

## **Burn the ships!**

Once brand leadership has made the proverbial decision to “Burn the ships!”, the real work starts, and it starts with marketing the new brand direction internally to make sure all hands are on deck. Every organization goes about this internal marketing in a different way, as they should, since every organization has a different culture and brand.

Needle & Rosenberg, a leading patent law firm, rented out the Georgia Pacific Theatre and hosted a huge (400 people) party to celebrate, communicate, and educate everyone in the organization, including spouses and children, about their new direction. There were kiosks in the lobby and a massive wall mural of their new “magna carta.” They began, marked, and celebrated their new chapter in huge ways with a big company rollout.

As we mentioned in our previous post about “Step 6,” the brand leadership at Greenway Health chose a slightly different approach. T. Green, the CEO, knew it wasn’t part of the Greenway brand personality to rent a theatre, so they had a huge BBQ in their parking lot, and put on a “fireside chat” to make sure everyone heard the words directly from the source.

TurboChef didn’t have quite the same opportunity to celebrate its new direction. When the new management group took over, there was literally nothing to celebrate. The company was completely upside down, and there was only one direction they could go: UP! So, when the new management arrived, they simply ran in the new direction, carrying the remaining employees with them. After less than 3 years, the new management team had completely turned the organization around, and TurboChef was acquired for \$200 million.

There are many different adages and bumper sticker quotes that could easily describe the intelligent, prepared transition into growth mode; however, the following sums up the how and why brand should and do go about ringing in a big, audacious new direction:

“To eliminate an old belief, you must introduce a new belief.”

In the 1990 cold war thriller, [The Hunt for Red October](#), Captain Marko Ramius actually told the Kremlin that he was going to defect with the Soviet Union’s biggest, baddest new nuclear sub in an ice cold effort to make sure his crew were all committed. Today, brand leadership must be extraordinarily intentional and bold about bringing along the entire team in the new direction.

The research has been done and the decision has been made. There’s no going back.