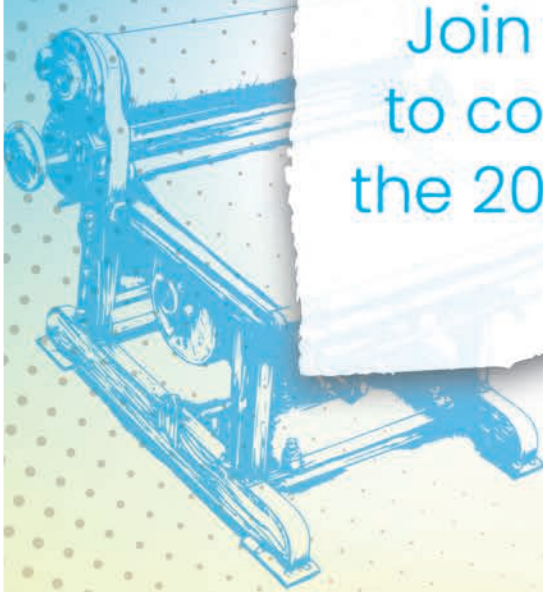


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April 2026

NEOGRAPHICS®
MASTERPIECES IN PRINT

Awards Night
Join the party
to congratulate
the 2026 Winners!



Join the Party – Get Your Tickets for the Neographics Awards Gala May 14, 2026

The judging is complete; winners have been notified and now it's on to the party! Make your plans today to congratulate the Winners!

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The way we think directly impacts our performance, resilience, and overall happiness. If you want to elevate your career and life, start by shifting your mindset.

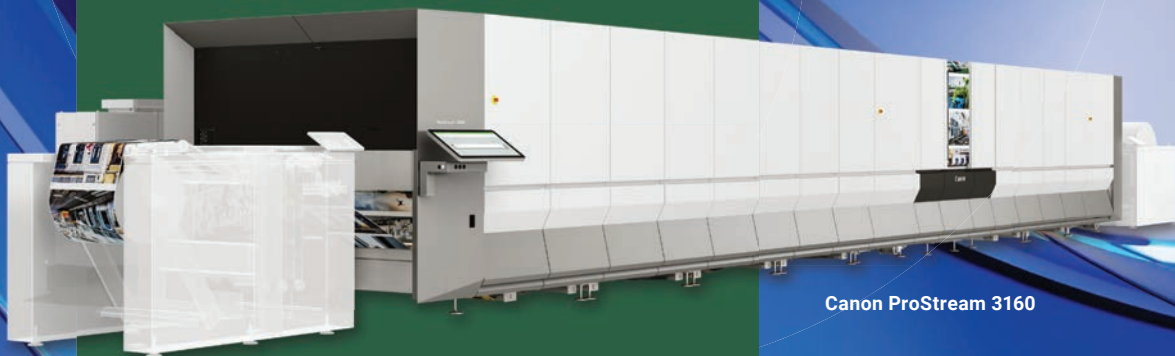
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Make your plans today to join us for the Neographics® Gala, where we celebrate exceptional achievement in print, packaging and graphic communications.

Congratulations to the Neographics® Power of Print® Award Winner 2026!

SureFold Co.

SIGNATURE

April 2026 | Published by Print & Graphic Communications Association

Print & Graphic Communications Association is the trade association serving the paper, print, packaging and mailing community in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, District of Columbia and Delaware.

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Join the Party – Get Your Tickets for the Neographics® Awards Gala

The judging is complete; winners have been notified and now it's on to the party! Make your plans today to join us for the Neographics® Gala, where we celebrate exceptional achievement in print, packaging and graphic communications. Don't miss an unforgettable evening honoring the Power of Print®.

WHAT: NEOGRAPHICS® AWARDS GALA

WHEN: MAY 14, 2026 | 6:00 - 10:00 PM

WHERE: THE SWITCH HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PA



This event begins with an open bar reception, vendor village, winners showcase and grand culinary presentation. At 8 pm, the open bar and decadent dessert station will continue while we honor the pinnacle of excellence in print, packaging and graphic communications.

TICKETS: Reserve online at www.printcommunications.org/events or contact us at (716) 691-3211 or info@printcommunications.org.

Franklin Awards of Excellence

Alcom Printing (13)
BookBaby (2)
CTC of Lackawanna County (5)
Diamond Packaging (5)
Fort Nassau Graphics (2)
Fry Communications (4)
Graphic Imaging (2)
The H & H Group
Hatteras
Indigo Ink Digital Printing (3)
Intellicor (8)
Ironmark (4)
K&W Finishing (2)
NB Bookbinding
NextGen Label Group (2)
OnPress Book Printing (2)
PDC Graphics (7)
Perfect Communications
Prestige Color (2)
Printing Specialist (4)
Roelynn Litho (2)
Schmitz Press (2)
SGM Bindery
Strategic Factory (3)
SureFold Co. (4)
The Standard Group (20)
Zenger Group (4)

Environmental, Health & Safety Excellence Awards

2026 Winner

Little Mountain Printing

1st Runner Up –

Thales DIS USA, Inc.

2nd Runner Up –

Intellicor Communications

3rd Runner Up –

Advantage Book Binding Inc.

Congratulations to the Winners!

