



By: Kelly Graves "The Corporate Therapist™"

**What do organizations, such as those in the publishing industry, need to do to ensure survival, readership, and jobs for their people and provide a service to their communities?**

The publishing industry is at a wonderful crossroads, depending on how you choose to look at this challenge. Change and evolution are occurring all around us. Certain industries need to change, innovate, reinvent themselves or they will simply go the way of the steam ship and die out. A few industries in need of innovation are:

- Publishing,
- Insurance,
- Real Estate,
- Automobiles Sales
- Community Colleges

Information and news will still be disseminated, people will still purchase insurance and automobiles, and our society will still educate those who have a burning desire to learn. However, the process in which the organizations within these industries choose to conduct business must change dramatically. They must accept reality, innovate, and implement the innovative ideas and plans which will secure their futures.

The first step in any change process, whether we are discussing an individual that needs to quit smoking, a company who is hemorrhaging money, or an industry that is in the late stages of their life cycle is to accept reality and admit that course corrections must be made in order to survive. Beliefs, behaviors, processes and cultures must change. Paradigm shifts must happen. This is akin to a doctor telling a patient who has been smoking for thirty years that "you must stop now and change your behaviors or go home and make your final arrangements." It's serious! The good news is that there are options.

These options will be difficult for some people within these industries and there will be attrition for those people and organizations that choose not to respond quickly and with a clear, effective and innovative plan. Some individuals and organizations don't respond well to change and they will be heard saying, "But this is how we have always done it," or "I have seen these ups and downs before in my thirty years in this business. Don't worry, this is just a fad and will blow over." This kind of thinking is, "stick your head in the sand" blind justification. Never underestimate the power of denial.

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The people and organizations that are profitable in the years to come will be those who are thinking of the future with excitement and innovative ideas, not remembering the good old days. History and evolution has clearly shown us that the animals, people or organizations that avoid extinction have always been those who are able to adapt to the changing conditions.

The next step to survival is *innovation*. So the question isn't whether or not newspapers should advertise on search engines or not, but rather about how to satisfy the customers' thirst for news in a format that is efficient, convenient, dependable and enjoyable. In other words, the publishing industry must figure out how to provide the service of delivering news in a format that people want given today's technology and consequently will be profitable for the organization that delivers this service.

Obviously this is a major undertaking for the leaders in this and other industries. Those who approach this with an innovative, solution oriented, and behavioral mindset will likely prosper and those who approach it using a *problem solving* formula will die out. There is a subtle difference between the two methods and the choice will ultimately lead to success or disaster.