often your own people. But the financial markets are demanding more and you know you're going to have to cut deeper. It's a bit miserable but there is a path to the future.

The grand mistake is that we tend to cut away exactly the things we need to create that future. In any layoffs for example, it is very easy to use metrics based upon performance in the "*past*" world and therefore remove those seen as less successful in that previous era. That doesn't sound too bad but the result is you end up with a higher density of people successful in the past models (which are now in decline due to evolution) and hence you'll tend to reinforce your cultural inertia to change. Whoops.

Unfortunately, we also tend to remove the radicals, the trouble makers and the pioneers. Again, that doesn't sound to bad because we've got to become more "*efficient*". Unfortunately, those often annoying people are also the ones most likely to stick a soldering iron into a pot of ink, create inkjet printers and save the company. Whoops again. To compound this even more, we often cut far deeper than we need because we reward those with past success in order to retain them. In our effort to keep the past going we've cut away those very things which might give us a future. Our revenue then declines further and the spiral continues.

Much of this spiral of death played out in RIM as it attempted to cut costs, return to profitability, reinvent the past and found itself lacking in the capability it needed to create a future. In the most ironic examples, you often hear companies that have undergone aggressive