Power of Print® Award – the Best of the Best!

SureFold Co.

Power of Print® Runners Up

1st runner up –

Fry Communications

2nd runner up –

NB Bookbinding

3rd runner up –

The Standard Group

4th runner up –

K&W Finishing Inc.

5th runner up –

Indigo Ink Digital Printing

Best of Category Awards

Alcom Printing (3)
BookBaby
CTC of Lackawanna County
Diamond Packaging (2)
Fort Nassau Graphics (2)
Graphic Imaging
The H & H Group
Hatteras
Intellicor
Ironmark (3)
K&W Finishing
PDC Graphics
Roelynn Litho
Schmitz Press (2)
Strategic Factory
SureFold Co.
The Standard Group (9)
Zenger Group (2)



The one and only Daniel Dejan prepares to choose the “Best of the Best”!



Neographics Outstanding Individual Award Winners!

New to Neographics, we are proud to announce this year’s Outstanding Individual Award Winners. Winners were chosen from nominations submitted over the past month and were judged by members of our Neographics Committee. Congratulations to the following individuals, who will be honored at the Neographics Awards Gala on May 14th.

Outstanding Leadership in the Print Industry Award

Becky Almeter, President, Hodgins Engraving

Becky was nominated by Michelle Humes, Customer Service Manager, Hodgins Engraving, Batavia, NY. Michelle described the events of the past year and how Becky led her team back to life. “In May 2025, a devastating fire destroyed the Hodgins Engraving building and everything within it. Overnight, our team of thirty-one employees faced overwhelming uncertainty — no building,

no equipment, and no clear path forward. What we did have, from the very first moment, was Becky.

In those difficult and emotional early days, she became our anchor. Her calm presence grounded us. Her compassion unified us. Her determination propelled us forward when we struggled to see the way. She didn’t simply manage a crisis — she led through it with remarkable strength and humanity.

Becky Almeter is not only an exceptional leader in the print industry; she is a mentor, a role model, and a source of hope and stability during life’s most challenging moments.”

Outstanding Customer Service in Print Award

Daron Rogers, Sr. Client Solutions Manager, Systems Design & Improvement, IMS Solutions

Daron was nominated by Steven Van Dyke, Director of Human Resources, Immediate Mailing Solutions, Liverpool, NY. Steven had this to say, “Daron proactively improves

processes and communication to prevent issues before they occur. By empowering his team to take ownership of client needs, he ensures customers feel heard, supported, and confident in our partnership. Daron makes a meaningful difference by turning challenges into opportunities to strengthen client relationships. His professionalism, responsiveness, and commitment to solutions consistently reflect the high standards of our organization.”

Outstanding Print Production Performance

Gregory Ruby, Pressman, K&W Finishing

Greg was nominated by Kathryn Holmes, CEO, K&W finishing, inc., Baltimore, MD. Kathy had high praise for Greg, writing in her nomination, “Greg achieves tight registration on highly technical finishing jobs that others decline. He executes complex multi-pass foil stamping with extraordinary precision. His commitment to quality ensures every finished piece meets the highest standards for alignment, impression depth and overall quality. When he contracted

COVID, he was determined not to disrupt production schedules. He worked 3rd shift in an empty facility, thoroughly sanitizing equipment before leaving. Day shift sanitized again on arrival, allowing jobs to stay on schedule while protecting coworkers. His dependable attitude and willingness to help others, makes him both an exceptional craftsman and valued teammate.”

Outstanding Marketing Print Professional

Julia Meassick, Technical Sales & Marketing Coordinator, Atlantic Graphic Systems

Julia was nominated by Jeffrey Tomlinson, President, Atlantic Graphic Systems, Columbia, MD and he had this to say in his nomination: “Since taking over AGS marketing three years ago, Julia has boosted customer engagement and event attendance by over 50%. Her cohesive strategy—blending print, social media, and web—has pushed brand recognition to an all-time high, earning consistent praise for its creativity and relevancy. Julia pairs

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“supernatural” creativity with sharp organizational skills and drive. She generates her own content, meets every deadline, and balances messaging with delivery. Above all, her infectious joy for her craft inspires both the AGS team and prospective clients alike.”

Thank you, Neographics Judges

Seven judges volunteered their time to study the entries and consider the quality of printing, degree of difficulty and technical expertise in choosing the winners. Twenty-eight companies submitted 137 entries from their best work in 2024 and 2025. The first round of judging resulted in the Franklin Awards for Excellence. From those entries, the Best of Category winners were chosen. Finally, the Power of Print® award, the Best of the Best, and Runners

up were selected by industry icon, Daniel Dejan.

Thank you again to the following individuals who served as judges for this year’s Neographic competition. Our thanks also go to Stephen Martinec, President, SGM Bindery in Windsor Mill, MD for hosting the judging this year.

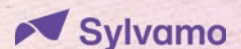
Daniel Dejan, Principal/Creative Director, Dejan Associates, Hixson, TN. Educator, designer, humanist, mentor and lover of all things graphic arts. Mr. Dejan has 40 years of design, production, print buying and on-press experience and is an evangelist for the power of paper and print. As a certified G7 expert, Dejan is an authority in both Color and Color Management and an avid student of color perception and color theory as it relates to branding and printed color reproduction.

