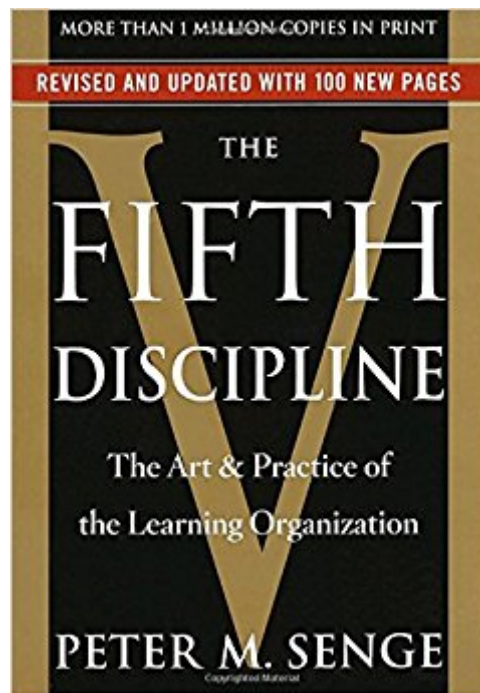




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# **The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice Of The Learning Organization**



## Synopsis

Completely Updated and Revised This revised edition of Peter Senge's bestselling classic, *The Fifth Discipline*, is based on fifteen years of experience in putting the book's ideas into practice. As Senge makes clear, in the long run the only sustainable competitive advantage is your organization's ability to learn faster than the competition. The leadership stories in the book demonstrate the many ways that the core ideas in *The Fifth Discipline*, many of which seemed radical when first published in 1990, have become deeply integrated into people's ways of seeing the world and their managerial practices. In *The Fifth Discipline*, Senge describes how companies can rid themselves of the learning disabilities that threaten their productivity and success by adopting the strategies of learning organizations—ones in which new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, collective aspiration is set free, and people are continually learning how to create results they truly desire. The updated and revised Currency edition of this business classic contains over one hundred pages of new material based on interviews with dozens of practitioners at companies like BP, Unilever, Intel, Ford, HP, Saudi Aramco, and organizations like Roca, Oxfam, and The World Bank. It features a new Foreword about the success Peter Senge has achieved with learning organizations since the book's inception, as well as new chapters on Impetus (getting started), Strategies, Leaders' New Work, Systems Citizens, and Frontiers for the Future. Mastering the disciplines Senge outlines in the book will:

- Reignite the spark of genuine learning driven by people focused on what truly matters to them
- Bridge teamwork into macro-creativity
- Free you of confining assumptions and mindsets
- Teach you to see the forest and the trees
- End the struggle between work and personal time

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Peter Senge, founder of the Center for Organizational Learning at MIT's Sloan School of Management, experienced an epiphany while meditating one morning back in the fall of 1987. That was the day he first saw the possibilities of a "learning organization" that used "systems thinking" as the primary tenet of a revolutionary management philosophy. He advanced the concept into this primer, originally released in 1990, written for those interested in integrating his philosophy into their corporate culture. The Fifth Discipline has turned many readers into true believers; it remains the ideal introduction to Senge's carefully integrated corporate framework, which is structured around "personal mastery," "mental models," "shared vision," and "team learning." Using ideas that originate in fields from science to spirituality, Senge explains why the learning organization matters, provides an unvarnished summary of his management principals, offers some basic tools for practicing it, and shows what it's like to operate under this system. The book's concepts remain stimulating and relevant as ever. --Howard Rothman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A director at MIT's Sloan School, Senge here proposes the "systems thinking" method to help a corporation to become a "learning organization," one that integrates at all personnel levels indifferently related company functions (sales, product design, etc.) to "expand the ability to produce." He describes requisite disciplines, of which systems-thinking is the fifth. Others include "personal mastery" of one's capacities and "team learning" through group discussion of individual objectives and problems. Employees and managers are also encouraged to examine together their often negative perceptions or "mental models" of company people and procedures. The text is esoteric and flavored with terms like "recontextualized rationality," but the book should help inventory-addled retailers whom the author cites as unaware of their customers' desire for quality. Macmillan Book Clubs selection. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Peter M. Senge focuses to dismantle people's mindset of the out-there vs. in-here mentality, as a precursor of understanding the inter-connected nature of our world. Regardless of location and

