

Practically Speaking

Live ... Eat ... Sleep ... Breathe: PROTOTYPE

Image: finger painting in a kindergarten classroom. Image: an NFL team Tuesday walk-through practice session. Image: an investment bank's acquisition team creating reams of spreadsheets with dozens of possible deal structures. Image: a theater company holding a staged reading of a play.

Practice is the essence of the arts (sports, theater, etc.) ... and ... almost entirely absent in business.

In business, we talk ... and talk, and talk some more ... and plan and plan ... and plan some more ... before we head to the practice field. At which point, likely as not, all the WOW has been talked out of our inspiration ... and we're left with the "safe" (a/k/a couldn't-possibly-offend-the-boss-or-any-other-living-human-being) choice.

What to do? Start with the Quick Prototyper's Laws from the *Project50* book (#33 page 144):

- 1. Define a small, practical test of some piece of the project...in a page or less of text. Now.**
- 2. Gather materials already at hand to conduct the test...on the (very) cheap. Now.**
- 3. Find a (kinky?) partner-customer who will provide a test site and will act as a sounding board. Now.**
- 4. Set a very tight deadline of five working days - or a little more or a little less - for this next, practical step.**
- 5. Conduct the test. ASAP.**
- 6. De-brief and meticulously record the results in a Project Notebook.**
- 7. Set the next test date. ASAP. In five days.**
- 8. Repeat...ad infinitum.**

Big Idea: Establish the Rhythm of Quick Prototyping. Big Idea: Pay attention to WOW. Talk WOW. Be WOW.

Do it. NOW.

- Tom Peters

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