Many Thanks to our **NEOGRAPHICS®** Sponsors

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Contributors

Printing: THE STANDARD GROUP | Design: Julia Meassick

Rio DeNaro, Senior Graphic Designer, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, who's been making things look good (and print right) for over two decades—part pixel nerd, part ink whisperer.

Sherry Kennell, Senior Business Development Manager, CTI Paper USA, Inc., Millersville, MD. Over 30 years' experience in the Paper and Printing industry with a focus on creating client relationships for the long term.

Stephen Martinec, President, SGM Bindery, Windsor Mill, MD. Entrepreneur, bindery and printing expert since 1990.

Jeff Wiggins, Operations Manager, Dow Jones & Company/Wall Street Journal, Silver Spring, MD. A 35-year industry veteran, Jeff gained extensive experience in commercial sheetfed and web

printing and newspapers printing, prior to his time at Dow Jones.

Eileen Womelsdorf, Senior Creative Project Manager, AmeriHealth Caritas, Brookhaven, PA. A Drexel University grad, Eileen developed a reputation for a keen eye for detail and a strong commitment to quality, with a particular passion for the relationship between design and print. ■

<< Photo on the Left Franklin award judges: Left to right, Sherry Kennell, CTI Paper USA, Inc., Rio DeNaro, National Gallery of Art and Stephen Martinec, SGM Bindery sift through the entries.

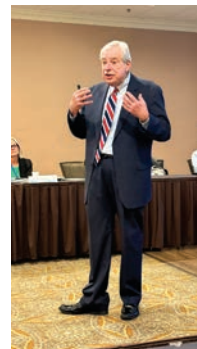
Photo on the Right >> Best of Category judges: Left to right, Sherry Kennell, CTI Paper USA, Inc., Jeff Wiggins, Dow Jones & Company/Wall Street Journal and Eileen Womelsdorf, AmeriHealth Caritas, choose the best entries in each category.



Senior Leader Conference Held in Harrisburg

If you weren't in Harrisburg, PA on March 19th, you missed an awesome line-up of industry greats presenting on important issues. You have a chance to learn from a few of the speakers at upcoming PGCA events.

- You can catch Nick Fiorenza, PGCA Association Counsel at PGCA's Annual Human Resources Conference on May 7 & 8 at Turning Stone.
- Kelly Mallozzi presents a Marketing, a Sales and a Culture brief each month on Thursday's at 1:30 pm. See the list of upcoming topics on page 16 and register at www.printcommunications.org/events.
- Check out Dr. Ralph Williams' EBITDA superman T-shirt he flashed during his presentation on cultivating value-enhancing strategies from financials. Dr. Ralph's studies conducted from surveys of members are available in the members only area at printcommunications.org. ■

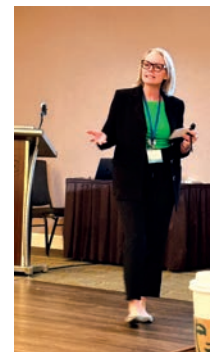


Left to Right

Nick Fiorenza, Association Counsel, Ferrara Fiorenza PC

Dr. Ralph Williams, Professor, Jones College of Business, Middle Tennessee University

Kelly Mallozzi, Principal, SuccessInPrint & VP/Program Director, Girls Who Print



What a Senior Leader Needs to Know About Workforce Risk and Leadership



By Nicholas J. Fiorenza, Association Counsel, Ferrara Fiorenza PC

A Structurally Different Workforce Environment

The workforce environment confronting the ever-evolving graphic arts community is not simply more regulated than it was a decade ago. It is structurally different. The shift we are experiencing is not tied to a single statute, enforcement cycle, or court decision. It reflects deeper changes in how employees view work, how skills transfer across industries, how compensation structures evolve, how digital communication preserves tone, and how agencies and courts evaluate leadership behavior.

For executives and senior leaders in this industry, employment risk is no longer an isolated human resources function. It is directly connected to operational continuity, margin protection, leadership credibility, customer stability, and long-term enterprise value. The patterns emerging across our industry suggest that leadership discipline now plays

a decisive role in determining whether workplace issues remain manageable or escalate into disruption.

The Contracting Talent Market

One of the most significant industry developments over the past several years is that talent competition is no longer confined to other print-related companies. Many of the competencies that drive success in the industry are highly portable. Production oversight, workflow management, estimating, cost modeling, customer account coordination, file preparation, scheduling, logistics planning, much of the production environment and even sales relationships translate easily into adjacent businesses.

Advanced manufacturing operations, logistics and distribution firms, packaging companies, marketing services organizations, and technology enabled production environments are all competing for



similar skill sets. In some cases, fully remote administrative roles also attract individuals whose backgrounds originated in print operations.

The result is not merely wage pressure. It is expectation pressure. Employees with portable skills evaluate leadership consistency, communication clarity, advancement opportunity, flexibility, and fairness with

greater scrutiny than in prior cycles. Compensation remains central, but leadership credibility and perceived stability increasingly influence retention decisions.

Senior leaders who evaluate turnover solely through compensation benchmarking may overlook the broader leadership variables affecting mobility. In a portable talent environ-

“

When a workplace decision is challenged, the question often becomes less about what leadership meant and more about what the facts allow others to infer.”

ment, daily management conduct becomes a competitive factor.

