



Do you know how your company's history can help to build its future?

With start-ups' permission, **all organizations have a past that can act as an engine or as a burden**; there is no middle ground. Faintheartedness is rarely seen in enduring companies.

When past becomes a burden strong enough to make our company sink, it is time to let it go. We are not thinking about eliminating wisdom –in other words, firing old employees who know the tips and tricks of the company–, but about **taking advantage of our company's historic knowledge to turn the burden into a powerful engine.**

It is an exercise of letting go some and renewing other attitudes, services or products, communication and selling channels, internal organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, processes and procedures...

Of course, many of these factors are paid attention after a workforce reduction. Nevertheless, our late experience shows that CEOs and middle managers are changing strategies: **creatively reorganizing in order to improve** rather than firing and losing internal talent.

To avoid all this sounding like empty topics we will give an example of a little company (less than 50 employees) in Vallès –north of Barcelona– that has become a reference in the distribution of office peripherals and their consumables.

Two years ago they faced **an important drop in demand**, as their costumers progressively extended the life of the peripherals and looked for alternative solutions to manage their consumables. A grey future turning black was ahead of them.

Nevertheless, Carles, one of the company's managers with whom we have the privilege to be friends, told us that fortunately they had reinvented themselves. As this is something that we love, our curiosity increased. We asked for details about what they had done and how.

"Well –he started–, it is very simple: if customers had reduced their costs to the minimal expression avoiding ties to fixed expenses, why could not we **turn fixed costs into variable ones?** So we have started offering pay-per-use features for those peripherals and consumables. Now, instead of selling them we rent them, charging a variable cost for their use, maintenance and repair services. This way our customers can change their focus from the P&L to delighting their customers."

Carles had not had summer vacations for some years. This last one it has been a pleasure to share with him some vacation days and seeing him so lively sharing positive experiences despite the difficulties.

How do you think their company's past helped them to build for it and encouraging future?