

FROM CONSULTANT TO STRATEGIC-THINKING THOUGHT LEADER

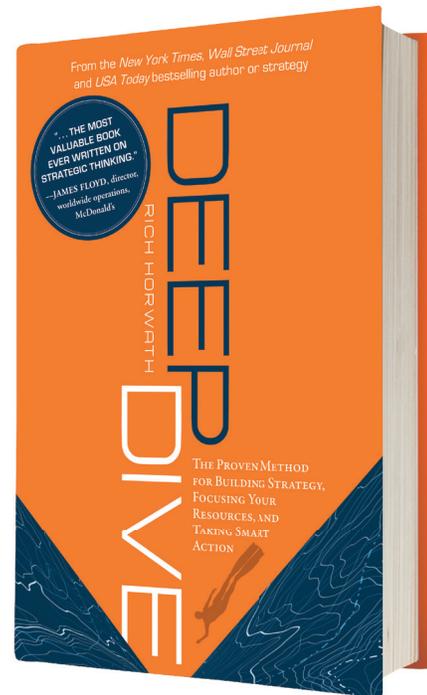
Introduction

Consultant Rich Horwath, founder of the Strategic Thinking Institute, has worked with many organizations, helping them identify holes in their thought processes. His services focus on teaching managers to develop a more strategic way to approach their business in order to improve their competitive advantage, better use resources, and to achieve sustainable growth. Having worked with such companies as Kraft and Motorola, Rich recognized the need for strategic planning resources at all levels of management. “I heard from many managers at all levels that they didn’t have a roadmap to go from being tactical thinkers to strategic thinkers,” a necessary skill vital to the health of a company.

Looking to bring solutions to his clients, Horwath decided to develop a guide, a book on strategic thinking that his clients and other business professionals could use to improve their competitive advantage and overall performance, and to grow in a profitable and sustainable way. “[My book] *Deep Dive* helped fill a critical need in the marketplace,” says Horwath, and it also allowed him to position himself as an information source rather than just a consultant.

Getting the Book to the Marketplace

Once Horwath developed his book, he knew he needed a way to get it into the hands of the professionals who could most benefit from its content. Although self-publishing would give Horwath the greatest amount of creative control, it didn’t provide him with the broad distribution reach he knew his book needed in order to be successful. Horwath says, “I considered large publishers and midsized publishers who had a strong background of getting business books into all potential distribution outlets.” Unfortunately, with a slow acquisitions process and long publishing time lines, getting to market with a traditional publisher can take several years and often has a low return.



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Horwath looked for another option, one that would give him control, but most of all, one that would give him the maximum return in terms of placement and distribution. “I chose Greenleaf Book Group because of its ability to strategically place my book, *Deep Dive*, in premium positions within key retailers across the U.S.” In addition to traditional book retailers and online stores, Greenleaf “was best able to secure high visibility locations [e.g., Hudson’s bookstores in airports] where my target audience [business executives] was most likely to purchase the book.” On each book sold through the traditional and specialty retailers, Horwath retained 35 percent of the cover price, a significant return over traditional publishing, where authors receive only 5–15 percent of the cover price.

Greenleaf also allowed Horwath to sell his book directly to business professionals through back-of-room exchanges at his many speaking engagements. Not only did these back-of-room sales allow Horwath to immediately monetize on the interest generated from his speeches, but Horwath also retained 100 percent of the cover price on each purchase, a significant return for a published book. Still, it was the placement in specialty retailers, including Hudson’s retail outlets inside airports, that provided the biggest incentive for Horwath. “Since the target audience for my business is senior-level executives, and because these executives tend to travel quite a bit, the airport locations were critical to generating awareness and demand for both my book and my consulting and speaking services.”

Convinced that Greenleaf would provide him with the distribution muscle he needed to connect with his audience, Horwath signed on in November of 2008. By August of 2009, Horwath had a high-quality finished product strategically placed in national retailers. When asked about his experience with Greenleaf, Horwath replied, “Greenleaf has expertise across both the creative and business spectrum of the publishing process. They were able to take my vision for *Deep Dive* and make it a creative and commercial success.”

Since its publication, *Deep Dive* has generated its own revenue and also helped drive prospects to Horwath and his consulting firm. He has seen a significant increase in the “acquisition of consulting, training, and speaking engagements based on people reading *Deep Dive*.” Horwath has also enjoyed “increased name recognition as the thought leader on the topic of strategic thinking [and] an increase of 50 percent in my keynote speaking fees.”

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Plans for the Future

“*Deep Dive* has furthered my position as an international thought leader in the area of strategic thinking and has positioned me to leverage this success as I prepare to publish future books.” Motivated by his success, Horwath plans to publish at least three more books. Greenleaf “delivered a high-quality book that I’m proud to see on bookshelves around the country.” As a result, he will continue to partner with Greenleaf Book Group in order to get both the best placement and highest return for his projects.

Advice for Other Professionals

When asked what advice Horwath would give to other professionals who are considering writing a book, he shared the following thoughts:

- “Understand how your book is different from the others in its category.”
- “Assess how the book will help you achieve your overall goals.”
- “Make sure you know who on the publisher’s side will be doing the day-to-day work and that you’re comfortable with their knowledge and expertise level.”
- “Decide why you’re writing the book in the first place, and know what value it will bring to people.”

Answering these questions will save you both time and money as well as help you better locate a publisher who can meet your needs as a professional. A firm grasp of your book’s value and its competitive advantage will also help you better place it in the market and develop a sound marketing strategy in which to engage prospects who will purchase your book—and contact you for other services. Above all, do your homework, and don’t settle for anything below your own personal standards.

Greenleaf Book Group is a publisher and distributor best known for its innovative business model, distribution power, and award-winning designs. Named one of Inc. magazine’s 500 fastest growing companies in the United States, they have represented more than 1,000 titles, including four that hit the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today* bestseller lists.