Leadership Conduct as Enterprise Risk

Further, employment related legal risks today increasingly turn on leadership behavior rather than purely technical missteps. Supervisor emails become exhibits. Text messages become discoverable. Performance conversations form the basis of retaliation allegations. Compensation ambiguity becomes contract litigation.

In most employment disputes today, the central question is not whether a rule exists. It is whether the company acted fairly and consistently. Fairness is evaluated through documentation, tone, and timing. When records reflect that expectations were clear, that employees were heard, that standards were applied consistently, and that decisions aligned with articulated company values, risk decreases significantly.

When documentation reflects sudden shifts, inconsistent enforcement, frustration, or silence followed by abrupt termination, even defensible decisions become more difficult to defend. Leadership behavior now carries evidentiary weight. Did senior leaders know about objectionable conduct? When? Did leadership consider all options before a RIF (reduction in force)? Did they seek out alternatives? Culture, values and mission are part and parcel with traditional documentation. It is not enough to check off the right boxes on a warning notice form.

Mitigating Three Key Areas of Legal Risk

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation – Discrimination and retaliation law rests on a simple idea that executives and senior leaders should keep front and center: as a society, we have made a value judgment that making employment decisions based on protected characteristics is

“unfair”. Protected characteristics include race, color, sex and gender (including gender identity), sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, national origin, and other classifications recognized by law. That baseline premise sounds straightforward. In practice, it is a moving target because it sits at the intersection of evolving social expectations, expanding legal protections, and the realities of human interaction in a high-pressure workplace.

It is also an area where leaders can inadvertently create risk without any intent to do harm. Many disputes begin not with explicit bias, but with frustration, impatience, personality conflict, or inconsistent management habits that later get recast as discriminatory treatment. When a workplace decision is challenged, the question often becomes less about what leadership meant and more about what the facts allow others to infer. Agencies and courts will infer intent from patterns, inconsistencies, timing, and documentation. This is one

reason leadership discipline matters so much. Good intentions do not substitute for a coherent record.

Retaliation, in particular, has become one of the most common claim vehicles. The legal definition is broader than many supervisors realize. An employee does not need to use legal terminology. If the employee raises a concern that could reasonably be understood as discrimination, harassment, safety, leave, accommodation, or pay issues, that can trigger legal protection against retaliation. In real life, retaliation risk often arises from the way managers respond after a complaint, not from the complaint itself. Timing mistakes, offhand remarks, a sudden change in tone, or a quick move toward discipline can make the employer look defensive or punitive. Even when performance issues are real, the optics and the paper trail must show that the performance concerns existed independently and were handled consistently.

>>

Harassment risk belongs in this same conversation because harassment claims often hinge on leadership response. The legal standard is not simply whether someone said something inappropriate. The core question becomes what did the company do once it knew or should have known there was a problem. This is where the concept of the employer as the first line of enforcement is so important. Unlike many other areas of law, discrimination and harassment law expects employers to do more than comply passively. The employer is expected to act. Leadership sets expectations, trains supervisors, provides reporting channels, investigates complaints, and corrects behavior. In other words, prevention and response are part of the job.

This is where the “legal versus real fairness” dynamic becomes extremely practical. People have always cared about fairness. It sits at the center of human interaction. When someone feels short-changed, they react. Sometimes they react openly with conflict, arguments, and confrontation. Sometimes they react indirectly through disengagement, gossip, sabotage, or resistance to change. In the modern workplace, they may also react through formal complaints, agency charges, or litigation. Leaders do not have to agree with every complaint to recognize this. The point is that perceived unfairness creates energy, and that energy will go somewhere. Successful workplaces preserve fairness actively because the alternative is disruption.

Legal fairness and real fairness do not always match. A decision may be technically lawful and still be perceived by the workforce as unfair, disrespectful, or inconsistent. Conversely,

a leader may believe they are fair in a human sense and still create legal risk if they handle comparable situations inconsistently or allow protected characteristics to become part of the narrative. This gap between legal and real fairness is where many organizations get surprised. It is also where senior leadership can make the biggest difference, because the gap is narrowed primarily through consistency, communication, and credible documentation.

It is also critical to acknowledge that “work fairness” is different than fairness in everyday life. The workplace is governed by rules that do not apply in the supermarket, at a ballgame, or at a social gathering. How you relate to people at work is legally different than how you relate to friends, family, or acquaintances. The law does not view coworkers primarily as confidantes, family members, potential romantic partners, or people who must accept you “as you are.” They must be treated as coworkers. People at work do not have to absorb behavior that might be tolerated elsewhere. The workplace is a regulated environment, and leaders are accountable for keeping it functional, respectful, and nondiscriminatory.

For senior leaders, the practical takeaway is that discrimination, harassment, and retaliation risk is managed primarily through leadership habits. This happens in three ways.

First, leaders make expectations explicit. They do not rely on assumptions that “everyone knows what we mean by respect.” They define standards of conduct, they reinforce them, and they hold people

accountable. This is especially important in organizations where long tenure and familiarity can blur lines. A joking culture, an informal culture, or a high pressure culture can still be a respectful culture, but only if leaders set boundaries and enforce them consistently.

