



A Strategic Planning Lesson from Harry Potter **October 2011**

In the sixth book of the Harry Potter series, JK Rowling uses three powerful words - destination, determination, and deliberation - to outline the important steps in the lesson of apparating, the spell that allows a person to disappear from one place and reappear somewhere else almost instantly.

First, concentrate your mind firmly on your desired destination. Next, focus your determination on occupying that space. Lastly, move with deliberation.

Learning to apparate takes time, effort and energy. The students occasionally make mistakes in their execution and splinch themselves, which is a random separation of body parts that occurs when the mind is inadequately determined. Ouch!!

To sum up, getting where you want to go by apparating requires destination, determination, deliberation and an occasional splinch. Honestly, I thought it sounded like JK Rowling was talking about strategic planning and not just disappearing and reappearing somewhere else.

To create an effective strategic plan, a destination must be determined. Where do we want to be 3 years from now? What is our vision? Next, we determine what actions need to take place in order to reach our desired outcome. What specific actions need to happen in the next 6 months? Who is responsible? How will we measure that? Once we determine what to do, we act deliberately. Each person executes their responsibilities and we revisit our plan regularly.

In an ideal world, we accomplish our strategic plan without issue. Realistically, we splinch ourselves often. We may only accomplish part of what we intended due to increased demands or staffing changes. We experience unforeseen growing pains along the way, including industry changes and economic shifts. Splinches are learning opportunities to assess and refine strategic plans.

Wouldn't it be great if we could apparate our businesses into whatever successes are desired? Absolutely!! But, since that's not possible (yet), we can successfully use the apparition principles of destination, determination, and deliberation to create sound strategic plans and learn from our splinches along the way.