

Choose to be Great with These 3 Behaviors!

In last week's [blog](#), I introduced the three core behaviors for business greatness as researched by [Jim Collins](#) in his new book "[Great by Choice](#)." These behaviors include fanatical discipline, empirical creativity, and productive paranoia. Let's take a deeper look at each of these, so we can have a better understanding of how to apply them in our own businesses.



In the core behavior of fanatical discipline, Collins discusses how these companies had a relentless approach in implementing their processes and strategy. Collins describes "relentless" as "consistency of action, consistency of values, consistency with long term goals, consistency with performance standards, consistency of method, and consistency over time." He then adds, "For a 10Xer the only legitimate form of discipline is self-discipline, having the inner will to do whatever it takes to create a great outcome, no matter how difficult." These 10Xer companies operated on a completely different level of discipline than the average or even the

comparison companies. They were fanatics about it!

In regards to the core behavior of empirical creativity, Collins shows that 10Xers would try things in the marketplace, get feedback, make changes, and get more feedback. They relied on this practice to make bold moves with less risk. He says, "By empirical, we mean relying upon direct observations, conducting practical experiments, and / or engaging directly with evidence rather than relying upon opinion, whim, conventional wisdom, or untested ideas." I really relate to Collins analogy of firing bullets instead of cannonballs. Fire the bullets and make adjustments to be sure you zero in on the target. When you have a lock on the target, then you fire your cannonball.

When observing the core behavior of productive paranoia, the 10Xers displayed a sense of constant worry in regards to what could cause their demise in good times as well as bad. They worried, like [Gates](#), that the guy in the garage would come out with something that would sink them. Like me, you may remember [Andy Grove](#) of Intel, a 10X company, coming out of the cover of Fortune with the title [Only the Paranoid Survive](#)." Collins says, "They (10Xers) believe that conditions will – absolutely, with 100 percent certainty – turn against them without warning, at some unpredictable point in time, at some highly inconvenient moment. And they'd better be prepared."

I have discussed many times in these writings how [Efficiency](#) is working toward its BHAG by creating many products in the marketplace and observing the evidence of what works. Those are our bullets, and when the empirical evidence comes in, we will fire a cannonball. I expected this to be a core behavior, but the other two behaviors of discipline and paranoia found in the 10Xers surprised me. We will be working hard to step up to our discipline and paranoia going forward. How will you use these behaviors to be great?