Second, leaders respond to issues with disciplined calm.

When a complaint surfaces, the organization does not treat it as a personal attack or an annoyance. It is treated as information. Leaders stay neutral, gather facts, and avoid commentary that suggests they have already decided the outcome. They recognize that the manner of response will become part of the record. They also recognize that silence is not neutral. If leaders ignore issues or minimize concerns, they are creating the story that the company does not take fairness seriously.

Third, leaders document the full narrative of fairness.

In many disputes, the decisive factor is not the existence of a policy – that’s baseline – but whether the documentation shows fairness in action. That means documenting not only discipline, but also the steps that came before it. It means documenting expectations, coaching, employee input, the opportunity to improve, and the reasons decisions were made. This is where compassionate accountability becomes more than a leadership philosophy. It becomes a defensible record. The strongest documentation does not read like a verdict. It reads like a fair process: we taught, we counseled, we listened, we warned, and we acted when improvement did not occur or when misconduct required it.

This fairness narrative is also central when employment ends.

Termination law is shifting in a practical sense because most claims today arise less from the underlying reason and more from how the employer handled the situation. Poor investigations lead to credibility problems. Failure to address the employee’s side of the story creates gaps that others fill in. Failure to consider legal protections, such as leave, accommodation, or protected complaints, can make the timing look retaliatory even when leadership believes it is simply performance-based. Executives and senior leaders should expect that investigations, decision-making, and documentation will be evaluated by outsiders who were not present for the day-to-day frustrations. The record must stand on its own.

In a labor market where talent is portable and reputations travel fast, this is not only about reducing liability. It is about leadership credibility. Fairness, actively preserved, is a stabilizer. It reduces conflict, improves retention, and strengthens the organization’s position when decisions are challenged. For senior leaders, the goal is not perfection. The goal is consistency, clarity, and a record that demonstrates that the organization acted with both standards and respect.

Compensation Complexity

The industry continues to operate within tight margins. That reality increases the impact of potential compensation disputes. Small structural errors in overtime calculations, commission definitions or other wage and hour issues can become significant financial exposures. And while enforcement initiatives, at least for now, on the federal level seem

to be trending toward a more business friendly approach, most of the activity confronted by employers today occurs at the state level.

As production technology evolves and administrative roles absorb operational functions, exemption classifications should not be assumed static. Titles do not determine exemption status. Duties do. A classification decision that was appropriate years ago may not reflect how a role functions today. Periodic review of job duties is prudent management practice. Exempt vs. non-exempt decisions are often not intuitive.

Bonus structures, production incentives, and discretionary payments often affect overtime calculations in ways that are not always fully appreciated. Technical errors accumulate quickly across production teams. The cost of correcting systemic miscalculations frequently exceeds the cost of preventive review.

Hybrid roles introduce additional complexity. After hours client communication, digital file exchanges, and remote approvals may create compensable time that is not consistently captured. Clear expectations regarding time reporting and boundaries for after-hours work reduce ambiguity and help prevent inadvertent exposure.

Commission plans remain a recurring source of dispute. Questions frequently arise regarding when a commission is legally earned, how mid-year plan changes are documented, whether discretion is clearly defined, and how termination timing affects payout obligations. Compensation documents

that drift from operational practice create avoidable vulnerability. Alignment between written plans and real world execution is a hallmark of disciplined leadership.

The Layered Leave and Accommodation Environment

Leave and accommodation obligations have become layered and interdependent. Federal requirements, state mandates, local paid leave laws, disability accommodation standards, pregnancy related protections, and mental health considerations now overlap in ways that demand structured oversight. Supervisors continue to be frustrated that attendance standards seem unenforceable and, in many instances, simply stop trying.

The most common breakdown is not refusal to grant leave. It is mishandling of the interaction itself. The interactive process, required under disability law, is an ongoing dialogue. It requires clarity, documentation, and consistency. In production driven settings, operational strain during employee absences is real. When key personnel are unavailable during peak periods, pressure intensifies. Risk arises when that pressure influences tone or subsequent treatment. The understanding of the requirement to seek possible accommodation with an employee absent in relation to a medical condition and to properly document the process is likely the single most significant risk mitigation technique impacting disability related absences.



The strongest documentation does not read like a verdict. It reads like a fair process: we taught, we counseled, we listened, we warned, and we acted when improvement did not occur or when misconduct required it.”



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Retaliation claims frequently stem not from the leave request itself, but from perceived shifts in treatment after protected activity. Centralized oversight, supervisor training, and careful documentation of the dialogue surrounding leave requests significantly reduce this risk.

Agreement Integrity

For years, informal or incomplete agreements were common in the industry, covering everything from significant customer arrangements to understandings with top sales performers. Today the legal and financial risk is simply too great for this practice.

Employment agreements and policies require periodic review to ensure alignment with operational reality. Informal practices can dilute at will language, narrow cause definitions unintentionally limit managerial action, discretionary compensation is applied inconsistently.

In closely held organizations, trust and long tenure sometimes substitute for precision. That approach may function effectively until a dispute arises. Governance discipline includes ensuring that written agreements reflect how the company actually operates. Alignment between documentation and practice reduces conflict and strengthens credibility.