time, every chain of events affect one another systematically, specially the globalization of business and technology. This book is an absolute must for those seeking to understand the nature of human and technological inter-dependencies within our ecosystem. Senge emphasizes on 5 main disciplines that evolve a company in to a "Learning organization". They are virtually practiced by the best fortune 500 companies (Verizon, Coca-Cola, Google, etc.). The disciplines improve from Dr. W. Edwards Deming's work of quality management, which rose Japan from ashes to being the 2nd largest economy in the 1960's. This book is a useful guide for those taking university statistics. It's filled with history, personal experiences, and must-knows. It's dense, however simplified impressively well. For example, he describes the complex system behind a descent beer company through the perspective of the Brewer, wholesaler, and retailer. Along with week by week events, Data, charts, and descriptions. Somehow, he even connects the truck driver into all this. There are so many examples, he taps into every body's perspective. There is one minor drawback: he cites too many examples and naturally does not have space to explain all of them. This book might require a bit of personal research if read critically. For example, he makes controversial claims like the modern education system being flawed, and the influence of terrorism, but hesitates to dissect the issues. He throws them in as fun facts, and trusts the reader to take it from there. His revised edition contains almost 100 new pages: -step-by step teachings on how to be not just a leader, but also a designer, teacher, and steward-how to reconnect within society as a whole

This book explains a lot not only in a business environment, but also government, family, and anywhere else where several humans must get along and get the job done. Well written and full of examples. Might even explain why the latest election turned out the way it did (and the Russians have nothing to do with it!)

Although it is somewhat evident that this book is a bit older and lacking some modern day examples, "The Fifth Discipline" by Peter Senge captures concepts of how to create a learning organization. Senge masterfully explains how people are stuck in a traditional way of thought and how it affects our decision making in business practices. The book also features a simulation experiment done with MIT students called, "The Beer Game". The game results from show a repeated pattern of the points Senge is making about how we think similarly in terms of individuality and how it creates cycles in which we fail. From there, he explains his insights on how we can break these cycles from a traditional linear way of thinking to systems thinking which

eventually ties in to create a better learning organization. As an engineering major, I felt this book did a very good job in tying a lot of concepts together that is practical in the major. The book also does a good job of highlighting where systems thinking is also practical in improving broader things like family, teams and organizations along with businesses. This book is definitely worth the read for anybody as it applies to everyday interactions. For anybody with management and business control positions, this book will definitely enlighten you on the benefits of operating under a learning organization especially if working in a supply chain industry.

The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization written by Peter Senge in 1990 has some great viewpoints for upper and middle managers to learn from. The book may seem to apply its learning philosophy for large size companies but is valid for a company of any size. Senge's views of the learning organization are broken down into five disciplines; they are: personal mastery, mental models, team learning, building shared vision, and systems thinking. In chapter 2, Senge explains the seven deficiencies of a learning organization which he calls the seven learning disabilities. I don't know why but the one comparable of the boiling frog stands out in my mind the most; that of letting threats gradually sneak up on or your system. Or being complacency or too comfortable where you can't react in time because it's too late. Senge does a good job of giving the reader a visual with his illustrations and examples. On page 89 he mentions of how the temperature controls adjustments can overshoot the target and exceed the desired limits. A simple time delay between adjustments can help stabilize the process from overshooting the opposite limits. I've seen this on systems that monitor the relative humidity when storms blow in and change the dew point. Also, when my spouse comes home from work and adjusts the thermostat as low as it can go thinking the A/C unit will cool down faster. By the time I get home the house is freezing. Senge's point is that sometimes delays to a process are sometimes necessary while other delays, like in the beer game orders, may be a burden and create an issue. The beer game was in chapter 3 is a great example of how material flows from the brewery, through the distributor, and then to the retailer for sale to the consumers. The process is a little redundant and maybe a little long winded but is important for the readers or managers to understand how easily things can go wrong. My initial thought was the book was written in 1990 and now that we have the internet with B2B software, it could resolve the communication breakdown between the three parties and have material flow closer to JIT process. This would help the reaction time as sales increase or decrease. Senge references the beer game throughout his book and mentions the game was first developed

in the 1960s as a demonstration at MIT's Sloan School of Management. The 7 Disabilities of an organization relate to the 11 Laws of an Organization in chapter 4. The seven disabilities can be conquered by the disciplines of the eleven laws of an organization. What I thought reading through the beer game was somewhat difficult but was nothing compared to the agonizing chapters of 6 and 7. Chapter 8 was refreshing that deals with Personal Mastery. I guess the part I enjoyed was the Personal Vision where I can evaluate my own visions and not just my goals. It clarifies the vision and what it takes to achieve being a personal mastery. It mentions to fill in the gap between my vision and reality; the gap is the energy of making my vision a reality. One thing Senge mentions is that organizations learn only through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organizational learning. But without it no organizational learning occurs. Leadership, vision, and disciplines all play a part in creating a learning organization. These are just some of my notes that I made for myself and almost gave the book only three stars for the long drawn out sections. Other than that it is a good book and one to highlight and tag notes inside and keep on your shelf. That is just my take on it - hope my notes help.

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