most adept at handling change that will define the success or the failure.

The globalization of capitalism has also presented new markets and manufacturing bases. Yet, here again, the organization is faced with uncertainty. The firm may find itself embroiled in international politics or environmental issues that may threaten to sink their investment. The venture must be structured in such a fashion that they can withstand the assault of the unknown. Cultural and political awareness of the regions where they do business is a start, but they must also project socially responsible behavior. A company may be wading into untested waters around the globe and it is wise to take along a life support system.

Capitalizing on new technology can be a great success or a bleak failure.

New technology often results in a loss of jobs or displaced workers.

Technology has made outsourcing a better option to increase profits but is filled with uncertainty. There may be a political or social backlash against the practice, which could result in poor public relations or consumer boycotts.

The corporation must be aware that these uncertainties exist and be prepared to confront political groups. This may be the road to greater profits, but can only be navigated by a firm prepared to deal with the uncertainty.

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To sum it up, Peters was giving the business community an insight into the opportunities and the dangers of sudden change. The rapidly changing face of globalization and technology has presented managers with a new set of variables for the 21st century. Organizations must be structured to accommodate the sudden change. Employees need to be aware of an expanding global presence and prepare themselves to act in the global interest. 'Business as usual' no longer exists and those that aren't prepared for sudden change will perish. By following Peters's warning, the firm will be presented with a new set of challenges and find many new opportunities amidst the changing landscape of the 21st century.