Sales Relationships and Post Employment Risk

Customer relationships remain central assets within this industry. When sales personnel depart, disputes frequently follow. Questions regarding client ownership, use of personal devices, confidentiality boundaries, non-solicitation enforceability, and commission

timing often surface simultaneously.

Courts scrutinize restrictive covenants for reasonableness. The objective is balance. Protection of legitimate business interests must be grounded in language that is realistic and enforceable. Tailored agreements combined with consistent application provide stronger protection than aggressive provisions that exceed practical boundaries.

Mitigating Risks

Compassionate Accountability as a Leadership Standard

A forward looking concept that deserves particular emphasis is compassionate accountability. Compassionate accountability does not mean accepting underperformance or avoiding difficult decisions. It does not mean lowering standards. It means that performance management reflects both clarity and respect.

In practice, compassionate accountability requires that expectations be clearly articulated. Employees should understand not only what standards apply, but why they matter. When performance gaps arise, leaders invite input regarding obstacles or misunderstandings. Misconduct or underperformance is addressed directly, but within the context of company values and shared goals.

Employees are given a meaningful opportunity to succeed. Follow up is consistent. Documentation reflects the dialogue that occurred, the expectations that were communicated, and the support that was offered.

If discipline ultimately becomes necessary, the record demonstrates that the organization sought success before imposing consequence. Agencies, courts,

and juries evaluate how a decision was reached as much as the decision itself. Documentation that reflects effort, clarity, and opportunity tells a story of fairness.

Compassionate accountability strengthens culture and strengthens defensibility simultaneously. It reinforces that standards matter and that people matter. It signals to the workforce that leadership is both firm and fair.

Supervisor Leadership Development

Many print and graphic communications companies promote supervisors based on technical skill, operational reliability, or tenure. While those qualities are valuable, they do not automatically translate into people management proficiency. Front line supervisors are often the most significant risk multipliers within an organization.

Untrained supervisors may communicate inconsistently, document sporadically, or react emotionally under pressure. In a digitally permanent environment, those missteps carry lasting consequences.

Investment in leadership development yields measurable return. Training supervisors in documentation discipline, consistent coaching techniques, respectful communication, and structured performance conversations reduces exposure and improves retention. Executives who treat supervisor readiness as a strategic priority position their organizations for stability.

Closing Thoughts

The modern workplace operates in an environment of digital permanence. Emails, text messages, and internal messag-

ing platforms preserve tone and context. Informal commentary that once dissipated now forms part of a discoverable record.

Senior leaders set the tone. Professional digital communication is not a cosmetic concern. It is risk management. Culture is reflected in written exchanges as much as in formal policies.

Termination decisions generate risk primarily when process appears inconsistent. Sparse documentation, sudden escalation without warning, inconsistent discipline among similarly situated employees, and reactive written commentary undermine defensibility.

Regulatory layering is unlikely to decrease. Talent portability will continue to shape expectations. Digital transparency will further influence dispute evaluation. Margin pressure will persist, increasing the cost of preventable employment disputes.

The organizations that navigate this environment successfully will not necessarily be those with the most policies. They will be those whose leadership practices align with their stated values, whose compensation documents reflect operational reality, whose leave oversight is structured and consistent, and whose culture embodies compassionate accountability.

PGCA is Here to Help

Members looking for more information on any of the topics reviewed above or other help with human resources or employment law challenges are encouraged to contact Association Co-President Tim Freeman at tim@printcommunications.org or Association Counsel Nick Fiorenza at njfiorenza@ferrarafirm.com. We're here to help. ■

Print Is Green Event – a Big Hit in Virginia



BigEye Direct in Sterling, VA hosted a hugely successful networking event on March 26th, co-sponsored by Print & Graphic Communications Association. Guests enjoyed exclusive plant tours and heard from special guest speaker David Loos, President of MCS.

Melissa Jones and Mike Vares from PGCA were on hand that evening connecting with PGCA members and friends. Thanks to our event sponsors Atlantic Graphic Systems, BigEye Direct and MCS for a fun and educational evening.



Attendees enjoying a tour of the BigEye facility.



David Loos, President of MCS, speaks to the crowd.



The crowd at the BigEye event. I spy Melissa Jones, PGCA, Brianna Caso, Grit Printing, Montoursville, PA and Ross Kraft, PGCA Insurance Partner Gilroy Kernan & Gilroy, New Hartford, NY.

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Upcoming Events



May

■ JOIN US FOR THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

PGCA HR CONFERENCE

May 7 & 8, 2026

Turning Stone Resort Casino,
Verona, NY

NEOGRAPHICS 2026

May 14, 2026

The Switch House,
Philadelphia, PA

PGCA MARYLAND GOLF TOURNAMENT

July 9, 2026

Woodlands Golf Course,
Windsor Mill, MD

RAYMOND A. BUBAR CLASSIC

July 24, 2026

Terry Hills Golf Course,
Batavia, NY

PGCA VIRGINIA GOLF TOURNAMENT

September 16, 2026

Hunting Hawk Golf Club,
Glen Allen, VA

July

Webinars

■ WEBINARS WITH KELLY MALLOZZI

MARKETING BRIEF

The Keywords Your Competitors Are Ignoring:
A Guide to High-Intent Search

May 7, 2026 | 1:30 pm

CULTURE BRIEF

3 Ways to Build Internal Community That Don't Require
a Big Budget (or HR Department)

May 14, 2026 | 1:30 pm

WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND PGCA'S HUMAN RESOURCES CONFERENCE

