

"Jack"  
Jack Welch  
Notes by Dave Kraft

More often than not, business is smell, feel, and touch as much as or more than numbers. If we wait for the perfect answer, the world will pass us by. I had decided what I liked and wanted to do and, just as important, what I wasn't so good at (18) The quickest way to neutralize that advantage is to go after the scalps of those who dare to dream and reach—but fail. That just reinforces a risk-averse culture. We wanted everyone in the company to know that taking a big swing and missing was okay (31,32) Unfocused dabblers...lacking intensity and passion for any one thing (54) Some employees proudly described the company as a "super-tanker"—strong and steady in the water. I respected that but wanted the company to be more like a speedboat, fast and agile, able to turn on a dime (92)

In those days, I was throwing hand grenades, trying to blow up tradition and rituals that I felt held us back (97) I told people's stories again and again to every GE audience at every opportunity. For the next 20 years, I used that same story-telling technique to get ideas transferred across the company (104) GE would become a place that was more high spirited, more adaptable, and more agile than other companies a fraction of our size (107) The organization had to see every management action aligned with the vision (109)

Removing people will always be the hardest decision a leader faces. Anyone who "enjoys doing it" shouldn't be on the payroll, and neither should anyone who "can't do it." (128) Change doesn't come from a slogan or a speech. It happens because you put the right people in place to make it happen (135)

Get a group of people around a table, regardless of their rank, to wrestle with a particularly tough issue. Stew on it from every angle—flush out everyone's thinking—but don't come to an immediate conclusion (141) Change has no constituency—and perceived revolution has even less (169)

**Questions to ask:**

- What would you do if you were appointed CEO
- What would you do in your 1<sup>st</sup> 30 days?
- Do you have a current vision of what to do?
- How would you go about developing one?
- How would you go about selling the vision?
- What foundations would you build on?

- What current practices would you jettison? (177)
- What did you find about a presentation what was constructive and clarifying?
- What did you find confusing and troublesome?
- What do you regard as your most important take-aways? (181)

Of course, a word or a phrase wasn't enough. We had to back it up with a system that would make it happen (191) Making initiatives successful is all about focus and passionate commitment. The drumbeat must be relentless. Every leadership action must demonstrate total commitment to the initiative (299) Having a 23 year old mentoring a 36 year old in the Internet (346) I was an outrageous champion of everything we did. My behavior was often excessive and perhaps obsessive (393) Once we had highly energized leaders in place, ideas flowed like water downhill to the rest of the company (394) Wallowing—getting people together, often spontaneously, to wrestle through a complex issue (397) I've always believed that when the rate of change inside an institution become slower than the rate of change outside, the end is in sight (432)