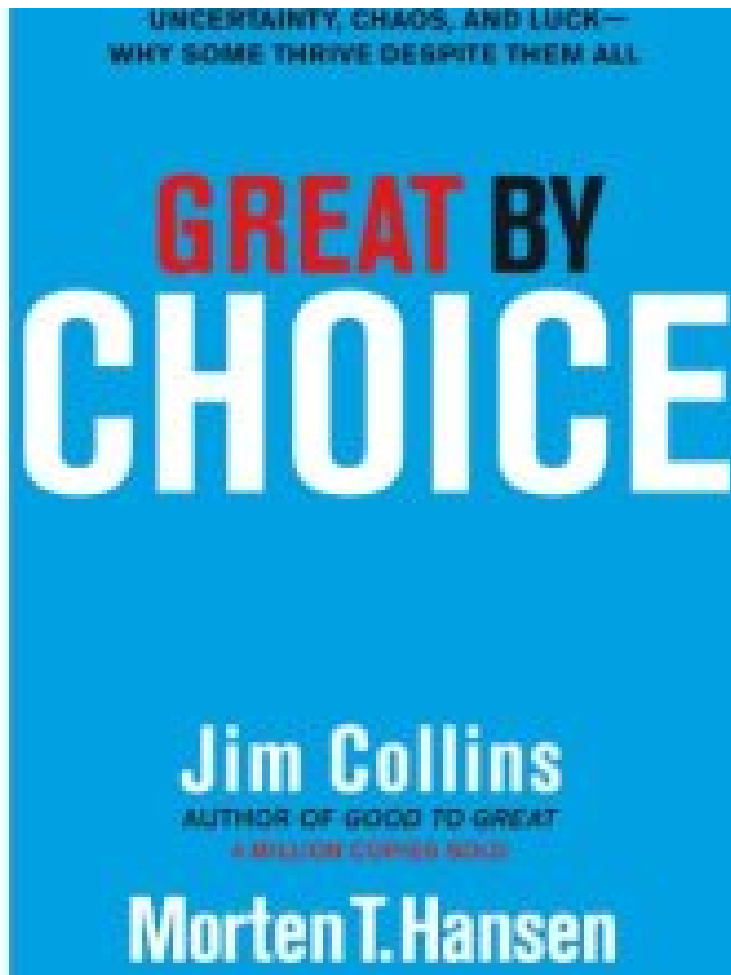


# 3 Keys to Business Greatness!

If you asked me the business authors out there who I think provide the most value, I would have to say [Jim Collins](#) and [Peter Drucker](#). Both of these guys have provided huge insight to the business community on how to run a successful company. Like most businesses, we at Efficiencie are starting the year formulating strategies and goals to make forward progress toward our destination, and reading Collins' and Drucker's material has always been good preparation.

Peter Drucker is legendary and has since passed on. I credit him for giving me the insight in the early '90s to see how the information revolution would provide the future with value and to develop a mutual fund called [IPS Millennium Fund](#) in '95 to participate in this information revolution.

Jim Collins opened my mind to creating a company that had a big vision with a BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal), a heart with a core purpose, and personality with core values. So, when Collins came out with his new book, I was anxious to see the new awareness that would come from his decade long research.



In [Great by Choice](#), Collins and Hansen set up an awareness of how three key areas acted as the common themes in the companies that have dealt with uncertainty, chaos, and luck as well as why some companies thrive despite all this. What they found was very interesting and contradicts common thinking about great companies. They discovered what they call 10Xers (companies that have been beating the marketing and comparison firms by at least 10 times in stock market performance) were **not** more visionary, more bold, more risk taking, more innovative, or more creative than the comparison companies.

They were more of 3 things:

- 1) **More Disciplined**
- 2) **More Empirical**
- 3) **More Paranoid**

This book is very eye opening! When we think of a company that has had great success, we usually assume it has done so with a new break through idea, a new patent, or by taking a big risk that is paying off. However, this was not the case. Of course, to a point, these companies were innovative and creative, but they became really great by finding what works through empirical evidence, testing that out, and then being super disciplined to get it done. They also worried excessively about what was out there that could change the game for them.

I will discuss each in more detail in next week's blog. Happy New Year, and I wish you much success this year being worried about what is coming, gathering evidence that your ideas work, and implementing them with vigorous discipline.

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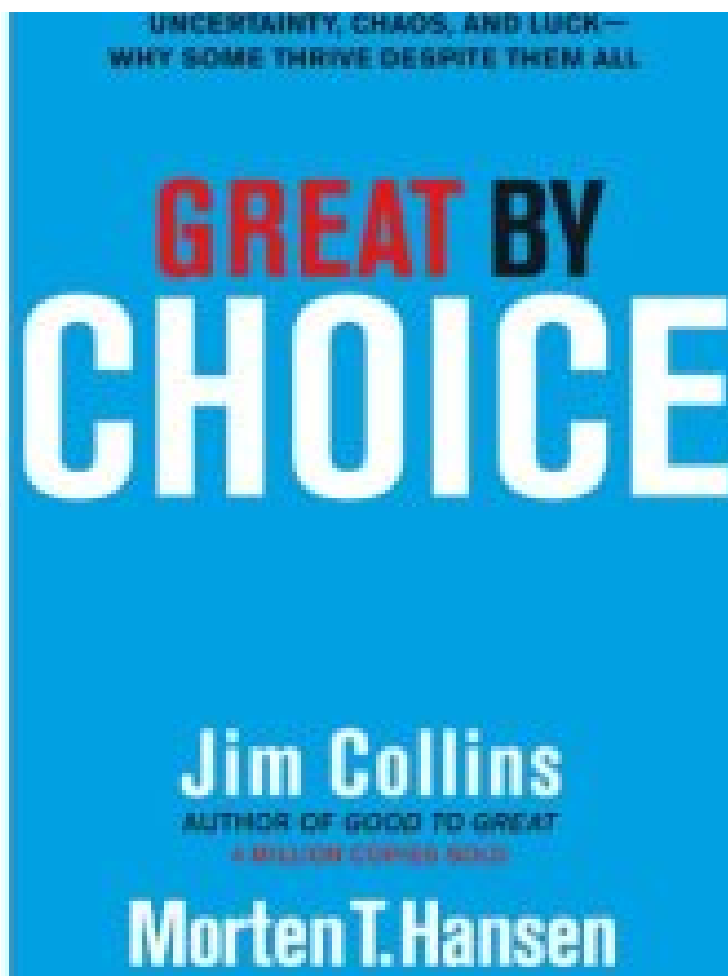
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**Choose to be Great with These  
3 Behaviors!**

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?