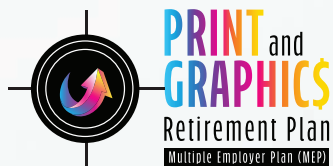
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Change Your Mind, Change Your Life: 5 Mindset Shifts for Optimized Performance



By **Kelly Mallozzi**,
Principal,
SuccessinPrint

After more than 30 years in sales and marketing in the print industry—often as one of the only women in the room—I’ve learned that success isn’t just about skill or strategy. It’s about mindset. The way we think directly impacts our performance, resilience, and overall happiness. If you want to elevate your career and life, start by shifting your mindset. Here are five practical and tactical ways to do it:

1. Embrace a Growth Mindset

Challenges aren’t roadblocks; they are opportunities to grow. Instead of seeing setbacks as failures, view them as lessons. There have been more than a few times in my life where I was underestimated and undervalued. I could have been defeatist about it and faded into the background. But instead, I saw it as a challenge to prove my value. I learned, adapted, and eventually earned a seat at the table. The most successful people aren’t the ones who never fail, but the ones who never stop learning.

2. Reframe Negative Self-Talk

We are often our own worst critics. Pay attention to your

inner dialogue—would you speak to a friend the way you speak to yourself? Replace “I’m not good enough” with “I am constantly improving.” Confidence isn’t just about external validation; it’s built from within. One simple shift in how you speak to yourself can change how you show up at work and in life.

3. Take Ownership of Your Success

No one is going to hand you opportunities—you have to claim them. I used to wait for recognition, thinking hard work alone would get me ahead. Then I realized that self-advocacy is just as important as performance. If you want a promotion, ask for it. If you want a seat at the table, pull up a chair. Owning your success means believing you deserve it.

4. Focus on Solutions, Not Problems

It’s easy to get stuck in what’s wrong, but high performers focus on solutions. Instead of dwelling on what’s broken, ask, “How can I fix this?” In business, the most valued professionals aren’t the ones who point out problems—they’re the ones who solve them. Shift your mindset from frustration to action, and you’ll see doors open.

5. Surround Yourself with the Right People

Mindset is contagious. If you’re constantly around negativity, it will impact your outlook. Seek out mentors, colleagues, and friends who inspire and challenge you. I’ve found that when I surround myself with

people who think bigger, I think bigger too. The right network can elevate not just your career, but your entire mindset.

Your mindset shapes your reality. Shift your thinking, and you’ll shift your results. Change your mind, and you’ll change your life. ■

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Webinars with Kelly Mallozzi



May 7, 2026 | Marketing Brief – The Keywords Your Competitors Are Ignoring: A Guide to High-Intent Search:

When a prospect searches “eco-friendly direct mail printer for nonprofit fundraising,” they’re not browsing. They’re buying. This 15-minute brief shows print sales and marketing teams how to uncover these long-tail, high-intent searches and use them to attract better-fit leads with less competition. You’ll learn a straightforward approach to researching, prioritizing, and embedding these phrases into your marketing so the right buyers find you first.

May 14, 2026 | Culture Brief – 3 Ways to Build Internal Community That Don’t Require a Big Budget (or HR Department):

In this 15 minute Culture Brief, we’ll explore how intentional “micro communities” inside your print company—small, recurring groups and simple rituals—can boost loyalty, break down silos, and improve retention. You’ll leave with three no budget, easy to-start ideas you can pilot in the next 30 days.

Register at www.printcommunications.org/events.

Kelly Mallozzi is a sales coach, marketing consultant, speaker, blogger, and podcaster with 30 years of print obsession to brag about. Her mission is to help print companies drive sales and customer loyalty through content strategy and sales process optimization, all with an eye on culture, workforce development, and personal skills optimization.



quoins2pixels

“In the business world, the rearview mirror is always clearer than the windshield.”

— Warren Buffett (1930 -)

The Ever-changing Economic Picture

Uncertainty. It's something every businessperson understands. Employees change jobs. Customers become unhappy. In the past several years, it's been national economic forces. Supply chain challenges. Tariffs. Wars. The impact to small businesses is much greater than what their Fortune 500 cousins have faced. Consequently, we need to pay a lot more attention to the basics, and cash is king.

It's time for an internal audit of receivables, payables, inventories, supply chain agreements, and of course pricing. Are we billing on a prompt basis? Are we utilizing all of today's electronic banking and accounting applications available to us to accelerate cash flow? Who is responsible for purchasing? Do we have appropriate procedures to ensure our outside purchase are accounted in our job pricing? Are we speaking to our suppliers and developing a better understanding of their supply chains, especially with today's geopolitical challenges. There are dozens of other ideas, but these should get the reader started in finding ways to improve their company's cash flow.

About the Author: quoins2pixels is written by Joe Polanco. The author has spent decades in the printing industry, and held various management positions within the industry. As a value-added service of PGCA, Joe is available to expand on these articles, or aid with projects. Contact Joe at jspolanco49@gmail.com.

