



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 21, 2017

New York Times Shrinks Print Staff; 100 Taking Severance Offers

On Thursday more than 100 staffers at the *New York Times*, including copy editors and reporters, took their only option: [severance packages](#) offered as the paper continues to shrink its print staff.

Though they were warned well in advance, many of those whose jobs were in jeopardy decided to wait until the bitter end, hoping to snag one of the few new job openings at the *Times*' digital operations. For many, those final job interviews turned out instead to be offers to take the severance package, as their job skills no longer fit the new paradigm at The Gray Lady.

Red ink has been flowing for years as the *Times* struggled with a shrinking print audience and a technology that wasn't keeping up with audiences switching to online media for their information. In January the *Times* published an internal report, "Journalism That Stands Apart," crafted by seven of the newspaper's journalists. It was blunt in its assessment:

The Times is uniquely well-positioned to take advantage of today's changing media landscape — but also vulnerable to decline if we do not transform ourselves quickly....

The print version of *The New York Times* remains a daily marvel, beloved to a large number of loyal readers ... but the newsroom's current organization creates dangers for the print newspaper.

Addressing some of those dangers involved recommendations of changes in internal structure, but also laying off dozens of the paper's long-term employees. The memo released along with the report was equally blunt. Dean Baquet, the paper's executive editor, and Joe Kahn, its managing editor, stated:

Nothing can disguise the fact that the continued shift from print to digital demands a somewhat smaller and more focused newsroom.

There will be budget cuts this year.... We cannot pretend to be immune from financial pressures, but we view this moment as a necessary repositioning of the *Times*' newsroom, not a diminishment.

They admitted that the paper was too heavily staffed for the new information age: "We will focus cuts on the multilayered editing and production systems, a legacy of our newspaper traditions that remains much bigger and more complex than at our competitors."

The *Times* is fighting for its survival on many fronts, not just financial or in lagging behind its competitors. Its credibility has been evaporating as well, thanks to its insistent determination to undermine the Trump presidency through its promoting falsehoods and innuendoes that have nothing to do with traditional journalistic reporting. Jack Marshall has been writing about journalistic ethics for years at his Ethics Alarms. In June he exposed just one of the examples that the paper called "The definitive list of Donald Trump's lies." Marshall wrote: "The statements (by Trump, quoted by the





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Times) are not all lies. Most of them, in fact, are not lies.”

Marshall explained:

If we assume that the *New York Times* knows what a lie is (and if the *Times* does not then it should have no credibility at all, since a journalist’s mission is to report the truth), then the list proves that the *New York Times* deliberately set out to deceive its readers.

Marshall goes on to quote the *Times*:

We are using the word “lie” deliberately. Not every falsehood is deliberate on Trump’s part. But it would be the height of naïveté to imagine he is merely making honest mistakes. He is lying.

Said Marshall: “This is a self-contradictory statement. If a falsehood isn’t deliberate, then it isn’t a lie.”

Sara Shepherd, author of *Heartless*, could have been speaking of the Gray Lady when she wrote: “No one believes a liar. Even when she’s telling the truth.” So it is with the *Times*. It may be able to fix its internal structure, but restoring the paper’s credibility will take much more than just laying off a few people.

Image of *New York Times* logo: Screenshot of [New York Times online](#)

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