Direct Mail

While it's an undisputed crucial part of marketing, the continued rising costs of materials (paper, ink, etc.) as well as postage make direct mail a challenge for many advertisers. As an online article outlines, direct mail is a proven channel of communications. Yet, today's burgeoning technology (AI) is challenging the role which direct mail will play in marketing and promotion.



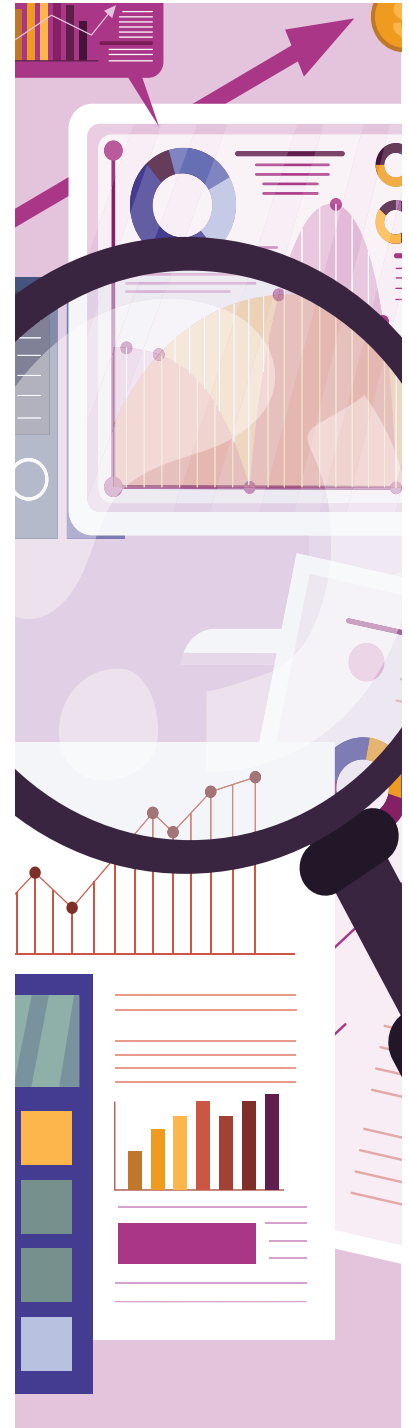
Thus, print service providers need to offer greater levels of sophistication and/or integration going forward. This will mean additional investment in "smart" technology which can offer savings to clients as well as providing information. Rather than waiting for changes in sales, this could be an excellent time for a SWOT analysis of your direct mail business, or any other portion of your business.

Not familiar with SWOT? It's an analysis process where we look at our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It should be conducted with our entire management team. Once we can determine those aspects of our targeted analysis, we can develop a strategy which provides us a roadmap to success.

Stay Interviews

One of the topics being discussed in HR circles is the utilization of "stay" interviews with key employees. It's a concept of formally meeting with essential employees and exploring their needs and potentially avoiding situations where they depart to greener pastures. These discussions focus on what they are enjoying about their job as well as providing opportunities to discuss the "negatives."

In a small business with a direct line to the CEO, this can be an informal meeting. In larger businesses, it should be conducted with the direct supervisor but never make it part of their performance review. Individuals who conduct the interview should be trained to utilize open ended questions focusing upon what is keeping the interviewed individual in their job and what frustrates them. It's crucial that the person conducting the interview takes notes and creates an action plan to make any appropriate agreed upon changes. Insincerity (lack of follow-up) can be a big negative and could potentially drive someone away rather than retaining them. ■



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News from Mailers Hub

Mailers Hub is the only national organization exclusively serving commercial mail producers, including printers who mail and mailers who print, as well as in-house mail operations and advisors to the trade. Their sole purpose is to provide information, training, and support on mailing, postal, and related issues to all companies, regardless of the class or category of hard copy mail they produce.

As a Mailers Hub partner, PGCA members receive a discount on Mailers Hub subscriptions but all members have access to monthly summaries of postal news provided by Mailers Hub, available in the members-only section at printcommunications.org.

Recent Mailers Hub news items

- An April 13th Special Report to Mailers Hub subscribers included the news about the latest USPS price increase, including increasing the stamp for first class mail single pieces to 82 cents. The full report for subscribers included had a complete set of charts showing the proposed prices and a later report included the complete proposed rule containing DMM changes.

- Amazon announced it reached a new agreement with the Postal Service. That agreement would continue the shipper's use of the USPS, but for only about 80% of current volume. Mailers Hub commented that the USPS shouldn't get too comfortable. The past five months have taught Amazon that it may want to become more self-reliant, and should have taught the USPS that future mail volume and revenue aren't guaranteed.
- Aside from sharing a continent, Canada and the US also have something else in common: a struggling postal service. As the US Postal Service continues to look for ways to save money and/or increase revenue, its counterpart to the north has already received government approval for two important cost reduction programs – replacing door delivery with delivery to centralized neighborhood mail receptacles, and closing rural post offices.

Contact PGCA at (716) 691-3211 or info@printcommunications.org to inquire about a Mailers Hub subscription. Members having questions on the postal news can contact Leo Raymond at (703) 624-3761 or lraymond@mailershub.com.



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